Latin cults through Roman eyes
*Myth, memory and cult practice in the Alban hills*
Hermans, A.M.

**Publication date**
2017

**Document Version**
Final published version

**License**
Other

**Citation for published version (APA):**
Latin Cults through Roman Eyes

Myth, Memory and Cult Practice in the Alban Hills
Latin Cults through Roman Eyes
Myth, Memory and Cult Practice in the Alban Hills

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam

op gezag van de Rector Magnificus

prof. dr. ir. K.I.J. Maex

ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties ingestelde commissie,
in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Agnietenkapel

op donderdag 2 februari 2017, te 10.00 uur

door Antoinette Maria Hermans

geboren te Venray
Promotiecommissie:

Promotor: prof. dr. E.A. Hemelrijk Universiteit van Amsterdam

Copromotor: prof. dr. M. Gnade Universiteit van Amsterdam

Overige leden: prof. dr. D. den Hengst Universiteit van Amsterdam
prof. dr. J.W. van Henten Universiteit van Amsterdam
dr. P.S. Lulof Universiteit van Amsterdam
dr. B.D. Rous Universiteit van Amsterdam
prof. dr. O.J. Hekster Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen
prof. dr. C.J. Smith University of St Andrews, UK
dr. T.D. Stek Universiteit Leiden

Faculteit: Geesteswetenschappen
# Table of Contents

A note on translations, editions and abbreviations

v  
Acknowledgements

vii

I) **Introduction**: Memory, Identity, *Latinitas*  
1
   - The memory 'boom'
   - Memory and theory in ancient Rome
   - Communicative memory: a different perspective
   - Necessary contextualization
   - Livy and the danger of *neglegentia*
   - Cicero and scepticism
   - Varro and the antiquarians
   - Epigraphy: filling up voids in our knowledge and uncovering new ones
   - The Latin sanctuaries and their archaeological remains
   - Preceding the argument: what is a Latin cult?

II) **Diana Nemorensis and her worshippers**  
37
   - A curious king
   - 'Minor' deities
   - Trivia and the moon
   - Wives and mothers?
   - Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis
   - Signs of syncretism
   - Temples and votives
   - Images old and new
   - Epigraphic testimonies
   - Myths and memories inscribed
   - Conclusions
### III) Juno Sospita: guardian of Lanuvium and Rome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juno Sospita as <em>patrona</em> of Lanuvium and Rome</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goddess and the serpent</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cult place(s) in Rome</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The development of the sanctuary in Lanuvium</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pantanacci votive deposit: the cave of the snake?</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early representations of a goddess in goatskin</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanuvian <em>origo</em> on coins</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cult images</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priests, magistrates and devotees in the epigraphic record</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV) Jupiter Latiaris and the *feriae Latinae*: celebrating and defining *Latinitas*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tarquiniius’ unification attempts</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinus as forefather and Alba Longa as metropolis</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Carnem petere</em>: a celebration of community and hierarchy</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological remains – or the lack thereof</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excavation and destruction in the archival sources</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epigraphic testimonies of the <em>feriae Latinae</em></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cult officials on the <em>mons Albanus</em></td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Jupiter and Latin Jupiter: creating religious and political unity?</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V) Conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Images</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samenvatting in het Nederlands</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A note on translations, editions and abbreviations

All literary sources quoted in this thesis are quoted in English translation, while the Latin and Greek texts are provided in the footnotes. Unless otherwise specified, the translations are based on the most recent Loeb editions. Translations by the author or adaptations to existing translations are specified.

The references to coins, inscriptions and images – if not mentioned in full – are based on the following corpora:

AE: L’Année Épigraphique, 1888-.

CIL: Th. Mommsen et al. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin, 1863-.


FUR G. Carretoni et al., La Pianta Marmorea di Roma Antica (Forma Urbis Romae), Rome, 1960.


Acknowledgements

In many ways, this thesis originated in the winter, spring and summer of 2006, when I spent an Erasmus term at the University of La Sapienza in Rome. I arrived a month before classes started and – learning quickly that university procedures would not move any quicker because of my early arrival – I immersed myself in the vibrant chaos of the city with Amanda Claridge’s Archaeological Guide to Rome. Many long walks followed, in which scattered and incomprehensible ruins slowly turned into actual monuments, streets and houses. The ancient city came to life before my eyes, and in my romantic – and no doubt naïve – view it blended effortlessly with recently acquired skills for modern Roman life, like pasta making and the correct use of Romanesco. Like many before me, I was captured by the intricate layeredness of the past below my feet, and much of my historical fascination for the ‘past in the past’ can be traced back to these first months in Rome. Although any concrete research plans were far away at that point, it was an exciting and encouraging realization that one could make a career out of studying something like this.

Now that it is finished, I realize that doing PhD research has given me quite a few reality checks over the years. Rome, for all its late afternoon sunlit splendour, can be a tacky, grumpy and especially difficult city to manage at times. More importantly, I learned that carrying out a self-designed research project requires long hours of seclusion, which makes it a solitary – if not sometimes lonely – enterprise. I am happy to say, however, that the moments of struggle and doubt were far outnumbered by moments of enthusiasm, curiosity and energy. I would not have had such a positive experience (nor would I have a book now), without the company and support of many people. It is with gratitude and delight that I use the first pages of this study to acknowledge their contributions.

My first and foremost acknowledgement is to my supervisor, Emily Hemelrijk. Even though she did not know me before, she generously offered her time and expertise to support my application to the University of Amsterdam PhD programme. Since then, she has been of crucial importance to the completion of this study and to my development as a scholar and teacher. I have enjoyed our long conversations, from which I always returned encouraged and inspired. Her thoughtful and honest feedback on my writing has saved me from many mistakes. Through the years, I have admired Emily’s ability to be a meticulous reviewer and a kind mentor at the same time. I benefitted greatly from both of these roles, even after the completion of this project, as she helped pave the way for my first steps into postdoctoral academic life. I am grateful and proud to have gained her trust.
Next, I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to my second supervisor, Marijke Gnade. She has been an enthusiastic and supportive reader of my work from the beginning, and her knowledge of the archaeology of Latium has been invaluable for this project. As such, she literally kept my work grounded in the material sources. I am thankful for her guidance on how to use this evidence in an appropriate way and also for her many bibliographical suggestions. Mentioning Marijke and/or Satricum opens doors in Latium, and I have gladly used this to my advantage. I therefore feel honoured that she recently included me in some of her Satricum endeavours.

I wish to thank all the institutes and institutions that contributed to the realization of this project. The Amsterdam School of Historical Studies and the Faculty of Humanities have provided the funding; I am grateful for their continuous support and for the course programme they offered as part of the PhD programme. Special thanks go out to my colleagues at the Department (Republic) of History: it has been a privilege to work in such a creative, dedicated and idealistic – should I say slightly anarchistic? – environment. Before my time in Amsterdam, I spent a very productive academic year at the Westfälische Wilhelmsuniversität in Münster. I thank Peter Funke for facilitating this and I am grateful for the VSB and DAAD research grants that financed it. Support came from other directions as well. I was lucky to spend a few weeks in the wonderful environment of the Fondation Hardt pour l’étude de l’Antiquité in Geneva. I thank the Fondation and its director, Pierre Ducrey, for awarding me the research grant, for providing such a unique and inspiring study atmosphere and for bringing me into contact with wonderful group of international scholars. Additional support was given by the Allard Pierson Fund, who covered part of the printing costs for this thesis, and by the OIKOS travel grant, which contributed to a conference visit to Philadelphia.

Without the help of the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome (KNIR), this project would have been nearly impossible to carry out. Not only did their grants allow me to visit my research sites for several years in a row, they also provided great assistance in communicating with libraries, archives and Soprintendenza authorities. Being part of the KNIR community has introduced me to innovative ideas, great minds and numerous good friends – in somewhat of a bubble in Rome, but a very fun and productive one. Many thanks go out to the directors and heads of archaeology who have given me these opportunities: Bernard Stolte, Gert-Jan Burgers, Harald Hendrix and Jeremia Pelgrom. Of course, I do not want to forget the members of staff who have been the backbone of the KNIR for so long: Janet, Angelo, Fernando and Mohammed, thank you so much for all your kind attention.

One of the great joys of doing PhD research is meeting so many interesting people along the way. Through the years, I have benefitted from many great scholars who were willing to listen to, read and comment upon my work. First of all, I wish to thank Christopher Smith, Olivier Hekster, Daan den Hengst, Patricia Lulof, Benjamin Rous, Jan-Willem van Henten en Tesse Stek for being in
my dissertation committee and for reading my work so carefully. Ton Derks, Nicholas Purcell, Eric Orlin and Joe Farrell commented on earlier drafts of chapters; I am very much obliged to them as well. For my work at the sites in Lazio, I greatly benefitted from the expertise and generous help of Luca Attenni, director of the Museo Civico di Lanuvio and Francesca Diosono, director of the excavations in Nemi. Furthermore, I thank Mark Locicero for quickly and carefully proofreading my text, while Joan Griffioen has helped me with the images and did a wonderful job in designing the cover of this thesis. That the study of ancient culture is very much alive in the Netherlands, is proven year round by the national research school for classical studies (OIKOS). I greatly appreciated the opportunity to present my work to junior and senior scholars and have also enjoyed their curriculum, in which several (international) masterclasses and a course on epigraphy were particular highlights. It has been a joy to share these experiences with an ambitious group of young colleagues from other universities. I think of Liesbeth Claes, Ylva Klaassen, Kim Beerden, Raphael Hunsucker, Simon Speksnijder and Marleen Termeer in particular, but there are many others.

A little closer to home, but just as important, was the support of the colleagues of the Ancient History group of the UvA. Over the years, our group has changed quite a bit, and I thank all earlier and current members for their friendship and for showing me the joy and importance of teaching. With regards to the latter, Lucinda Dirven and Hans van Rossum deserve special mention. I am happy to see that the arrival of Martijn Icks, Marlena Whiting and Sofie Remijse brought new energy to our group and I’m looking forward to work together on many more occasions. Furthermore, I wish to express my gratitude and admiration to librarian Ewa Zakrzewska, who does everything in her power to keep the classics library in good research condition - despite fighting an uphill battle sometimes (as I have experienced myself). I consider myself lucky to have another group of wonderful colleagues at the Ancient History department of Groningen, where I was given the opportunity to teach from the start of this academic year. It has been great fun so far, and I wish to thank Onno van Nijf, Jan Willem Drijvers, Christina Williamson and Inger Kuin for giving me such a warm welcome and for their help in navigating a sometimes difficult teaching schedule.

While writing these acknowledgements, I find it increasingly difficult to distinguish colleagues from friends. This is perhaps most clearly the case for the ladies who were my office mates but have, over time, become so much more. Marianne, Sanne D., Martje, Karlijn and Sanne K.: thank you for all the great advice, for the stimulating conversations about academic and (more often) real world issues and for making me laugh so often and so loud. I hope we will share much more tea, fun and friendship in the future. Within this group of people, I want to mention Anna Sparreboom in particular. As a fellow PhD candidate in Ancient History, she was there during almost all stages of my research. Anna showed me how it was done, up until the near perfect defence of her
thesis a few months ago. I am grateful for the many times I could rely on her experience, but more so for her encouragement, her warm personality and her humour. Luckily, she agreed to be my paranimf (as I was for her), so we can also walk the last part of this road together. We did it, Anna!

I feel fortunate that I could rely on so many close friends over the last years, sometimes for pep-talks and encouragement, but more often for much-needed distraction in the form of vacation, food, sports and parties. Going back to Nijmegen, for example, still feels like going home in a way, and that is not in the least thanks to Manon, Ilse and Edith. Marleen had moved to Amsterdam before me and turned out to be a great guide to the city; I thoroughly enjoyed our long evenings and delicious dinners and hope many more will follow. Many thanks go out as well to my flatmate Nale. An academic herself, she was helpful and supportive when it came to research matters, but I especially thank her and Janneke for the many fun- and wine-filled evenings on her living room couch. I could not have wished for a better roomie. Of the many friendships that originated in Rome, I especially want to mention Jan, Floris, Roel, Dirk, Anne, Sanne and Jo. Our roads may not lead us to Rome as often anymore as we would like, but I am happy that they keep crossing, and hope they will continue to do so in the future. Finally, I am proud to call myself a megje. It is very special to still have your childhood friends close and I realize that even more now that I see their careers develop and their families grow. Esther, Ineke, Linda, Marion, Lieke and Franca: thank you so much for everything. Out of all these, Franca and Lieke are my oldest companions – yes, it is on official record now! – and we grew up playing together in the same street. That we now live in the same part of Amsterdam, where we still share life’s adventures and experiences, is a source of great joy and pride for me. I am very happy that Franca agreed to be my paranimf, as a sign of this friendship.

The concluding words of thanks belong to my family and loved ones. Rob, Chris, Martijn, Machteld and Coen have welcomed me into their family and have shown genuine interest in my person – and my project – from the beginning. I feel like I know you for a long time already and thank you for your support. I cannot emphasize enough how much I am indebted to the love and support of my sister Anky, her partner Anthonie, their beautiful little Joppe and my brother Rob. I could not have done this without you and am forever grateful to have grown up in such a warm and loving family.

Frank made the last years of this project so much more meaningful and fun. I thank him for his patience with my impatience, for reassuring me and challenging me and for the many, many moments he made me laugh and remember that there is more to life than work. Finally, my greatest and most heartfelt thanks go out to my parents. They must have wondered often about the strange world of academia and where it would take me, but I have felt loved, supported and encouraged by them at every step of the way. I dedicate this book to them.
Chapter I: Introduction. Memory, Identity, Latinitas

He [Anthony] taunts Gaius Caesar’s son with his humble birth, though even his natural father, had he lived, would have been elected consul. “A mother from Aricia”: you might think he was speaking of a woman from Tralles or from Ephesus. Do you see how we who come from municipia are looked down upon – that is, just about all of us: for how few of us do not come from such towns? And if he has such contempt for Aricia, an immemorially ancient community, a Roman ally under treaty, so close as almost to adjoin the Roman boundaries, distinguished by the high standing of its citizens, what municipality does he not despise? ¹

Aricia mater. With these words, Anthony had apparently tried to belittle the ancestry of Octavian, whose mother came from the Latin town of Aricia. Cicero, who defends the future princeps here, is clear in his rebuttal: if even the origo of someone from Aricia was subject to criticism, what then of the ancestries of the honourable men surrounding him? Were they not all from municipia, and had they not all come to Rome to contribute to the Roman state? Cicero refers to the diversity and inherent pluralistic origins of the Roman citizenry, a concept that he famously explained with the term duae patriae in de Legibus.² As a result of the large scale inclusion of municipal elites from all over Italy, every Roman citizen had in fact two homelands, one being the Roman Republic, the other being his ancestral town. This did not result in conflicted loyalties, because the Roman citizen, according to the orator, thought of his two fatherlands as one.³

It should not surprise us that a homo novus like Cicero chose to praise the inclusive character of Roman citizenship and emphasize the fact that a local identity was part of, and not in contrast to, Roman identity. For someone from a Latin town like Aricia however (such as Octavian’s mother), the

---
¹ Cic. Phil. 3.15: Ignobilitatem obicit C. Caesaris filio, cuius etiam natura pater, si vita suppeditasset, consul factus esset “Aricia mater”; Trallianam aut Ephesiam putes dicere. Videte quam despiciamur omnes qui sumus e municipiis, id est omnes plane: quotus enim quisque nostrum non est? Quod autem municipium non contendit is qui Aricinum tanto opere despicit, vetustate antiquissimum, iure foederatum, propinquitate paene finitimum, splendore municipum honestissimum? The translation is my own.
³ Cic. Leg. 2.5: Dulcis autem non multo securis est ea, quae genuit, quam illa, quae exceptit. Itaque ego hanc meam esse patriam prorsus numquam negabo, dum illa sit maior, haec in ea contineatur […] habet civitates sed unam illas civitatem putat.
duae patriae were even more intertwined. Aricia was in the heart of Latium Vetus (‘old Latium’) and, from its very beginnings, was just as Latin as Rome. Although it eventually came to dominate all others, Rome shared mythical ancestors, juridical rights and religious history with the Latins of its neighbouring villages. In this context, the attachment to (and advertisement of) a local Latin municipality was very much an attachment to the heart of Rome itself.

And yet, despite the shared cultural and political background, the Romans had waged war on Latins just as much as on non-Latins. While the communal Latin origins were acknowledged and remembered in literary sources of the later Roman Republic and Empire, so were these early military campaigns. Just like the Italians in the Social war, or even the Gauls talked about by Claudius in his famous speech to the Senate, the Latins had joined the Roman imperial cause only after fiercely opposing it. Not only the favourable outcome of the struggles was reported, but also centuries of strife and war before that reconciliation, the end of the Latin war in 338 BC. While we can certainly not use the information provided by Roman historians about this period uncritically, it is revealing that they present a Latin past of which the binding elements – political alliances, religious meeting places, military cooperation – often originated not in partnership, but in opposition to Rome. In this historical context, the Latin status of the neighbouring villages could also be considered as something distinctively non-Roman.

In many ways, the relationship between Latins and Romans was defined by their mutual past, and it is the reflection upon that past that is at the heart of this thesis. I am fully aware that an investigation of Rome’s Latin past could span a large number of subjects, varying from the Latin language, to colonization, or to civic law, but I will focus on one central aspect: religion. More precisely, this thesis will discuss the three large cult centres of the Alban hills: the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis at lake Nemi, the sanctuary of Juno Sospita in Lanuvium and the sanctuary of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban mount. The Alban hills are volcanic highlands southeast of Rome that presented (and still present) a dramatic scenery for anyone leaving the urbs using the Via Appia. Although it was a highly popular location for elite villa’s in the late Republic and Early Empire, parts of the region remained rather isolated, with dense woods, steep sided crater lakes and dozens of little streams and waterfalls. So, the landscape formed a sharp contrast with Rome and the busy traffic going in and out of it. Located in the core of Latium Vetus, the sanctuaries on and below these hills had long histories as meeting places for Latins, both in times of war and in times of peace.

---

4 The speech is recorded in Tac. Ann. 11.23-24 and on the Lyon tablets (CIL XIII 1668).
5 Farney (2007) 77, who also notes examples of Latins (especially from Tusculum or Praeneste) being accused of arrogance.
6 Horden and Purcell (2000) 59-64.
My selection of Latin cults could have been expanded, as I am also aware of, by including the other large monumental sanctuaries of Latium in my study, such as the sanctuary of Hercules Victor in Tibur or the famous sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia in Praeneste. Also missing from the selection, are old communal sanctuaries elsewhere in the region, such as that of the seven altars in Lavinium and the temple of Mater Matuta in Satricum. Instead of providing a more general outline of the religious past of Latium however, I have chosen to perform a detailed analysis of three specific cases studies, within the geographically confined area of the Alban hills. I have chosen this strategy because a number of studies have already emphasized the similarities in religious practices and the common development of religious structures, as well as the general chronology of material Latin culture. Apart from that, I have adopted a case study approach because I believe that the creation and transmission of religious memory that is the focus of my work, is best studied as a product of acting and communicating individuals. Focussing on three cults within the geographically confined area of the Alban hills allows me to study the required individual detail, recognizing similarities in dealing with the religious past, but also differences and inconsistencies in the sources that have sometimes been overlooked in the earlier studies. Located in the same volcanic landscape and even connected by sightlines, the cults of the Alban hills are comparable in many ways, from the Latins inhabiting the communities around the cults and visiting them to the political history – of strive and reconciliation with the Roman state – they are embedded in. Still, as the analysis in the following chapters will show, the way that past was perceived and communicated could vary greatly and, depending on the context, the Latin deities could take on a foreign, local or Roman role. By studying these roles in detail, I hope to further the understanding of three individual cults in the religious landscape of Latium Vetus, but I also, by extension, hope to contribute to the continuing debates on Roman identity and its relation to the Latin past it originated in.

In the case studies that make up the core of my work, I will focus on the question if, and if so in what form, the Latin past played a part in the everyday cult practice for Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita, and Jupiter Latiaris. In a detailed analysis of literary and visual representations, ritual practices and archaeological remains, I will not attempt to reconstruct an ‘original’ or pre-Roman version of the cult, but will instead focus on the ways later Romans – including the inhabitants of the villages that hosted the deities – made sense of the religious heritage of the Alban hills. This study thus begins from the premise that the Latin character of the cults was not a static relic of the

---

3 The common development of religious structures in the late Republic is most famously discussed in Coarelli (1987). Cf: Colonna (1983), Rous (2010) and section ‘The Latin sanctuaries and their archaeological remains’, on pages 29ff. of this introduction. For the earlier developments in religious architecture, see Potts (2015); a recent overview of the developments in Latial material culture is provided by Fulminante (2014) with bibliography. Cf: Smith (1996a), Holloway (1994). In the literary domain, Fantham (2009) has studied the representation of Italian gods, but has focused exclusively on ‘rural’ cults like Priapus, Silvanus and Faunus.
archaic past that somehow survived through the ages, but was constantly reinterpreted, redefined and reinvented. Consequently, my approach relies considerably on insights on the relationship between history, (religious) performance and collective identity that have arisen from the field of memory studies over the last few decades.

Before we turn to the analyses in the individual chapters however, some of the key concepts of this scientific paradigm must be critically examined, in order to create a point of departure that is workable but also suitable for the context of Republican and early Imperial Rome. Apart from that, the introduction will devote attention to the different types of sources used in this thesis, and the different types of religious experience they represent. Narratives from the ancient literary tradition will form an important part of the discussion, but the different chapters do not always leave room for a critical discussion of the authors themselves, nor for the literary context of their remarks on individual deities. Therefore I will introduce some of the most important authors used and will also pay attention to the role of religion and religious history in their work. While the study of material remains – such as temple structures, inscriptions and sculpture – broadens the scope of our research and provides us with a different perspective on the Latin cults, the confrontation between material and textual (both literary and epigraphic) evidence is not without methodological risks. So, I will not only use this introduction to point out some of the peculiarities and possible interpretation problems of these material remains but also formulate a standpoint on how and why to use material and textual sources together.

1.1 The memory ‘boom’

Since the late 1990s, ‘memory’ and ‘identity’ have become new catchwords in the study of the humanities. Theorists like Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and Jan and Aleida Assmann have developed concepts that are so frequently adopted that it is safe to speak of a memory boom. In general, these studies have paid scant attention to the ancient world, but in recent years the research paradigm has sparked interest in Greek and, to a lesser degree, Roman identity. The subject of memory has also attracted attention amongst ancient historians, especially when it comes to the ‘memory of place’ tradition that emerged with Nora’s monumental work on lieux de mémoire. As this introduction will show however, the developing field of memory studies has produced other and more useful insights into the connection between history, memory and (collective) identity.

---

Although these advancements have so far largely been ignored in classical studies, they can be a useful tool to study the complex, plural and often dissimilar views that the Romans had of their religion and past – and the ways in which these views were transmitted. At the same time the term memory has been stretched so far, that it increasingly becomes a vague and somewhat tedious notion. Contributions were so abundant and diverse that scholars have warned for a ‘terminological profusion’ and ‘semantic overload’. This should warn us not to use the concept of memory only for its rhetorical power, but to formulate a clear and functional starting point for our research that takes into account the possibilities and limitations of the Roman evidence.

The recent emphasis on ‘memory’ has its origins in the first half of the 20th century, in the works of French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945). In Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire and La Mémoire Collective he develops a model to study cultural continuity and change. In his view, the identity of a group is defined by its ability to create, and to relate to, a collectively shared memory. This is not the same as a shared history: the study of history is about changes, peculiarities and differences and therefore creates an irrevocable distance to the present. When people collectively remember something, they focus on similarities and continuities, they recognize the past in the present and vice-versa. Shared perceptions about events in the past, certain monuments or natural features create a group feeling and direct the thoughts of an individual within that group. Consequently, in Halbwachs’ view, memory is not (only) a biological function of the brain but also a constructive power in society that creates cohesion and defines individual as well as collective identity.

Halbwachs theory has gained momentum rather late. It is not until the last decades of the previous century that the works of Pierre Nora and Jan and Aleida Assmann place memory at the centre of academic attention. In his famous introduction of Les Lieux de Mémoire, Nora adopts Halbwachs’ distinction between history and memory. His realms of memory are physical locations and landmarks, but also metaphorical ‘spaces’ that contain memories that are important for the formation of societies and (nation) states. The lieux can be very diverse: topographical sites, monuments, works of art, but also persons, myths, rituals and symbols. The realms form a representation and ‘embodiment’ of memories, because they connect the present with the past and function as elements of continuity in a changing world, when any ‘real’ connection with the past and spontaneous memory is long gone. In a French context for example, the Revolution of 1789 is represented by the annual celebration of the 14th of July and by the historical site of the Bastille.

---

12 Halbwachs (1925), Halbwachs (1950).
According to Nora, the selection of these symbols is neither random nor impartial: it is the state that selects and constructs the things that ought to be remembered, and in the author’s view, memory serves the development of state, nationality and public authority.

Nora’s approach was very influential, and similar large scale projects have since appeared in Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and elsewhere.\(^5\) In classical studies the impact has not been so profound, but volumes on Greek and Roman lieux de mémoire show that Nora’s theory has influenced the debate on identity in antiquity as well.\(^6\) Still, historians and others have warned against adopting too much of Nora’s ideas and language. His analysis is solely centered on France and several critics have noted the sense of nostalgia that overshadows his ideas of ‘authentic’ memories versus ‘constructed’ ones.\(^7\) More important, to our case, are the methodological limitations of his focus on nation building and state formation. Nora’s lieux de mémoire are the result of a conscious attempt to nationalize the past, create unity and confirm national authority. Pre-modern states often lack the will and collective means to take such measures, and, as we will see below, this was especially the case in the competitive world of the Roman Republic.

Another stimulus for the upsurge of memory studies was the work of Aleida and Jan Assmann. In several books – mainly on pre-modern societies – they took on Halbwachs’ theory of memory as a group-specific social phenomenon.\(^8\) In their view, common perceptions of the past generate a shared knowledge within a community. This cultural memory is a defining component of group identity and provides a framework for individual behavior.\(^9\) In his research programme, Jan Assmann distinguishes between three categories of ‘every day’ memory: the ‘mimetic’ memory of habits and imitations, the memory of objects (i.e. the material world), and the communicative memory of speech and other forms of communication. These three categories eventually find their way into cultural memory: this is characterized, by definition, by its distance to every day practices and contains selected written, visual and ritual representations of the past. For our purposes, it is important to reflect on Assmann’s distinction between these three communicative spheres of memory and the overarching cultural memory. Using insights from oral history, he explains that the communicative memory wanders along with the present and covers a period of approximately

\(^{16}\) Whereas Halbwachs used the term ‘collective memory’, based on sociological categories like families, neighborhoods or professional groups, Assmann prefers the term ‘cultural memory’, which allowed him to take into account Nietzsche’s theory of conscience and Freud’s theory of superego. See: (Assmann 1992) 22-36.
80-100 years, in which generations share experiences and reflections of the past. Outside of this period, only the Erinnerungsbilder (‘figures of memory’) that are preserved and stabilized in the cultural memory are remembered. The preservation is in the hands of so-called ‘experts of cultural memory’ – people who make an effort to safeguard certain texts, images, actions and occurrences. Assmann himself studied the development of writing and the canonization of literary works, a phenomenon that illustrates his theory well: by selection and conservation a body of Erinnerungsbilder is created that surpasses the generations and that is inevitably distinct from communication in everyday life. The same can happen with rituals or monuments, although these aspects have received relatively little attention in his works.

Assmann’s model combines well with contemporary insights from historical anthropology like those of Clifford Geertz, who proposed to study a society as ‘the story they tell themselves about themselves’. In general, Assmann’s work proved to be a great stimulus for a growing field: he showed that memory and its formation also could offer insightful tools to study cultural change in non-nation states. Apart from that, his differentiation between communicative and cultural memory gained a lot of following. Nevertheless, scholars have recently stressed the limitations of the theory. Assmann identified cultural memory as a key factor in cultural development, but for many theorists the functioning of the model is too unclear for such a far-reaching explanatory claim. The transformation of certain images from the communicative memory into the cultural memory remains particularly vague, since Assmann does not go into detail about the nature of the transition and the groups or individuals that bring it about. Because he focuses on the consolidation, reproduction and canonization of Erinnerungsbilder, the model is static in nature and leaves little room for the varying social circumstances in which memory was generated.

The emphasis on collectively shared memories can be explained by the two case studies that form the basis of Assmann’s concept: ancient Israel and pharaonic Egypt. Here the political and religious conditions can perhaps account for the development of a monolithic cultural memory, but it must be emphasized that the circumstances are unique. In other societies, like the diverse polis-centered world of ancient Greece, there was no central control or authority to structure the creation of a collective memory. Assmann’s conception of cultural memory as an integrating force and focal point of identity seems especially problematic if we turn to our context, the highly

---

21 Geertz (1973) 448.
competitive society of the Roman Republic. As Uwe Walter and others have observed, memory in the Roman Republic was intrinsically linked with the gentes, who actively produced, reproduced and manipulated perceptions of the past. These diverse, competing and sometimes conflicting images existed next to each other, with no undisputed authority that could define ‘the’ cultural memory that would serve as ‘the’ basis for ‘the’ mos maiorum or identity. Assmann’s model leaves no room for this complexity and is thus too static to describe the dynamic nature of Roman memory culture.

1.2 Memory and theory in ancient Rome

Although memoria was as important as it was ubiquitous in Rome, we have observed that modern theories seem hardly suitable to analyze the specific context of Republican aristocratic culture. In what appears to be a lack of modern research tools, it may help to look more closely at ancient ideas and practices themselves. Philosophers and rhetoricians from Plato onwards have debated the working and purpose of memory. In the Greek tradition, most notably in Plato’s Theaetetus and Aristotle’s de Memoria et Reminiscentia, memory (mnêmê) is presented as a dialectical process, in which images are imprinted on the soul and, in a later stage, recollected. This remembrance serves as a connection between body and soul, which secures knowledge or – in Plato’s case – recovers some of the absolute truth and Forms that are buried in the soul.

Both Plato and Aristotle object to a rhetorical use of memory: the rote-learning of arguments would deprive the students of real knowledge, and fill them with only the ‘conceit of wisdom’. Nonetheless, it is precisely this correlation between memory and oratory that is the most well-known and well-studied aspect of the ancient memory discourse. The ars memoriae was, as part of the aristocratic educational programme, fully developed in Roman rhetorical training and literature of the first centuries BC and AD. Cicero introduces us – although he probably did not invent it – to a mental system that combines space (places or loci) with content. In his de Oratore, he elucidates the legendary origins of the system, which are traced back to the story of Simonides of Ceos. The poor man was a guest in a dinner party, when the ceiling collapsed and everyone but he died. By remembering the order of the rooms, and the places where the guests had been seated, Simonides was able to identify all the victims. This explains the technique: memorable objects are

30 Cic. De or. 2.86.351-54.
placed against the background of an imagined location, with different rooms representing different things to remember. The way one can walk through the ‘memory house’ explicates the order of the arguments. The anonymous work Rhetorica ad Herennium (long thought to be a work of Cicero) offers further detail and is especially clear about the kind of images that the orator should keep in his imaginary rooms: they are supposed to be vivid and have a dramatic quality that makes them easy to remember. The anonymous work Rhetorica ad Herennium (long thought to be a work of Cicero) offers further detail and is especially clear about the kind of images that the orator should keep in his imaginary rooms: they are supposed to be vivid and have a dramatic quality that makes them easy to remember.31 The *ars memoriae* inspired medieval and renaissance writers – mainly through the influential work of Quintilian – and has, to this day, not lost its appeal.32 Although *memoria* was clearly of concern to both Greek and Roman writers, the discourse on rhetorical proficiency seems to have little to do with modern theories on cultural memory that have been analysed earlier in this introductory chapter. Does that mean that the connection between memory and identity, often proclaimed universal by the abovementioned theorists, was not acknowledged in Roman literature? The encyclopedist Varro, who in the first century BC offers an explanation of the verb *meminisse* (‘to remember’) in his *de Lingua Latina*, suggests otherwise:

*Meminisse*, ‘to remember,’ from *memoria* ‘memory,’ when there is again a motion toward that which *remansit* ‘has remained’ in the *mens* ‘mind’; and this may have been derived from *manere* ‘to remain’, like *manimoria*. Therefore the Salii, when they sing “O Mamurius Veturius”, indicate a *memoria vetus* ‘memory of olden times’. From the same word comes *monere* ‘to remind,’ because he who *monet* ‘reminds’ is just like a memory. So also the *monimenta* ‘memorials’ which are on tombs, and in fact alongside the highway, that they may *admonere* ‘admonish’ the passersby that they themselves were mortal and that the readers are too. From this, the other things that are written and done to preserve their *memoria* ‘memory’ are called *monimenta* ‘monuments’.33

The last part of the definition is particularly revealing. Varro emphasizes the correlation between monumental spaces and memory; in a funerary context that is meant to remind people of their own

---

31 Rhet.Her. 3.22.
32 Quin. *Institutio oratoria*. Modern appreciation of ancient mnemonic techniques can be observed in Yates (1966) and the recent and very successful Foer (2011).
33 Varr. L.L. 6.49: Meminisse a memoria, quom <in> id quod remansit in mente rursus movetur; quae a manendo ut manimoria potest esse dicta. Itaque Salii quod cantant: "Mamuri Veturius"significant memoriam veterem. Ab eodem monere, quod is qui monet, proinde ac sit memoria; sic monimenta quae in sepulcris, et ideo secundum viam, quo praeteruntis admoente et se suisse et illos esse mortalis. Ab eo cetera quae scripta ac facta memoriae causa monimenta dica. The translation is slightly adapted from that of Ronald Kent, editor of the Loeb edition, who observes that *meminisse*, *mens*, *monere* and *monimentum* (or *monumentum*) are from the same root. Varro’s other etymological connections (notably *manere*) are probably wrong.
mortality, but also recalls the lives and deeds of the deceased. From grammarians and philosophers like Festus and Porphyry it is clear that anything that was intended to call to mind (monere) the memory of a person or event could reasonably be called a *monumentum*.\(^{34}\) Literary works, already mentioned in Varro’s definition, were no exception. Livy, for example, uses *monumentum* several times in reference to literary achievements (like his own), as does Horace, who famously claims to have ‘constructed a memorial more lasting than bronze’.\(^{35}\) The expressions *memoria* and *meminisse* were used for a similarly broad range of categories: buildings, statues, locations, persons, archives and books could all be referred to as manifestations of memory.\(^{36}\)

The Roman discourse on memory was not limited to things that could contain or represent memory. Authors also reflected on the process of remembering itself. Cicero, apart from describing its rhetorical function, presents *memoria* as part of *prudentia* (wisdom), itself part of *virtus*, which he rather curiously defines as ‘a habit of mind in harmony with reason and the order of nature’.\(^{37}\) This quality is particularly associated with the aristocratic class, because ‘the memory of distinguished men who have served the Republic well, even though they be dead, is important for us’.\(^{38}\) The past has authority and remembering notable events and exemplary behaviour was seen as central to Roman aristocratic self-presentation and identity.\(^{39}\) The *gentes* devoted great attention to the display of their famous lineage, which could be articulated – and put to political use – by erecting honorary statues, issuing coins or organizing *ludi* and *munera*. Perhaps the most illustrious and visible aspect of the aristocratic memory culture was the *pompa funebris*, the funerary procession. Here, the mourning family walking in a street procession was accompanied by *imagines* (wax masks) of their ancestors and although there is much debate on the function and appearance of the portraits, it seems clear that the ancestors were carried along as if they were present.\(^{40}\) The link between past and present was made even more explicit by the funeral oration, which put the

---

\(^{34}\) Porph. *ad Hor. Carm.* 1. 2. 15: *monumentum non sepulchrum tantum dicitur, sed omne quicquid memoriam testatur,* cf. Dig. I 1.7.2.6 (Ulpian): *monumentum est quod memoriae servandae gratia extistat* (‘a monument is what exists for the purposes of preserving the memory’); Festus I23 L: *monumentum est quod et mortui causa aedificatum est et quicquid ob memoriam alcius factum est, ut fana, porticus, scripta et carmina* (‘a monument is both what is built for the sake of a deceased person and whatever is made for the sake of someone’s memory, like shrines, porticos, writings and poems’). Meadows and Williams (2001) 41-42, Walter (2004) 32-33

\(^{35}\) Liv. *Praef.* 10; 6.1.2; 38.57.8; Hor. *Car.* 3.30.1: *Exegi monumentum aere perennius*[…]

\(^{36}\) Buildings: Cic. *Sest.* 26; Locations: Plin. *H.N.* 3.34; Books: Gell.6.1; People: [Cic.] In Sall.21; Archives: Cic.*leg.* 3.46; Cael.78; Mil.73; Grave inscriptions: Cic. *Leg.agr.* 1.5. The list is far from complete, for additional examples see: Walter (2004) 26 ff.


\(^{38}\) Cic. *Sest.* 15: *Valet apud nos clarorum hominum et bene de re publica meritorum memoria, etiam mortuorum.*

\(^{39}\) Gowing (2005) 23.

\(^{40}\) No ancestor masks survive from the Roman period, but there is epigraphic, literary and legal evidence. Flower (1996) has studied the phenomenon especially convincing.
deceased in line with his famous relatives.\textsuperscript{41} For the broad mass of Roman citizens, with little or no access to literary documentation, this was probably the most direct confrontation with history and memory.\textsuperscript{42}

Again, it should be emphasized that the images the gentes promoted of their past were neither neutral nor uncontroversial. Remembering was an active process that had its justification and purpose in the present.\textsuperscript{43} The historian Sallust (86–35BC) is very clear about this in his bellum Iugurthinum:

I have often heard that Quintus Maximus, Publius Scipio, and many other illustrious men of our country, were accustomed to observe, that, when they looked on the images of their ancestors, they felt their minds irresistibly excited to the pursuit of honour. Not, certainly, that the wax, or the shape, had any such influence; but, as they called to mind their forefathers' achievements, such a flame was kindled in the breasts of those eminent persons, as could not be extinguished till their own merit had equalled the fame and glory of their ancestors.\textsuperscript{44}

In other words, memory equips Romans with the capacity to make sense of the present, to imitate the accomplishments of their ancestors (imitatio) and – preferably – to exceed those achievements (aemulatio).\textsuperscript{45} We find many comments of a similar nature in Roman literature, and it is noteworthy that the authors often present their own work as an active display of memory, meant to provide guidance and inspiration.\textsuperscript{46} In this way, a book, a statue or an ancestor mask was more than a souvenir of a long forgotten past: it was part of the social reality and active communication of everyday life. Memory could create unity, but was also – probably more often, in Republican Rome –

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42} Flower (1996) 127.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Walter (2002) 326-339.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Sal. Iug. 4.6: \textit{Nam saepe ego audivi Q. Maximum, P. Scipionem, praeterea civitatis nostrae praecarios viros solitos ita dicere, cum maiorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissime sibi animum ad virtutem accendi. Scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere, sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flamam egregiis viris in pectore crescere neque prius sedari, quam virtus eorum famam atque gloriam aedaquauerit.} Quintus Maximus: Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus Cunctator (ca. 280 BC – 203 BC), famous politician and general; Publius Scipio: Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus (236–183 BC), famous for defeating Hannibal.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Gowing (2005) 23. Academic discussion on imitatio and aemulatio is extensive, especially in studies of Graeco-Roman sculpture and literature. See for an introduction: Gazda (2002).
\item \textsuperscript{46} Livy's use of exempla is well known: Liv. Praef. 10-11: \textit{[...]} omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias. ([... that you see, set in the clear light of historical truth, examples of every possible type. From these you may select for yourself and your country what to imitate.']) Cf: Jaeger (1997) 15-29, Chaplin (2000). Similar comments: Nep. Hann. 8.2; Liv. 21.28.5; Cic. Mur. 16; Cic. Sull. 27; Liv. 8.18.12; Phil. 13.26; Liv. 6.1.2. Plin. NH 6.32.8; Gell. 6.19.8.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the focus of *aemulatio*, a striving for excellence that could lead to rivalry and tension. ‘Tradition’, as Andrew Wallace-Hadrill puts it even more cynically, ‘is an instrument of dominance of old over young, insider over outsider, male over female’. 47

1.3 Communicative memory: a different perspective

As this introduction shows, the Roman discourse on forms and functions of memory is extensive. It is not limited to abstract theorization, but provides us with insights into a society in which the articulation of past events was an integrated part of everyday communication. Authors like Livy and Cicero clearly recognize a link between memorial culture and the social position of an individual or family. In studying this phenomenon, we owe thanks to the instigators of memory studies like Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora and Jan Assmann, because they opened our eyes to the way shared perceptions of the past shape and define identity. Still, before we come to a point of departure for this thesis, two important observations have to be made. First, as has been emphasized before, it would be incorrect to describe memory in the Roman Republic as ‘collective’ or ‘communal’. Although it is in my opinion valid to describe religious traditions as ‘the story they tell themselves about themselves’, we always have to ask ourselves whose story we are actually talking about. Memory in Republican Rome was always group specific and therefore pluralistic: different parts of history were accentuated by different groups of people, at different moments in time and in different social circumstances. Second, the dichotomy between communicative and cultural memory – particularly important in the theory of Jan Assmann – cannot be upheld in the Roman case. Here, literary representations of the past stood in direct contact with other forms of memorial culture, like statues, inscriptions, rituals or shrines. There was not one group of experts who had the authority to decide which elements had collective significance and consequently it makes no sense to look for a moment in which certain representations were somehow ‘elevated’ from every day communication.

During the Principate, this situation changes, and the power to decide what was being remembered and on what occasion increasingly shifted from a variety of aristocratic *gentes* to the much smaller circles of the emperor and the imperial court. In these circles – the Augustan poets of the early first century AD are probably our best example – we may certainly recognize the experts of memory mentioned by Assmann: people who had the ability to promote certain memories and who actively tried to place them into a collectively shared framework, while other memories were

consciously forgotten. For example, in the quick proliferation of Roman *farti* (inscribed calendars) across Italy in the first century AD, we can identify a distinctively Julio-Claudian version of the Roman past, in which traditional Republican festivals were combined with Julio-Claudian achievements of the more recent past. While we must not mistake this for one-way memory politics or plain propaganda (local appropriations of the Roman-Augustan past likely played a part in the construction of calendars as well), the concentration of power in the early Principate did create ample opportunities to form a collective past centred around the imperial court, to replace or rather transform a compartmentalized aristocratic past. In this way, some memorial practices in the Principate resemble the creation of cultural memory as it was described by Assmann, and the analysis in the individual chapters to come will show that – in some cases – this centralization of memory culture had an effect on the perception of Latin cults as well.

Nevertheless, I have decided to study narratives, images and other representations of the Latin gods as forms of communicative memory. In light of the previous discussion, this might seem surprising, but in my view an emphasis on the communicative aspect of memory – or: on the activity of remembering itself instead of on fixed memories as the results of that process – is best suited for the dynamic, diverse and often competitive allusions to the past in the Roman Republic, in which most of the narratives on and representations of the Latin gods took shape. There is no reason to assume that in the Principate and later in the Empire, the religious memories of the Latin past had turned into fixed reference points that were distanced from everyday communications. New groups – whether they were linked to the emperor or not – laid fresh claims on the Latin past and these claims stood in direct contact with contemporary and earlier claims. The Latin past of the cults of the Alban hills, in other words, could change shape and meaning under different circumstances.

Communicative memory as I use it, is thus disconnected from the strict meaning that Assmann assigned to it: I explicitly do not consider communicative memory as a preliminary stage to cultural memory, but as a valuable instrument of analysis in its own respect. With the term I refer to discourses on the nature and history of Latin cults – brought forward in different media – which affected contemporary social and political communication but also shaped memories that were passed down over the generations. Consequently, I am not so much interested in the *res gestae*, the ‘facts’ or events themselves, but in the *memoria rerum gestarum* - the way these stories were

remembered or ‘got into the heads’ of the Romans. In my discussion of three Latin cults, I will try to distinguish individual and group memories and the reflection of them in different media, thereby avoiding the terminological confusion that surrounds the cultural historical category of memory as a whole. Only when the analysis is strongly concentrated on specific cases, and memory is conceived as the product of acting and communicating individuals, can its role in the formation of identity be recognized and understood.

So, by concentrating on the active communication of group specific memories, we can attempt to do justice to the plural and dynamic nature of Roman society. However, if we shift our attention to the media that transmit these memories, we encounter a new difficulty. At first sight, texts, coins and statues present a very direct link with the individuals or groups that produced them. At least, these materials seem to offer a certain historical sensation, showing that the remote past really did take place, and that people living in it expressed their opinions and feelings in a way that we can still understand. As numerous studies have shown however, media are in no way neutral transmitters of (memory-relevant) information. Every medium – or, in our case: source – has its own possibilities and limitations in providing information about the cults we want to know more about. Epigraphic texts, for example, are defined by the limited amount of space available to the issuer. Literary sources are affected by conventions of genre; statues by aesthetic standards, Greek examples or other conventions. In short, a medium does not only reveal messages, but also channels, classifies and reproduces them. Or, to refer to (yet another) platitude: the medium is the message.

In studying the perception of the cults of the Alban hills, we have to acknowledge that, although various senders, media and messages together form a culture of memory, not every medium has the same potential for commemoration. This creates a structure that is potentially very confusing: on the one hand a cultural historical study of memory needs a broad definition of media, which accommodates different types of communication and varying groups of producers and receivers of information. On the other hand, this broad definition can obscure any concrete and useful analysis of how media actually work. In the next part of my introduction, I will pay attention to the different (written and material) sources that form the basis of my thesis and to their possibilities and limitations.

1.4 Necessary contextualization

As has been remarked above, in confronting the diverse discourses about Latin cults in Roman sources, we must also consider the characteristics of the media involved. Although the different

---

53 The famous phrase is from: MacLuhan (1964) 8.
messages brought forward by text, image and ritual together form a framework for religious memory, it would be mistaken to try to reconstruct one central perception of a god and its cult. Encountering a god in a temple was not the same as encountering a god in a book or a poem. Consequently, every discourse about a god or cult has to be contextualized, and genre-conventions and –priorities have to be taken into account. This does not make one message more believable or ‘real’ than the other. In his famous essay ‘Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?’, Paul Veyne reflected upon what he calls ‘balkanisation des cerveaux’, or brain-balkanization: the capacity of educated Greeks and Romans to entertain different kinds of appreciation and criteria of judgment in different contexts, in ways that strike the modern observer as mutually contradictory.54 Denis Feeney, following Veyne’s analysis, stresses that this lack of an over-arching integrating system does not mean that we are left with a set of fragmented and unrelated messages:

The co-existence of genres of belief does not prove their impotence, but is rather the very condition that makes meaning possible. Meaning is produced by dialogue, at every level, and the search for a single monolithic meaning system can only proceed at the expense of smothering this ubiquitous dialogic activity.55

Veyne and Feeney participate in an ongoing debate on the contextual nature of polytheistic belief-systems, in which the work of Henk Versnel on ‘Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion’ had a profound influence as well.56 Much more can be said about this very rich discussion, but the limited scope of this introduction leaves room only for a few introductory remarks. For our purpose, it is important to realize that the literary, epigraphic, iconographic and archaeological evidence that provides us with information on the Latin cults has to be assessed within its own context. We cannot simply isolate a certain detail or a phrase from a literary work, without considering the aims and conventions of the genre involved. Likewise, statues may provide information about the iconography of gods, but an assessment of the imagery cannot be complete without taking into account both the aesthetic notions of the time of production and the religious function of statues as objects of cult.

54 Veyne (1983).
It has more than once been observed that combining literary and material sources does not necessarily result in a coherent and comprehensive image of a deity. Therefore, it must be emphasized that this dissertation does not intend to smooth out possible discrepancies. Instead, the focus will be on the interaction between different messages in different media; or, in the terminology of Feeney, on the dialogue between various genres of belief. In the coming chapters there is not always room to contextualize the sources used and separate the medium from the message; therefore this introduction will shed light on some methodological issues regarding the sources used in this thesis and the religious past they (re)present.

1.5 Livy and the danger of *neglegentia*

Notwithstanding the deliberate and desired application of different types of sources for the reconstruction of religious memory, our analysis of the history of Latin cults inevitably draws heavily on the literary sources. For most periods in the history of the Roman Republic Livy’s *Ab Urbe Condita* (27 – 25 BC) is our principal (and sometimes only) informant, but the work of authors like Cicero (106 – 43 BC) and Ovid (43 BC – 17/18 AD) has also shaped ancient and modern interpretations of Latin cults. Studying these presents a difficulty that seems banal but is nevertheless crucially important to acknowledge: Roman interference with the towns and cults of Latium was described and explained in a time when it had been a reality for decades, or even centuries. Consequently, *Ab Urbe Condita* is – like other works of the late Republic and early Principate – not only a description of historical episodes, but also (or: chiefly) a rationalization, justification and interpretation of those events in the light of later military, political and religious developments. Of course, the works now lost to us that preceded and influenced Livy, were just as much coloured by the preoccupations of their own time. For the ancient historian who wants to study the historical ‘core’ of the incorporation of the Latin cults of the Alban hills, trying to untangle this knot of interpretation can be frustratingly hard – if it is possible at all. As stressed before, my own interest is not so much in reconstructing the moment of incorporation, but on the memory and representation of that process and on later stages of Roman involvement in the cults. In other words, it is the layers of interpretation layers themselves that are at the centre of my analysis.

---

58 For Cicero, see the following section (pages 19ff) of this introduction.
The dominant influence of Livy (59 BC – 17 AD) on the historiographical discourse of the Roman Republic has been mentioned already, and will be confirmed in all chapters of this study.\(^{62}\) *Ab Urbe Condita* is our primary source for the conflicts with, and Roman conquest of the Alban hills. It is however important to observe that Livy’s work marks not the beginning but - in a sense - the end of a tradition. The author uses the same methods as the annalists that paved the way before him – such as Fabius Pictor, Postumus Albinus and Cato the Elder – and drew extensively on their works.\(^{63}\) These early works of history fell into oblivion for the most part, due to the astounding success of Livy’s own work. The scarce remains that we are left with offer too little information to reconstruct the structure of their arguments, but the frequent references to prodigies and religious holidays in the fragments seems to suggest that religion was an important focal point for the annalists - as it was for Livy.\(^{64}\)

Modern scholarship has more than once labeled Livy’s own attitude towards religion as ambivalent.\(^{65}\) On the one hand, he is often sceptical when it comes to wondrous signs of the gods or unbelievable legends; he repeatedly identifies these stories as forms of superstitio.\(^{66}\) On the other hand, he takes a great interest in the recording and conservation of traditional religious rites and festivals. Despite his own reservations, he shows himself reluctant to dismiss stories that his Roman ancestors with their great pietas did find worthy to record:

As I write of antiquity, not only does my own mind become in some way or other old-fashioned, but also a certain religious feeling (religio) keeps me from regarding those matters which the wisest men of former times decided required action from the part of the state as something unworthy to be reported in my History.\(^{67}\)

Thus, Livy frequently refers to the Roman dominance of the Mediterranean as a result of divine inspiration and approval, while at the same time characterizing narratives about direct divine intervention as fairy tales. The deeds and responsibilities of men receive his primary attention: the

---

\(^{62}\) The limited scope of this thesis leaves no room to discuss Livy’s writings in full, so I will confine myself to his standpoint on religion here. For further analysis of the author’s methods, I gladly refer to one of the excellent monographs that have appeared in the last two decades: Moles (1993) 141-168, Levene (1993), Miles (1995), Jaeger (1997), Forsythe (1999), Chaplin (2000).


\(^{64}\) Levene (1993) 16-30.


\(^{66}\) For example, when all sorts of strange rites spring up during a disastrous plague in Rome in 327 BC: 4.30.9-10. When in 213 BC., during the second Punic War, Rome is affected by a sudden increase in 'superstitious fears', Livy sees this as a danger to traditional religion: 25.1.6-7.

\(^{67}\) Liv. 43.13: *Ceterum et mihi vetustas res scribenti nescio quo pacto antiquus fit animus, et quaedam religio tenet, quae illi prudentissimi viri publice suscipienda censuerint, ea pro dignis habere, quae in meos annales referam.*
approval of the gods has an influence on the outcome of wars and political events, but only in an abstract way.\textsuperscript{68}

\textit{Ab Urbe Condita} is saturated with the notion of moral decline, and Livy’s description of the religious history of Rome is perhaps the most significant illustration of that idea. The latter part of the work is now lost, so we can only guess how deplorable the city of Rome had eventually become in Livy’s eyes.\textsuperscript{69} Still, from the pessimistic tone of the \textit{praefatio} we can understand that the decline was evident right from the beginnings of Roman history.\textsuperscript{70} After a relatively short period of glory, the signs of deterioration manifested themselves in every aspect of society, perhaps most notably in religion.\textsuperscript{71} Livy does not describe a healthy religious system that is working. The taking of the auspices was, just like the meticulous execution of archaic rituals, part of a world that no longer existed - or at least one that was nearly gone. With the \textit{neglegentia} of the gods, moral decline was inevitable. In the end, religion, past and contemporary society are so much intertwined that it is impossible to distinguish religious elements from the rest of Livy’s argument, as D.S. Levene has convincingly shown.\textsuperscript{72}

With his famous use of \textit{exempla}, Livy repeatedly holds a mirror to his audience, especially when it comes to respect for the gods. Marcus Furius Camillus, who in book five safeguarded the relics of Rome and added many gods to the pantheon of the city, is perhaps the best example.\textsuperscript{73} If the many studies of his work have made one thing clear, than it must be that Livy describes and reconstructs Roman religious history at the same time. While he calls into memory the \textit{pietas} and

\textsuperscript{68} Levene (1993) 25-29.
\textsuperscript{69} Livy’s relationship with Augustus and his attitude towards Augustus’ ‘restoration’ of the Republic is the subject of much debate. The chronology of the work remains obscure but it is important to realize that during the composition of – at least some of – \textit{Ab Urbe Condita} (the first books were written somewhere in the early 20’s BC) Augustus’ power base was not firmly established yet and his ideological program was yet to be fully developed. There is no evidence for a close relationship and Augustus’ and Livy’s interest in \textit{exempla} from the Republican seems parallel rather than mutually influential (Cf. Chaplin (2000) 168-196). Livy’s vision in later books does not challenge Augustus’ authority, and indeed it is conceivable that Livy’s patriotic tenor will have appealed to the princeps, but there is nothing in AUC that proclaims explicit support either. Important contributions to the debate include: Syme (1959) 87, Badian (1993) 3-38, Kraus and Woodman (1997) 70-74, Sailor (2007) 329-388.
\textsuperscript{70} Liv. Praef. 9: [...] labente deinde paulatim disciplina velut desidentis primo mores sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint, tum ire coeperint praeceptes, donec ad haec tempora quibus nec vitia nostra nec remedia pati possimus perversum est. (‘[...] then let him note how, with the gradual relaxation of discipline, morals first gave way, as it were, then sank lower and lower, and finally began the downward plunge which has brought us to the present time, when we can endure neither our vices nor their cure.’)
\textsuperscript{71} Chaplin (2000) 87 ff.
\textsuperscript{72} Levene (1993).
\textsuperscript{73} Livy’s use of \textit{exempla} is extensively studied by J.D. Chaplin. Her innovative approach does not only consider historical characters to be \textit{exempla}, but also moral concepts and practical events: in short, everything that can be learned from. Chaplin (2000), on Camillus: 86-89 and 207. On \textit{Ab Urbe Condita} book 5, where the religious position of Camillus is most clearly noted: Kraus (1994) 290.
glory of Rome’s religious past, he simultaneously creates a framework of moral reference for Romans of his own day.

1.6 Cicero and scepticism

*Ab Urbe Condita* may be our most important source for the early history of the Latin cults in the Alban hills, it is certainly not the earliest source that reflects on Roman religious history. In many cases, our most direct link with the Republican past is presented by the work of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC – 43 BC), who was acutely aware that he was writing in and about a system that was falling to pieces.\(^74\) Although the religious history of Rome is not Cicero’s focal point, a lot of information on Roman gods and religious practices can be extracted from his letters, orations, and philosophical treatises. In general, there is a sense of decline in his work, and in several instances he links his concern for the Republic with a concern for the loss of manners, memory and religion.\(^75\) In his later works Cicero often presents himself as a philosopher, and most of his accounts and opinions on religion have to be set against that background. In his treatise *De Natura Deorum*, Cicero introduces himself as a teacher and therefore abstains from imposing his own opinion:

Those however who seek to learn my personal opinion on the various questions show an unreasonable degree of curiosity. In discussion it is not so much weight of authority as force of argument that should be demanded. Indeed the authority of those who profess to teach is often a positive hindrance to those who desire to learn; they cease to employ their judgement, and take what they perceive to be the verdict of their chosen master as settling the question.\(^76\)

\(^74\) Gowing (2005) 3.

\(^75\) For example: Cic. *Rep*. 5.2: *Nostra vero aetas cum rem publicam sicut picturam accepisset egregiam, sed iam evanescentem vetustate, non modo eam coloribus eisdem, quibus fuerat, renovare neglecevit, sed ne id quidem curavit, ut formam saltem eius et extrema tamquam liniamenta servaret. Quid enim manet ex antiquis moribus, quibus ille dixit rem stare Romanam? Quos ita oblivione obsoletos videmus, ut non modo non colantur, sed iam ignorantur.* (‘But our age, on the contrary, having received the Republic as a finished picture of another century, but one already beginning to fade through the lapse of years, has not only neglected to renew the colors of the original painting, but has not even cared to preserve its general form and prominent lineaments. For what now remains of those antique manners, of which the poet [Ennius] said that our Commonwealth consisted? They have now become so obsolete and forgotten that they are not only not cultivated, but they are not even known’).

\(^76\) Cic. *Nat.* D. 1.10: *Qui autem requirunt quid quaque de re ipsi sentiamus, curiosius id faciunt quam necesse est; non enim tam auctoritatibus in disputando quam rationis momenta quaerenda sunt. Quin etiam obst plerumque iis qui discere volunt auctoritas eorum qui se doceire profitentur; desinunt enim suum iudicium adhibere, id habent ration quod ab eo quem probat iudicatum vident.*
This hesitation in expressing a judgment is also observable in the rest of the work: in the classical form of a dialogue, Cicero displays his knowledge and informs his readers on the three dominant philosophical schools of his time: the Stoic, the Epicurean and the Academic. Their positions on belief systems and gods are assessed judiciously, so much that Cicero’s own opinion is hard – if not impossible – to discern. Several modern authors have identified the opinion of the author with the Academic scepticism of one of his debaters, Aurelius Cotta. They argue that the later Cicero, perhaps because of all the personal and political mishaps in his life, had turned from the strong believer we see in several of his early orations into a skeptic; a process of which his philosophical treatise on divination would also testify.

There are several reasons to question this assertion. To begin with, in the introduction of De Natura Deorum, in the first person that seems to mark his own words, Cicero states that he considers the decline of religion a genuine danger for the res publica:

Piety however, like the rest of the virtues, cannot exist in mere outward show and pretence; and without piety, reverence and religion must likewise disappear. And when these are gone, life soon becomes a welter of disorder and confusion; and in all probability the disappearance of piety towards the gods will entail the disappearance of loyalty and social union among men as well, and of justice itself, the queen of all the virtues.

There are similar comments in Cicero’s other philosophical works, where approval for ancient cults and traditions is expressed by the same speakers that declare the severest doubt on the existence of the gods and the immortality of the soul. In the case of Cotta, there seems to be a tension between his role as a pontifex, a representative of Roman state religion, and his critical stance on the nature of the gods. Likewise, Cicero’s position as augur seems hardly compatible with his denunciation of the principles of augury as a character in De Divinatione. The list of ambiguities continues, for example if we examine Cicero’s attitude towards deification. In several speeches he praises the divine qualities and honours of human beings (for example Pompey), but at the same time, again

78 Explicit support for Roman state religion is for example to be found in: Att. 1.16.6; Cat. 2.13.29; Sull. 14.40; Leg. 2.13; 32-33. Cicero’s ‘shift’ from piety to skepticism is suggested by Linderski (1982) 212, Momigliano (1984b) 211.
79 Cic. Nat. D. 1. 3-4: In specie autem fictae simulationis sicut reliquae virtutes item pietas inesse non potest; cum qua simul sanctitatem et religionem tolli necesse est, quibus sublatis perturbatio vitae sequitur et magna confusio; atque haut sco an pietate adversus deos sublata fides etiam et societas generis humani et una excellentissima virtus iustitia tollatur.
80 For example: Cic. Nat. D. 3.2.5; Div. 2.33.70.
81 Cic. Div. 2.27. 58; 2.68.20.
mainly in his philosophical works, he seems very critical of the matter.\textsuperscript{82} It is especially remarkable how the aged author, in his letters to Atticus appears to be obsessed with building not a tomb but a shrine (\textit{fanum}) for his beloved daughter Tullia, so that ‘posterity shall respect its sanctity’.\textsuperscript{83} For the later, allegedly sceptical, Cicero this seems a very curious emotion.

It is tempting to interpret this ambiguity as a direct outcome of Cicero’s changed personality but in my opinion, this interpretation would neglect an aspect that was mentioned earlier: the need to take the context and genre into account when trying to interpret a religious message. Cicero, perhaps more than anyone in his time, had the knowledge and ability to employ the conventions of different literary genres to every possible extent, in order to enhance the rhetorical power of his works.\textsuperscript{84} In his philosophical treaties he demonstrates his extensive knowledge of a Greek tradition and is at the same time able to apply that tradition to a Roman context. Because he was so very aware of genre conventions, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct what Cicero actually thought or practiced. If anything, his work is a fine example of how sophisticated the ‘balkanization’ of different religious sentiments was in the late Republic. Religion, as an activity and a practice, had become the subject of philosophical discourse as well.\textsuperscript{85}

### 1.7 Varro and the antiquarians

The antiquarian and grammarian Marcus Terentius Varro (116 – 27 BC), is not quoted directly in this thesis very often. Still, his output was so vast and influential that his historical investigations penetrate our evidence in many ways and a brief reflection on his person and the genre is in place. Varro’s influence has been recognized in many works of varying genres, from Roman poetry (e.g. in Ovid’s \textit{Fasti}) to history (e.g. in Plutarchus’ \textit{Antiquitates Romanae}) to grammatical and linguistic works (e.g. in Aulus Gellius’ \textit{Noctes Atticae}).\textsuperscript{86} More directly, Varro’s studies formed a great stimulus for the genre of antiquarian literature itself, as is clear from the lexicons of Verrius Flaccus and Festus, which successively became important sources of historical information in their own respect (for authors like Pliny, for example).\textsuperscript{87} While historians like Livy provide the narrative framework


\textsuperscript{83} Cic. Att. 12.36: [..] ut posteritas habeat religionem. Other references to the \textit{fanum}: Att. 12.12.1; 12.23.3; 12.23.4; 12.25.1; 12.29.2; 12.35; 12.36; 12.40.4; 12.41.2; 12.43; 12.53.2; 13.1.2; 13.6.1-3; 13.29.2; 13.31.4.

\textsuperscript{84} Beard (1986) 36-40, Bleich-Schade (1996) 188 ff.


\textsuperscript{86} For an overview and further bibliography, see: Cornell (1995) 19-23.

\textsuperscript{87} For the dominance of Varro in the work of Verrius Flaccus and Festus, see: Glinister (2007) 11-32, North (2007) 49-68, who argue that Varro’s work was used much more than Festus and Verrius Flaccus are willing to admit, because both authors quote Varro’s sources, while (deliberately?) ignoring Varro’s own work. For the later influence of this tradition, for example in the work of Pliny: Grandazzi (1991) 101-123.
surrounding the cults in the Alban hills, the antiquarians give us an idea of what these narratives could be based on. The compilations are far from a collection of facts to our standards, but they were seen as factual information by Roman sources. As such, antiquarians give us an idea of the intrinsic multiplicity of Roman historical narratives, because for almost every investigation of an historical phenomenon they provide several – and often competing – explanations.

As a near contemporary of Cicero, Varro suffered an almost opposite fate. Although the author himself made it through the turbulence of his time unharmed and – after fighting for Pompey, being pardoned by Caesar and proscribed by Anthony - managed to spend the second half of his life writing under the protection of Augustus, most of the results of his labour are now lost to us. Varro’s vast oeuvre is estimated to have consisted of about 420 works, of which we know 55 titles and of which only a fraction has survived: the three books of De Re Rustica and six of the 25 books of De Língua Latina. His impact was all-pervasive and – paradoxically – the reproduction of so many of his detailed studies in other works could have contributed to the fact that his own works survived so poorly. In the words of Nicholas Horsfall, Varro has perished by absorption.

For our understanding of Roman religion, the almost complete loss of his sixteen books on Roman religion, the Antiquitates rerum divinarum, is particularly regrettable. These studies were part of a larger work on Roman traditions, which also contained twenty-five books on res humanae. In contrary to the latter, bits and pieces of his studies on res divinae have survived thanks to the quotations in Augustine’s De Civitate Dei, who was paradoxically also his biggest critic. His selection is particularly problematic, because Augustine clearly aims at proving Varro wrong and showing the contradictions in Roman religion – or polytheistic state religion in general. It is thus not always clear how and if we can separate these fragments from their early Christian context: we must unavoidably look at Varro through the mirror of Augustine. Still, Varro’s antiquarian investigations have had such a profound influence on Roman discourse on religious matters and on modern studies of Roman religion, that it is useful to take a further look at the way he defines and explains the religious traditions of his time. Much like Livy a few decades later, Varro sees himself confronted with a society that is rapidly changing and sets out to preserve some of the religious heritage that is at risk of disappearing. After lamenting that such

---

88 For a discussion of Cicero’s and Varro’s lives, careers and relations, see: Wiseman (2009) 107-130.
91 See, for example, the introduction to the second paragraph of book six: August. De civ. D. 6.2: Quid Varronem de dis gentium sensisse credendum sit, quorum talis et genera et sacra detexit, ut reverentius cum eis ageret, si de illis omnino reticeret (‘What we must suppose was Varro’s view of the gods, whose nature and rites he disclosed in such a way that it would have been more reverent to have kept altogether silent about them’).
a learned man wrote about so many things worthy of ridicule and scorn, Augustine quotes what seems to be a programmatic passage from Varro’s introduction:

... But in fact he [Varro] worshipped the gods and considered their worship so necessary that he says in this very work that he was alarmed for fear they would perish, not by an enemy’s invasion, but by the neglect of his fellow citizens. He says that in rescuing them from this downfall, and in storing and preserving them in the memory of good citizens by writing such books, he is performing a service more essential than the much renowned deeds of Metellus, who rescued the holy appurtenances of Vesta from the fire, and of Aeneas, who saved the Penates from the fall of Troy.\(^\text{94}\)

Varro’s conservation efforts took the form of a meticulous compilation of religious information. He assembled, categorized and explained long lists of gods and their spheres of influence, but also classified principal religious institutions like priesthhoods, rites, festivals, altars and temples. His erudition was illustrious and although similar antiquarian works appeared both before and after his Antiquitates, none of their authors displayed the same omniscience and achieved such an authoritative status as Varro.\(^\text{95}\) In matters of religion, as well as in other areas of knowledge, ‘as Varro says’ became a catchphrase that could legitimize almost any claim about Roman traditions.\(^\text{96}\) Thus, while investigating and writing about the gods and their rites, Varro was as much contributing to Roman religious thought as he was commenting upon it.

The Antiquitates are, however, not only characterized by their enumerative and pragmatic description of Roman religion. It has long been observed that Varro was not interested in religious traditions for the sake of tradition alone, but that he consciously tried to relate his studies to a Greek discourse about the nature of the divine.\(^\text{97}\) In the first book, Varro analyses the different ways

\(^\text{94}\) Aug. De civ. D. 6.2 = Varro, Ant. fr. 1. 2a Cardauns: Cum vero deos eosdem ita coluerit colendosque censuerit, ut in eo ipso opere litterarum suarum dicat se timere ne percaunt, non incursu hostili, sed civium neglectentia, de qua illos velut ruina liberari a se dicit et in memoria bonorum per eius modi libros recondi atque servari utiliore cura, quam Metellus de incendio sacra Vestalia et Aeneas de Troiano excidio penates liberasse praedicatur.


people could think about religion, in a theory commonly described as the *theologia tripertita*. Varro distinguishes, again in Augustine’s words, three types of religion, practiced in different situations: ‘The mythical, which poets in particular employ, the physical, which philosophers employ and the civic, which peoples employ’. The first category is formed by what we would call Greek and Roman myths, while the second – which Varro labels physical after the Greek word for ‘nature’, *physis* – concerns all the questions which philosophers could ask about the existence, nature and character of the gods. Civic religion, finally, regards the proper worship of each individual god, by the citizens and the priests of a specific state. Varro is critical of the religion created by poets, who attribute characteristics and deeds to the gods that are unworthy and ‘against nature’, such as gods being born from heads and other body parts, or gods stealing and committing adultery. He acknowledges that civic religion shares some of those peculiarities, a suggestion that Augustine readily exploits in his attack on the deities and rites of the Roman state. Although it is hard to discern through the Augustinian filter, Varro seems most in agreement with the religion practiced by the philosophers, who offer explanations and truths that one is more likely to hear in a school than outside in the Forum.

We might recognize a discrepancy here: while Varro privileges the *theologia naturalis* and seems dissatisfied with some of the characteristics that the *theologia civilis* had developed, he nevertheless invests a lot and time and energy in describing every practical aspect of Roman religion, cataloguing his findings in books to prevent them from being forgotten. Yet, differentiating ‘Varro the philosopher’ from ‘Varro the antiquarian’ would create the same distinction that we earlier recognized as a modern rather than a Roman one. As the *theologia tripertita* acknowledges, religion could be presented, experienced and discussed in many contexts, and Varro’s scholarly curiosity is just one aspect of the process of differentiation of religion that took place in his time. It would therefore be mistaken to treat Varro’s studies as a written-down version of what cultured Romans generally knew about their religion. Even a highly educated man like Cicero felt like he had been a ‘stranger abroad and lost in his own city’, until Varro’s book explained everything there was.

---

98 Other references to this theory in: Strabo 1.2.8; Plut. Amat. 763c; Dio Chrys. Or. 12.39-47; Sext. Emp. Adv. Phys. 1.61-64, 191-192; Cic. Nat. D. 1.42-42; Rep. 1.56; Min. Fel. 18.11ff; Macr. 1.7.18. See for an overview of the terminology and classification of the different authors: Cardauns (1976) 140.


to know about matters human and divine and ‘led him home’.

102 Cicero’s reaction shows us that there was no single Roman religious system, inherently meaningful and consistent, waiting to be participated in. So, while all authors played a part in the proliferation of the narratives surrounding our Alban cults, the religious past that Varro presents is entirely different from Cicero’s philosophical discussions and also from Livy’s moral exempla.

How do these different versions of the religious past relate to memory? According to Assmann, written testimonies typically belong to the sphere of cultural memory and form fixed, highly formal and hierarchically structured representations of the past, which are elevated from everyday communications by memory specialists. While this may be the case for some of the traditions preserved in Livy, the overview of literary genres concerned with religion and religious history has shown that different (and often conflicting) narratives could exist next to each other, without an apparent hierarchy or ranking in authority. What was being remembered or emphasized about the past, was very much a question of circumstances and genres involved. Furthermore, diverse literary narratives stood in direct contact with representations of the Latin past in different (material) contexts, and although interactions between sources can be observed, it makes no sense to label the literary representations as somehow being dominant or leading in this process. Literary representations of the Latin past are thus, in my perspective, components of communicative memory rather than the outcome or result of it.

1.8 Epigraphy: filling up voids in our knowledge and uncovering new ones

In my investigation of the relationships between Rome, its citizens and the Latin sanctuaries of the Alban hills, literary sources are thus a major – in some cases the most important – source of information. Nevertheless, texts have several significant limitations as source material. They often focus on ‘great men’ in exceptional situations, or discuss the theoretical and political aspect of cults and gods. By contrast, everyday habits, basic religious institutions and the practicalities of routine rituals are only rarely mentioned. Even where we have a more thorough reflection on everyday religion, like in Ovid’s Fasti, it is hard to establish which elements were familiar to larger groups of people and which belong to the sphere of the scholar or elite members of Roman society. Apart from

102 Cic. Ac. 1.9: Tum ego, sunt, inquam, ista Varro. Nam nos in nostra urbe peregrinantis errantisque tamquam hospites tui libros quasi domum deduixerunt, ut possemus aliquando qui et ubi essumus agnoscere. Tu aetatem patriae, tu descriptiones temporum, tu sacrorum ura tu sacerdotum, tu domesticam tu bellicam disciplinam, tu sedum regionum locorum tu omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum nomina genera officia causas aperuisti. (‘Yes indeed, Varro’, I said, ‘When we were strangers abroad and lost in our own city, your books led us back home, so to speak, so that at last we were able to recognize who and where we were. You revealed the age of our native land, its divisions of time, the rules of sacrifices and priesthoods; discipline at home and at war; the locations of regions and places; and the names, types, functions and causes of all matters human and divine’). Wiseman (2009) 127-128.

103 Feeney (1998) 140.
that, it is hard to get a glimpse of municipal customs and religious practices, because many of the literary testimonies focus heavily on the largest metropoleis, in our case particularly on Rome itself.\footnote{Rives (2001) 118-136.}

In an attempt to fill these voids in our knowledge, inscriptions play a vital role. They show us a glimpse of religious life at ground level that we can get only rarely from other sources, by providing examples of the regular and recurring features of cult practice and of the texture of civic life. Three types of inscriptions will be discussed in this thesis: ‘official documents’ that refer to the regulation of the Latin cults and their commemoration on calendars – roughly summarized as leges sacrae; honorary and funerary inscriptions that mentioned (honorary) priesthoods and magistracies; and finally, as perhaps the most direct communications with the divine world, the votive dedications. In the Latin west, leges sacrae are usually very rare, but the calendars from the Italian peninsula, the so-called fasti, constitute a valuable exception to this rule. Together with the lists of consuls and triumphators that are preserved in Rome (the Fasti Consulares and Triumphales), they enhance our understanding of the cults of the Alban hills in several ways.\footnote{The calendars are transcribed and most thoroughly commented upon in Degrassi (1963) XIII.2.} The formulation of votive inscriptions, marking the consecration of a shrine, an altar, or some smaller offering to a god, is often very simple. With only the name of the god, the dedicator and sometimes an indication of the circumstances of dedication, these texts can nevertheless be quite informative in revealing the identity and background of the worshippers, as well as the identity and way of addressing the deities. In the case of honorary and funerary inscriptions, it is not only the identity of individual priests and magistrates that comes to light, but – in some cases – it also allows us to reflect on the nature of the organizational structures surrounding the cults. In this way, although the evidence will turn out to be unfortunately fragmentary for some cults, honorary and funerary inscriptions (as well as the occasional building inscription) can inform us of the way the religious practices were integrated into the civic life of Aricia, Lanuvium and the villages around the Alban mount, as well as on the many relations between the Latin cults and the city of Rome.

The epigraphic evidence frequently offers a view that is very different from the information we can retrieve from the literary material. Perhaps the most illuminating example of this – in the field of Roman religion – is the cult of Dea Dia, the goddess that was worshipped in Rome by the fratres Arvales (Arval brothers). Epigraphically, this is by far the best documented Roman cult we know of, with dozens of inscriptions describing the cultic activity, the ritual year and the names of the priests involved.\footnote{For a detailed account of the fratres Arvales and a catalogue of the inscriptions: Scheid (1990), Scheid, Tassini and Rüpke (1998).} Without these documents however, we would have known hardly anything
about the *fratres Arvales*, not even the name of the deity they worshipped. Conversely, the few things that are described in the literary material, such as an aetiological explanation of the name of the priesthood, appear in none of the inscriptions.\(^{107}\) Although the priesthood invested a lot of time and energy in record-keeping, their cultic activity was nonetheless almost entirely neglected by several generations of Roman authors. This brings us back to an earlier point: combining textual and material sources does not necessarily deliver one dominant image of a deity or a cult, nor one that answers to modern ideas of consistency.\(^{108}\) This means that we cannot simply study the inscriptions as reflections of the ‘reality’ of the Latin cults in the Alban hills, or as a way to surpass the subjectivity of the literary material. Again, we have to acknowledge the inevitable plurality of the religious messages and be sure to evaluate the epigraphic testimonies within the context of the medium itself.

As said before, dedications, *leges sacrae*, funerary and honorary inscriptions can give us an unique insight into the ‘ordinary’ passage of the ritual year and reveal groups and activities that otherwise would have remained obscure.\(^{109}\) However, in recent decades there has been a growing awareness that the epigraphic evidence passed down to us is far from a direct reflection of a society and its religious ideas. First of all, there are the conditions of conservation and preservation to consider. Only a small part of the actual number of inscriptions that once were erected has survived – possibly up to five per cent - and the uneven availability of the material is influenced by several factors.\(^{110}\) In the west, for example, we have relatively few *leges sacrae* because they were often inscribed on bronze plates – a valuable material that seldom escaped recycling. Likewise, older inscriptions have often disappeared because stones were reused in later times. The smaller the stones were – and many of our dedications must have been carved on small marble plates – the more easily they were burned in a lime-kiln.\(^{111}\) This coincidence in the loss or preservation of a document is worsened by the fact that very few inscriptions are found *in situ*, which makes it very hard to study texts in their archaeological context, as integral elements of the monuments they accompanied.\(^{112}\)

---


\(^{108}\) See pages 14-16.

\(^{109}\) An example, noted by Rives (2001) 133, shows that the religious order of the Augustales (or *severi Augustales*) appear in more than 2500 inscriptions and therefore seem a significant factor in many cities in the Roman west. However, if we had to rely on literature alone, we could have come to an opposite conclusion, because there are only two short references to the order in Petronius’ *Satyricon* (30.2 and 71.12).

\(^{110}\) Duncan-Jones (1982) 360-362 estimated five percent, but others have suggested that that number (based on a sample from Africa) may be too high and one or two percent would be a better approximation. The speculative nature of these numbers hardly needs to be stressed. See for further analysis and bibliographical references: Hemelrijk (2015) 33.

\(^{111}\) Eck (2007) 56-60.

\(^{112}\) Bodel (2001) 25.
which were first excavated in hasty and undocumented campaigns in the nineteenth century, the lack of archaeological context for our epigraphic evidence is especially problematic.

It is not only the factors of conservation that prevent us from regarding inscriptions as *prima facie* indications of a past reality. Scholars have become increasingly aware that the production of inscribed stones in the Roman world represented a very specific cultural practice, which some people might embrace and others ignore. In a ground-breaking article, Ramsay MacMullen defined this phenomenon as the ‘epigraphic habit’ and warned against history that was ‘not written in the right way’.\(^{113}\) What he meant was that in the study of ancient history, scholars have often used inscriptions to describe political, religious or even demographic changes without regard for the changes and cultural differentiations in the epigraphic practice itself. Most attention has since been given to the chronological dimension of this habit, and attempts have been made to explain the ‘rise and fall’ of Roman epigraphy.\(^{114}\) Apart from chronological disparities, the spread of epigraphy as a medium also varies considerably per region and has often been linked with the process traditionally described as ‘Romanization’.\(^{115}\) Not surprisingly, our area of study, Latium, has delivered a relatively large number of inscriptions.\(^{116}\)

For our purposes, and perhaps even more important than the discrepancies in region and time, are the ways in which the epigraphic material can be biased towards certain groups, cultural practices or ideological preconceptions. A well-known example is the composition of building inscriptions, which have been known to exaggerate the decay of a structure that was to be restored or even present entirely new temples as restorations. These texts reveal the prestige that derived from restoring something old and respectable rather than reflecting the architectural reality.\(^{117}\) Similarly, scholars have warned against interpreting the frequent mention of dutifulness or piety in the superlative degree (*pientissimus*) on tombstones as a marker of the exceptional religious status of

---

\(^{113}\) MacMullen (1982) 245.

\(^{114}\) Studies of the total number of preserved (datable) inscriptions per year, show a gradual increase in production from the time of the Republic, with a steep rise in the Severan period. The number of inscriptions decreases sharply in the third century. Mrozek (1973) 115, MacMullen (1982) 241-244, Woolf (1996) 23, Mouritsen (2005) 39.

\(^{115}\) Most extensively by Meyer (1990) 74-96, who argued that the creation of an epitaph was first and foremost an expression of Roman citizenship. For the spread of epigraphy and Roman citizenship, see: Woolf (1996) 22-39, Bodel (2001) 6-7.

\(^{116}\) Then again, the density of archaeological research in the region probably contributes considerably to this large number. Harris (1989) 265-268 has introduced the term ‘epigraphic density’ (the number of surviving inscriptions per 1,000 square kilometres) to evaluate regional variations in the distribution of inscriptions in the Latin west. Greg Woolf’s map of these differences shows that central Italy was (with Africa Proconsularis) the region with highest amount of inscriptions (Woolf (1998) 82). See further: Bodel (2001) 35-37, Eck (2007) 50-51.

an individual or a community. More likely, what we see is a local custom to favour those qualities – in a family context – above others in epitaphs. In other words, the medium itself influences the message, distinguishing the epigraphic reality from the social or religious reality. Henrik Mouritsen has successfully shown that the epigraphic conventions within different groups can considerably distort our picture of Roman society, so much so that we should no longer speak of a single epigraphic practice but of multiple local and social habits. He focuses on liberti (freedmen) and their motivations for commissioning monuments, demonstrating that this social group had particular reasons to emphasize its civic status and experiences in funerary inscriptions, while there is evidence that contemporary elites withdrew from the financing of such grand monuments. These differences in epigraphic habit should warn us not to use our corpus of votive, funerary and honorary inscriptions as a direct cross-section of the people involved in the Latin cults.

The particular orientation of the bias is often difficult to determine: how it precisely affects our analysis of the participants of the cults is different for every case study in this dissertation. In any case, quick conclusions based on epigraphic material, like Carin Greens assumption that the cult of Diana Nemorensis was a gathering place for relatively lowborn members of society, seems to overlook the particularities of epigraphy as a medium and is therefore too simplistic. It is important to realize that the inscriptions do not directly reflect social or religious realities, but the attitudes of certain Roman groups or individuals towards those realities. Even when most epigraphic biases cannot be corrected, they can be recognized and can themselves become useful objects of study.

1.9 The Latin sanctuaries and their archaeological remains
For the modern observer, the most visible and perhaps captivating traces of the Latin cults in the religious landscape are probably their archaeological remains. Juno Sospita and Diana Nemorensis had sanctuaries both in the city of Rome and in the surrounding region of Latium Vetus; Jupiter Latiaris’ cult was particularly suggestive because of its prominent location on top of the Alban mount, in the centre of Latium Vetus. Although my research focuses more on the cult practice than on a typological analysis of the structures themselves, each of these sanctuaries will be discussed in the chapters to come. For this moment, a short exploration of some issues that may emerge when studying these temples as parts of religious experience is in place. Archaeological campaigns of

---

recent decades have added much to our knowledge of the religious landscape of ancient Latium, offering us a view on the Latin cults that supplements or corrects the often anachronistic and Romanocentric narratives of Livy and other authors.\textsuperscript{122} The large sanctuaries of Latium Vetus have been especially well researched, while much is still unknown about the small and often complicated sites for the Latin gods in the city of Rome itself.\textsuperscript{123} Although some temples in the region, like that of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste, have had a longer and more extensive history of research than the cult centres discussed in this thesis, all of our sites have been investigated since the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century. A series of excavations since the 1970s have attracted new attention to the entire region and the discoveries had at least one important consequence: in archaeological and historical research, the temples were increasingly seen as one coherent group of structures, all built or restructured in a monumental way between (roughly) 175 and 50 BC.\textsuperscript{124}

This ‘canonization’ of the Latial monumental sanctuary is first and foremost a result of the work of Filippo Coarelli, who in his 1987 study described the temples of Lanuvium, Gabii, Tibur, Praeneste, Aricia (Nemi), Fregellae and Terracina and emphasized the many connections between them.\textsuperscript{125} Apart from the fact that the sanctuaries were built around the same time, they reveal similarities in topographical setting and architectural features as well. The imposing building structures were erected on highly visible locations, demonstrating an effort to reshape the landscape and create a scenery that underlined the grandiosity of the sanctuary itself. Coarelli and others have developed a more or less standardized typology, according to which a standard monumental sanctuary was built on one or more artificial terraces, had a centrally placed temple building, and with a pi-shaped portico surrounding the temple.\textsuperscript{126} In addition, a theatrical cavea could be incorporated into the design, and the open court around the temple could be used as a sacred garden. The development of these sanctuaries was, according to Coarelli, the result of the building programs of a competitive local aristocracy, and was strengthened by the growing (economic) concentration on urban centres around Rome and the development of the road network.

At the same time however, it is important to remain critical towards the self-evidence with which the sanctuaries are grouped in modern literature and to critically reflect on the level of

\textsuperscript{122} Beard, North and Price (1998) 12.


\textsuperscript{126} Rous (2010) 5-6.
generalization that is implied by such a categorization. In his dissertation, Benjamin Rous has warned of the circular reasoning evident in some earlier publications: a monument is included in the ‘standard’ typology based on its chronology and certain architectural elements, it is then analysed and reconstructed with help of the characteristics of the ‘standard Latial monumental sanctuary’, and finally serves to further strengthen the idea of the typology itself.\(^{127}\) If that is the case, the typology is no longer a descriptive tool but becomes a prescriptive and normative model as well. This might make us overlook the architectural singularities of the monuments but also – in our case perhaps more important – the specific local circumstances and cult practices that might have contributed to the construction and layout of the temples. Furthermore, as is most obvious from our last case study on Jupiter Latiaris, not every cult site was redesigned in a monumental way, or paid for by a local Latin community. The lack of large structural remains does not necessarily reflect a lack of religious significance, and some of the most meaningful activities in the sanctuaries – the rituals themselves, for example – left little trace in the archaeological landscape. We should therefore be careful not to assess the Roman perception and significance of a cult solely by the monumentality of its remains.

Besides (over)simplification, there are (related) methodological issues to consider, particularly concerning continuity and change in the sanctuaries. It has more than once been noticed – and will indeed be repeated a number of times in the chapters to come – that the cult sites of the Alban hills show a remarkable continuity, with cultic activity often going back to the archaic period or even to proto-urban times.\(^ {128}\) After the Roman takeover of the region and reconstructions in the second and first centuries BC they continued to flourish, going through the troublesome last decades of the Republic undisturbed and surviving well into the second and third centuries AD. This archaeological continuity provides a significant and valuable contrast to the religious ‘neglect’, ‘impiety’ and ‘decadence’ that the literary sources declaim, especially in the turbulent last decades of the Republic.\(^ {129}\) Despite the fact that the temples are located within a range of no more than forty kilometres from Rome, there is no indication of a changing attitude towards the cults, let alone of


\(^{128}\) For the continuity of proto-urban Latin religion into later archaic and early Republican cult practices, see especially the works of Alessandro Guidi – for example Guidi (2000) 85-94, Guidi, Pascucci and Zarattini (2002) 5-21, Guidi (2009) 143-151 – which connect the phenomenon with the urbanization and state formation in the region. For a more critical approach of the continuity of ritual practice and its relation to state religion, see: Smith (1996b) 73-89. The continuity of the Latin past throughout Roman history is most clearly put forward by Alföldi (1963), who however mainly studies the continuities in Latin cults to demonstrate his idea of the relatively late arrival of Rome on the Latin stage.

\(^{129}\) See for example Cicero’s and Livy’s remarks on the subject: Liv. Prael. 9; Cic. Rep. 5.2 (See notes 70 and 75). Cf: Beard and Crawford (1999) 84-93.
the abandonment of or damage to one of them. 'Religious decline', so it seems, is very much a case of perception.130

This conclusion, however, can also be reversed. While the archaeological record shows a great deal of continuity, we cannot be sure of how the cult practice in these sanctuaries was perceived by the people that participated in it. While the temple stayed where it was and as it was, the disappearance of a particular priesthood or ritual might well be interpreted as a serious case of religious neglect by some observers (ancient and modern), while for others the same disappearance was a sign of the strength of the cult, which - like all living religion does - discarded some of the old traditions to adapt to new circumstances. The problem we face here, is that there may be a large gap between the fabric of religious buildings in Latium Vetus and the religious attitudes and devotions of the people that used them.131 The maintenance of temples is not always connected with the maintenance of cult practice and the monumental remains of the temples only rarely reveal signs of what actually happened in there.132

There is one ritual act however that was widespread and is very recognizable in the archaeological record: the offering of votive objects. In the area of the Alban hills, large quantities of votive material have been discovered, both in the neighbourhoods of our sanctuaries as well as (far) beyond, in religious sites that did not have any architectural design and were centred around natural elements in the landscape, like springs. These gifts represent a genuine ritual act and can be understood as direct communications with the divine world. Thanks to the typologies made by Annamaria Comella, Maria Fenelli, Jelle Bouma and other scholars, we are able to identify a basic chronology in the finds.133 From the earliest identifiable period of votive religion (the ninth or perhaps eight century BC) to the archaic period (sixth century BC), (miniature) impasto pottery was the most common category of offerings, sometimes imported but mostly of local making. While pottery remains an important category in later votive assemblages, the range of objects becomes bigger in the sixth century BC, when we see bronze figurines of deities appearing. Later (from the fourth century onwards) there are figures of humans and animals as well. In the fifth century, there seems to be a sudden decline in votive practices, which is hard to explain but appears all over Latium Vetus.134 After this drop however, in the fourth and third centuries BC, votive activity comes

---

130 A similar conclusion is reached by Christopher Smith, who emphasizes the importance of the archaeological material in studying the continuities of archaic Roman religion (Smith (2007) 34-36.
132 A modern parallel that comes to mind here is the 21st century transformation and re-use of Christian churches, which shows that the upkeep of religious structures does not necessarily imply the continuity of religious practice or 'faith'.
134 This absence of material (or of recognizable material) is discussed in chapter II, page 59 and note 238.
to a peak. Deposits from this period, apart from pottery, include the large quantities of terracotta votives that are typical for central Italian cult sites: whole and half heads, terracotta (along with bronze) statuettes of deities and worshippers and (as the most common category of finds) models of body parts such as limbs, heads, intestines and genital organs – the so-called anatomical votives.\footnote{Comprehensible introductions to votive religion in general – with relating debates on Romanization and medical knowledge – can be found in: Schultz (2006a) 95-120, Glinister (2006) 10-33, Rous (2010) 28-37.}

The votives are a valuable source of information, as they provide insight into the longue durée of our cult sites and are an important testimony of religious continuity. At the same time, they present a number of interpretative issues. Firstly, because of the highly standardized production of terracottas (which were mainly made with moulds) they are extremely difficult to date. A general chronology from the fourth to the first century BC has been established for the category of anatomical votives, but a more exact dating is often based on highly unstable stylistic characteristics.\footnote{Glinister (2006) 20.} An examination of the precise archaeological context of the deposit does not help much, because the votives were often collected in large quantities and were ritually buried long after they were offered (after they were probably kept in storage for a long time).\footnote{Glinister (2006) 20, footnote 43 provides examples of votives deposits that were closed several centuries after the dating of the terracotta votives, such as a deposit in Vulci where anatomical votives from the second and third centuries AD were found together with a Domitianic coin and oil lamps.} Consequently, the votive offerings are hard to align with general historical developments of the time. More specifically, it often turns out to be impossible to tell if a votive was made before or after the Roman conquest of the area. Attempts to connect the terracotta votive religion to the process of Romanization have thus been convincingly refuted over the last years.\footnote{Torelli (1999) 41-42 in particular argued that the rise of the anatomical votive culture was a sign of Roman superiority, and Pensabene (1979) 218, De Cazanove (2000) 74-75 and others express similar arguments. See for a critique of this line of though (and further references): Glinister (2006) 23-27, Schultz (2006a) 98-100, Rous (2010) 33-34.} Similarly, the end of these votive practices in the late Republic is hard to explain; the possible connections with the monumentalization of religious architecture in this period or the struggles of the civil wars have sparked an extensive debate that cannot be fully discussed here.\footnote{See for a thorough analysis of the religious changes in votive practices of the late Republican era (and the possible interpretation problems with votive material): Rous (2010) 32-57. Cf.: Glinister (2006) 30-33.} It is important to stress, however, that our sites do show some continuity of votive offerings into the imperial age and that we may not recognize other votive material, such as coins that were not documented and categorized as religious material (or were melted instead of buried).\footnote{For the melting of coins into a statue, CIL XIV 2088 and pages 116-117, where a statue for Juno Sospita was allegedly made ex donis aureis et arg(entaris).}

A final possible risk in interpreting this material lies in the fact that there is no obvious connection between the types of votives found in a sanctuary and the deity worshipped there.
Almost all deities could be recipients of votive offerings, and it is often unclear if the religious communication was addressed to the main deity of a sanctuary, to a ‘minor’ deity residing there or to the divine world in general. A votive offering thus reveals more about its donor (and her or his affliction) than about its recipient, as votive practices were far from limited to gods with healing powers.141 Thus, as we will see further ahead in this thesis, attempts to ascribe a deity with qualities of healing or fertility on the base of the votives found in and around the sanctuary, fail to address the phenomenon of Latial votive practice as a whole. What we observe in the archaeological record is, in brief, an index of continuity of expenditure on religious display, not necessarily an index of continuity of attitudes, feelings or experiences. We can never know what a Roman citizen with Latin roots meant, when he decided to use his wealth to build or reconstruct a temple to a particular god of his hometown; still less can be said about the intentions, expectations and perceptions of the visitor who came to worship at the temple, made a small offer or simply walked past. Besides, whereas we know that the deities worshipped at lake Nemi, in Lanuvium and on the Alban mount were recognized in Roman times as Latin forms of Diana, Juno and Jupiter, it is difficult to trace this identification further back in time. As the following chapters will show, while we can definitely trace the Latin (pre-Roman) history of the cults in the early archaeological remains, we are forced to describe, label and classify the cult practices through the eyes of the Roman sources that later wrote about it.142

1.10 Preceding the argument: what is a Latin cult?
After an overview of the different types of sources used in this thesis and the problems they present, it may be useful to reflect briefly on one last definition before turning to the analysis of the different case studies. I realise I have used the terms Latin, Latial and Latium rather indistinctively so far, and a more precise designation is in place. What do I mean with Latin cult? How does an offering to a Latin god contribute to one’s Latin identity and what is a Latin identity?

First and foremost, Latin refers to a geographical concept: the region of Latium, on the Italian peninsula. A Latin cult is a Latin cult not because of the language used or because of its juridical status, but because of its location within Latium. While this may seem a banal statement, we must emphasize that at no point during Roman antiquity, was the region as sharply defined as it is today. A general idea of the area may be reconstructed, in which the oldest part of Latium (Latium Vetus) constituted the area between the Tiber river in the North, the Appenine mountains in the

---

141 Schultz (2006a) 19ff and especially Glinister (2006) 16-32, who argues that while the votives reflect health related concerns, they do not testify to a massive ‘obsession’ with healing in central Italy, as the terracottas (being the main medium for addressing the divine) may also reflect a much wider range of religious feelings and expectations.

east and Monte Circeo in the South (see the map in figure 1.1). Our landscape of study, the Alban hills, lay at the heart of Latium Vetus. Later, the region was extended and Latium Adiectum came to include the Pontine plain south of Rome, as far as Terracina, as well as larger territories in the north. Although Augustus’ regional division of Italy probably made the boundaries a little more clear, no strict definitions of this area appear before Pliny and even his outline is far from precise (nor undisputed). If we want to analyse Latium, we should thus not so much study the geographical boundaries of the area, but the people living within that area, the Latini.

As the following chapters will show however, the identity of these Latins and their relationships with Rome were far from agreed upon in the literary sources. Did Latins perceive themselves as being part of one group before the Roman dominance of the area? And were Romans part of that group as well? As we will see, ‘Latinity’ – Latinitas – was a subject of research and reflection, not only for modern academics but also for Roman authors. In search of the ethnogenesis of early Latins, material sources from the Bronze Age onwards have been applied as well, and similarities in the archaeological record have led to the establishment of a periodization of Latial culture. However, there is an extensive and ongoing debate on using archaeological remains for studying ethnicity, and several archaeologists have warned that ethnic labels may create a false categorization of material categories that in reality are often blurred and overlapping, especially when these labels derive from later literary sources.

For our purposes however, the danger of ‘falsely’ labeling a cult or a ritual practice Latin is not so acute, because it is not the early Latins that will be the main focus of this study, but the later perceptions of (and indeed labeling of) these Latins. In other words, I do not wish to penetrate through all the interpretation layers in the Roman sources, but rather want to identify and study the layers of interpretation themselves. As specified before, the Latin character of the cults under investigation, in my view does not lie in their pre-Roman, archaic or even pre-urban history, but is constantly being remembered, reinterpreted and even reinvented. This makes the memories surrounding the Latin past plural rather than singular, and fluid and dynamic rather than rigid and static. What was Latin and what not, was constantly being negotiated, and it is this negotiation (and not its outcome) that is at the heart of this thesis.

---

143 For an attempt at identifying the geographic boundaries of Latium, see: Solin (1996) 1-22. All figures referred to in this thesis are provided at the end of this book, from pages 241 onwards.

144 This was first attempted in the works of Gierow (1964), Gierow (1966), following in the footsteps of Gjerstad (1953-1973) who had developed a chronology for archaic Rome. The chronology was later adapted and corrected, in Bietti Sestieri and Bergonzi (1980) 47-78, Bietti Sestieri (1980) 79-96, after which the report of the excavations of Osteria dell’Osa (Sestieri (1992)) and a study of the cemeteries of Rome (Bettelli (1994) 1-66). became reference works for dating material culture in Latium. See for a recent overview of these discussions of relative and absolute chronologies: Fulminante (2014) 261-265.

CHAPTER II: Diana Nemorensis and her worshippers

The sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis is set in a landscape that impresses the modern visitor as it did the worshippers in Roman times. The temple – now in ruins – lies at the centre of a small, extinct volcano that is surrounded by densely wooded hills; the blue lake in front of the volcano reflects the crater's edges perfectly and it is easy to see why in antiquity it was known as the speculum (mirror) of Diana. The sanctuary and the administering town of Aricia were located about 40 kilometres south of Rome and could be reached via the Via Appia. Aricia was in the heart of Latium Vetus, the region that surrounded Rome and – as we have seen in the introduction – was closely connected to it through a common language, a shared history and ancient economic and juridical links. One of the opening remarks of Carin Green's 2007 study on Diana Nemorensis claims that 'although there were a few kilometres between the city walls and the sanctuary, the cult belonged to the city', thereby referring to Rome. But is this indeed that evident? Was Diana's cult at Nemi fully part of the Roman religious landscape? Sir James Frazer, the most famous scholar of the goddess and her cult in Nemi, appears to disagree completely when he labels the cult barbarous and notes that its ritual activity stood out 'in striking isolation from the polished Italian society of the day'. His claim is supported by Roman authors such as Propertius, who does not consider Diana Nemorensis' temple as belonging to Rome, since he accuses his Cynthia – who went there to worship – of secretly fleeing away from the City. After all, 18 kilometres (about 11 Roman miles) on foot or on horseback is more than a half day travel at Roman speed.

In this chapter, I will look at the relations between the cult of Diana Nemorensis, the Latin communities and the city of Rome, which can be traced back to the archaic (pre-Roman) history of the region but were also emphasized in the cult practices of the Republic and (early) Empire. Did the Romans (i.e. the inhabitants of the city of Rome) perceive the goddess as foreign or un-Roman and, if so, where did this association come from? What do the sources tell us about the ritual activity at the site and the Romans and Latins involved in the ceremonies? And how did Diana Nemorensis' cult interact with that of Rome's own Diana, on the Aventine? To answer these questions and analyse the way Romans and Aricians perceived, worshipped and represented Diana Nemorensis, I will investigate different types of material that represent different areas of religious experience.

146 Serv. Ad Aen. 7.515.
147 Green (2007) 3.
148 Frazer (1911) 10. I have used the third and most elaborate edition of the book. For the alterations in the different editions: Smith (1973) 342-351.
149 Prop. 2.32.1-18.
Beginning with Roman literary traditions that shed light on the diverse mythology around lake Nemi and present different narratives regarding the religious and political significance of the cult, I will then move to the iconography of the goddess and the individuality of her image in regard to other representations of Diana. Modern assessments have often concentrated on the supposedly time-old history of the cult as its defining characteristic, and as we will see this association with the archaic, pre- (and possibly anti-) Roman past penetrates our discussion of the archaeological remains as well.

A discussion of the epigraphic material follows, and provides information on the way she was addressed in private votive offerings, as well as by the communities and magistrates who visited the sanctuary. As we will see, references to the past of the area were never far away: the memories of this past were actively communicated through different media, thereby changing form and meaning over time. As we have been warned before, combining literary and material sources does not necessarily result in a coherent and consistent image of a deity. Encountering Diana in a literary work was indeed very different from encountering her in a sacrifice or as a statue. I explicitly do not want to smooth out potential discrepancies, but consider it crucial to study the available sources with and in relation to one another. One might meet the goddess at different occasions and in different appearances, but it was all those encounters together that constituted the Roman perception of and experiences with the cult of Diana Nemorensis.

2.1 A curious king

In the sacred grove there grew a certain tree around which at any time of the day, probably far into the night, a grim figure might be seen to prowl. In his hand he carried a drawn sword, and he kept peering warily about him as if at every instant he expected to be set upon by an enemy. He was a priest and a murderer; and the man for whom he looked was sooner or later to murder him and hold the priesthood in his stead.\textsuperscript{151}

The complex mythology of Diana Nemorensis has fascinated both ancient and modern authors. The ancient tradition about the succession of the enigmatic priest king, the \textit{rex Nemorensis}, served as a programmatic opening – part of which is quoted above – of Sir James Frazer's \textit{magnum opus} on the

\textsuperscript{151} Frazer (1911) 8-9.
history of religion, *The Golden Bough*. As such, with a mad murderer priest as her consort and a sanctuary in a cave that was also a *refugium* for escaped slaves, Diana Nemorensis was quickly interpreted as a curious form of the Greek goddess Artemis. Frazer based his analysis mainly on the account of the Greek geographer Strabo in the early Principate, on that of his second century successor Pausanias, and on Servius' commentary on the Aeneid in the fourth century.

According to Strabo, in her appearance as a hunting goddess Diana was a protectress of wildlife and nature who over time incorporated barbarous 'Scythian' elements from her illustrious namesake Artemis Tauropolos:

> Above it [Aricia] lies, first, on the right hand side of the Appian Way, Lanuvium, a city of the Romans, from which both the sea and Antium are visible, and, secondly, to the left of the Way as you go up from Aricia, the Artemisium, which they call Nemus. The temple of the Arician, they say, is a copy of that of the Tauropolos. And in fact a barbaric, and Scythian, element predominates in the sacred usages, for the people set up as priest merely a run-away slave who has slain with his own hand the man previously consecrated to that office; accordingly the priest is always armed with a sword, looking around for the attacks, and ready to defend himself.  

In his account a few centuries later, Pausanias repeats the story and adds the mythical Hippolytus – a resurrected Orestes, who will return later in this chapter – as the sanctuary's first king. It is not until the fourth century that the crucial detail is added that since then has become so famous:

---

152 The scope of the *Golden Bough* is of course much wider than the violent priesthood discussed here; it encompasses examples of 'primitive superstition and religion' from different periods in time and from all over the world. Within the extent of this thesis, it is not possible to do justice to the depth and impact of the work, for which I gladly refer to one of the biographies of J.F. Frazer: Fraser (1990) and Ackerman (2002). Studies of the literary influence of the *Golden Bough* include Vickery (1973), Beard (1992) 203-224 and Spino (2000) 17-24.

153 Strab. 5.3.12: ὑπέρκειται δ᾽ αὐτῆς τὸ μὲν Λανοῦιον, πόλις Ῥωμαίων, ἐν δεξαίᾳ τῆς Ἀπίας ὀδὸς, ἀφ’ ἓς ἔσοπτος ἐς τε θάλαττά ἐστι καὶ τὸ Ἀντιον; τὸ δ’ Ἀρτεμίσιον, ὃ καλοῦσι νέμος, ἐκ τοῦ ἐν ἀριστερὰ μέρους τῆς ὀδοῦ τοῖς ἕξ Ἀρικιάς ἀναβαίνουσιν. τῆς δ’ Ἀρικινῆς τὸ ἱερὸν λέγουσιν ἀφιδριμά τι τῆς Ταυροπόλου: καὶ γὰρ τι βαρβαρικὸν κρατεῖ καὶ Σκυθικὸν περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ἔθος. καθίσταται γὰρ ἱερεὺς ὃ γεννήθηκεν αὐτόχερ τοῦ ἱερωμένου πρῶτον δραπέτης ἄνηρ: ξιφήρης οὖν ἔστιν ἀεὶ περισσοπῶν τὰς ἐπιθέσεις, ἐτοίμος ἀμύνεσθαι.

154 Paus. 2.27.4: ταύτης τῆς στήλης τοῦ ἐπιγράφων ὁμολογοῦντα λέγουσιν Ἁρκικεῖς, ὡς τεθνεῶτα ἑπολύτου ἐκ τῶν Θησεως ἀρών ἀνέστησεν Ἀκληπτῖνος: ὃ δ᾽ ἐς ἀυθίς ἔβη, οὐκ ἦσον νέμει τῶν πατρί τυχεῖν πέρι προδοσίας, ἀλλὰ ὑπερθύμων τῆς δήμους ἑκείνης ἑκείνῃ ἐρχεται παρὰ τοὺς Ἁρκικεῖς, καὶ ἐβοσιλευε τοῦ αὐτόνθα καὶ ἀνέρκη τῇ Ἀρτεμίδι τέμνεσιν, ἔνθα ἤρθη ἡμῖν μονομαχίαις ἄλλα ἦν καὶ ἱερασθαὶ τῇ διὸ τοῦ νικῶντα: ὃ δὲ ἰὼν ἔλευθερόν μὲν προέκειτο οὐδενεί, οὐκέτας δὲ ἀποδράσαι τοὺς δεσπότας. (‘The Aricians tell a tale that agrees with the inscription on this slab [at the sanctuary of Asclepius, near Epidaurus], that when Hippolytus was killed, owing to the curses of Theseus, Asclepius raised him from the dead. On coming to life again he refused to forgive his father rejecting his prayers, but he went to the Aricians in Italy. There he became king and devoted a precinct to Artemis, where down to my time the prize for the victor in single combat was the priesthood of the goddess. The contest was open to no freeman, but only to slaves who had run away from their masters.’)
Orestes, after the slaying of king Thoas in the Tauric region, fled with his sister Iphigenia, as we have said above (2.116), and, erected the statue of Diana carried from there, not very far from Aricia. After the rite of the sacrifices had been changed, there was a certain tree in this temple from which it was forbidden to break off a branch. However a power was granted to fugitives so that if anyone were able to carry away a branch from that place, he would contend with the fugitive priest in a duel, for the priest there was [also] a fugitive to symbolize the ancient flight.  

Here, in explaining the passage about the golden bough (*ramus aureus*) plucked by Aeneas before descending into the underworld, Servius reproduces the story of the *rex Nemorensis* and claims that the ritual duel was preceded by the seizing of a branch from a sacred tree. It is only with this late and rather obscure detail that all the elements of Frazer’s analysis come together. But even if Servius’ commentary and Frazer’s creative interpretation are left aside, there seems to be a certain consensus in the mythology on Diana’s cult at Nemi: there was a priesthood taking the form of a kingship, which was obtained by combat and was only available to runaway slaves. Shorter references to the *rex* are found in works of Ovid, Statius and Valerius Flaccus, who suggest that Diana at the lake of Nemi was once the savage cult of the Tauri, but moved from a ’bloodstained land’ to Aricia, which is now ’stern to her king alone’.  

The curious mythology has attracted considerable scholarly attention, especially after the appearance of Frazers work. Wissowa, in the 1912 re-issue of his famous *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, subtly declared that – notwithstanding the evident eloquence and erudition in Frazers work – he had not been able to find anything essential for the understanding of Roman religion there. The appraisal has not changed much since then: although Frazer has been much admired for his
creativity and the broad scope of his book, there are few scholars who have taken his arguments about the *rex Nemorensis* seriously. Wissowa did not deny the existence of the priesthood, but for him it had little role to play in the cult of Diana. The fact that only runaway slaves competed for the position, proved for Wissowa that it had degraded considerably and was held in very low esteem by the rest of the Roman population.

Several elements in the ancient sources – that were probably far from independent of one another - have long been recognized as literary inventions by modern interpreters of the cult: the curious golden bough that Servius used to connect the *rex Nemorensis* with Aeneas, as well as the Scythian origins that connected Diana at the lake of Nemi with the cruel Diana of Euripides’ *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Some scarce material remains from the site of the sanctuary at lake Nemi have been connected to the *rex* and to the rite (as will be discussed below), but the evidence is meagre and the priest king has never been attested directly in the epigraphic record. At the same time, the literary testimonies seem to be too numerous and too persistent to be disregarded altogether. To name one final instance: in listing the many examples of how Caligula begrudged the success of other people, Suetonius casually mentions the king of Nemi:

> In short, there was no one of such low condition or such abject fortune that he did not envy him such advantages as he possessed. Since the king of Nemi had now held his priesthood for many years, he [Caligula] hired a stronger adversary to attack him.

Even if this is just another case of Suetonius slandering Caligula – which seems rather likely – the context of this fragment is significant. The other instances in which the *princeps* displayed his jealousy all take place in the amphitheatre and involve people who performed well in that context. Was, by Suetonius’ time or long before, the ritualised murder perhaps a staged event, a performed

---

159 See, for example Smith (1973) 356-359, 370-371 and Beard (1992) 203-212. Beard however also notes (212-220) that the widespread popularity of the Golden Bough and Frazer himself with a general public was striking. She explains this by referring to the way the book could function as a useful compendium for native customs in the British empire and to the way the book appealed to typical Victorian age issues such as the relations between the peoples of the empire and those of (rural) England.

160 Wissowa (1912) 248.

161 Although Frazer had no doubt about the historicity of the *rex* himself, he acknowledged that myths connecting the priesthood to the Scythian Artemis were – to a high degree – the result of invention and speculation: Frazer (1911) 21-22. See further, for the detail of the golden bough: Spineto (2000) 17-19, Blagg (1986) 211-220, Smith (1973) 342-371, with note 42 for further bibliography. The 'invented' connection with Diana Taurropolis is discussed in: Gordon (1934) 11-12, Alfoldi (1960) 141, Pairault (1969) 445-450. The popularity of the *Iphigenia in Tauris* myth and its spread throughout the ancient world, especially through Strabo’s writings: Guldager Bilde (2003) 165-183. For a possible dating of the connection between Nemi and the Tauropolis myth, see section ‘Myths and memories inscribed’, pages 74ff.

162 Suet. Cal. 35.3: Nullus denique tam abiectae condicionis tamque extremae sortis fuit, cuius non commodis obtrectaret. *Nemorensi regi, quod multos iam annos poteretur sacerdotio, validiorem adversarium subornavit.*
battle that took place in the little theatre that was part of the sanctuary?\textsuperscript{163} The presence of actors in the sanctuary has been attested through inscriptions (see below) and we know – through studies on Roman mythology for example – that theatrical performance can function as a strong creative force in the creation and circulation of memories.\textsuperscript{164} So, the popularity and persistence of the tradition of the rex Nemorensis – however little we know of its origins – may be related to games or spectacles performed on the site. All in all, the current state of the evidence leaves us with a priesthood that was and is rather well-known (and infamous), but of which very little is actually known – apart from the violent way it was passed on. A plausible yet unprovable possibility is that the succession of the rex Nemorensis was – by the late Republic or early Principate – reinterpreted in a dramatic context and ritually staged in the small theatre on the site.

2.2 'Minor' deities

The complexities of the mythology of Diana Nemorensis do not end with her mysterious priesthood. In the same passage mentioned above, Strabo continues to describe the luscious surroundings of the temple and the lake side. One of the springs that feed the lake, he says, is called Egeria, after a 'certain deity'.\textsuperscript{165} Vergil and Juvenal also speak of an Egeria who was venerated at the lake.\textsuperscript{166} The sources reveal little detail, but there is another tradition that portrays the nymph as the wife or consort of king Numa. Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus claim that Numa received counselling and wisdom from Egeria, although they rationalize the story by presenting it as a justification of Numa’s religious reforms.\textsuperscript{167} Ovid provides the most imaginative account and connects Egeria with Diana, the violent priest king, and king Numa:

\begin{quote}
Teach me, nymph, who serves Diana’s lake and grove:
Nymph, Egeria, wife to Numa, speak of your actions.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{163} Cf: Pascal (1976) 31. For the discussion of the theatre and the site itself, see section 'Temples and votives', pages 58ff.
\textsuperscript{164} For the actors, see page 72. On the relation between performance and memory in general and an overview of recent studies in the field, see: Plate and Smelik (2013) 1-24. In a Roman context, it is mainly Peter Wiseman who has been exploring possible connections between performances on the Roman stage and the development of Roman historical traditions. His general argument is that, in a largely illiterate society, public spectacles (plays, triumphs, funerals, games) constituted an important medium for the circulation, appropriation and eventual recording of popular traditions and memories. See, for example: Wiseman (1994) 1-22, Wiseman (1995) 129-149, Wiseman (1998), Wiseman (2004).
\textsuperscript{165} Strab. 5.3.12: τούτων δ’ ἐστὶν ἡ Ἁγερία καλουμένη, δαίμονός τινος ἐπώνυμος.
\textsuperscript{166} Verg. Aen. 7.764-765: [...] eductum Egeriae lucis umentia circum litora, pinquis ubi et placabilis ara Dianae. Juv. Sat. 3.12-17: in vallem Egeriae descendimus [...] Juvenal describes a stroll into the countryside and does not mention Nemi nor Aricia specifically. For the assumption that it was indeed Nemi he was speaking of, see Schol. Juv. 3.17. Later commentators have assumed that Juvenal’s spring was closer to Rome: Braund (1996) 175-177.
\textsuperscript{167} Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. 2.60; Plut. Numa 4.2. Cicero hints at the same: Cic. Leg. 1.1.4.
There is a lake in the vale of Aricia, ringed by dense woods,
And sacred to religion from ancient times.
Here Hippolytus hides, who was torn to pieces
By his horses, and so no horse may enter the grove.
The long hedge is covered with hanging threads,
And many tablets witness the goddess’s merit.
Often a woman whose prayer is answered, brow wreathed
With garlands, carries lighted torches from the City.
One with strong hands and swift feet rules there,
And each is later killed, as he himself killed before.
A pebble-filled stream flows down with fitful murmurs:
Often I’ve drunk there, but in little draughts.
Egeria, goddess dear to the Camenae, supplies the water:
She who was wife and counsellor to Numa.\(^{168}\)

As so often, Ovid’s lines are fascinating and puzzling at the same time, because they connect a number of stories that in the modern mind hardly seem to fit together. The strong hands and swift feet no doubt refer to the rex Nemorensis, who was both a murderer and a victim of murder. But how about Egeria, who was the wife of Numa and a nymph of lake Nemi at the same time? Elsewhere, in the Metamorphoses, Ovid contrives a creative solution: after Numa’s death, Egeria was so overwhelmed with grief that she eventually melted away with her tears and transformed into a spring.\(^{169}\)

The fragment from the Fasti is dense with mythological detail and poses many more questions than it answers. Apart from Egeria, Ovid associates another divinity with the cult at the lake: Hippolytus. The mythical hero is known from plays of Euripides and Sophocles, where he is dragged to death by his horses after being cursed by his father Theseus.\(^{170}\) Vergil and Ovid have him resurrected, after which he is given the new name Virbius and migrates to Italy to reign with Diana.

---


\(^{169}\) Ov. Met. 5.547-551.

\(^{170}\) The story is known particularly from Euripides’ Hippolytus, but was also narrated in Sophocles’ Phaedra, of which only fragments remain. For a recent translation and commentary of Hippolytus: Shaw (2007), with a discussion of the (few) fragments of Phaedra: Lloyd-Jones (1994) 323-331.
at her sanctuary.\footnote{Verg. \textit{Aen.} 7.774-779; Ov. \textit{Met.} 15.479-546. For a more elaborate discussion of of Hippolytus / Virbius, see: Podemann Sørensen (2000) 25-28} In the complicated mythological interweavings that have been discussed so far, the story of Hippolytus/Virbius appears several times. Pausanias, for example, has him moving to Aricia to become the first king.\footnote{Paus. 2.27.4.} In Servius’ commentary on the \textit{Aeneid}, as was shown above, this kingship is instituted as a reminder of the flight of Orestes who brought Diana from the land of the Tauri to Italy; he is yet another Greek hero whose mythological history is woven into the landscape of memory around lake Nemi.\footnote{Serv. \textit{Ad Aen.} 6.136.}

The fact that Egeria, Hippolytus and Orestes were connected to Diana Nemorensis can be easily traced back to the energetic creativity of poets like Ovid or the aetiological speculations of grammarians like Servius. There is no evidence for any of these minor deities outside of the literary context and one may seriously doubt if they were ever part of the actual cult practice. At the same time, it is too easy to conclude that they were therefore of little or no importance for the people that came to worship at the lake. In the introduction, we were warned by Denis Feeney and others not to isolate the literary sphere from a material sphere that was somehow more ‘real’ or believable.\footnote{See: ‘Necessary contextualization’, on pages 14-16.} Seen from this perspective, the context of the religious message must be taken into account, and we should acknowledge that worshippers were able to attach different meanings to the cult at different circumstances. So, in one occasion they might perform rituals that were solely centred on Diana Nemorensis, while at another instance they would encounter Diana in a story or poem and as part of the same mythological surroundings of lake Nemi, of which Egeria, Hippolytus and Orestes also were integral and fully accepted parts.

\subsection*{2.3 Trivia and the moon}

To explore this multifaceted character of the cult, we must return to Diana Nemorensis herself, or, as she is often called by the Latin Poets: Diana Nemoralis.\footnote{Ov, \textit{Fast.} 6.59; Luc. 6.75; Mart. 13.19.} We meet the goddess for example in the work of the Augustan poet Grattius. His \textit{Cynegeticon}, a poem on hunting, includes a lustration rite that was – unsurprisingly – directed at Diana. Although Grattius does not specify the goddess by means of an epitheton, the description of the woodland surroundings has led modern interpreters to assume that it was Diana Nemorensis who was evoked by the poem.\footnote{See for example the Loeb translation and the latest text editions: Verdière (1964), Formicola (1988).}
...the deity [Diana] must be summoned from high Olympus and the protection of the gods invoked by supplicant ritual. For that reason we construct cross-road shrines in groves of soaring trees and set our sharp-pointed torches hard by the woodland precinct of Diana, and the whelps are decked with the wonted wreath, and at the centre of the cross-roads in the grove the hunters fling down among the flowers the very weapons which now keep holiday in the festal peace of the sacred rites. Then the wine-cask and cakes steaming on a green-wood tray lead the procession, with a young goat thrusting horns forth from tender brow, and fruit even now clinging to the branches, after the fashion of a lustral ritual at which all the youth both purify themselves in honour of the Goddess and render sacrifice for the bounty of the year. Therefore, when her grace is won, the Goddess answers generously in those directions where you sue for help: whether your greater anxiety is to master the forest or to elude the plagues and threats of destiny, the Maiden is your mighty affiance and protection.\textsuperscript{177}

The dominion of Diana over hunting and wildlife seems an obvious sphere of influence in the green surroundings of her sanctuary at the lake and, as we will see later in this chapter she often appears in the form of a huntress.\textsuperscript{178} In a literary context however, the wildlife aspect is rarely all there is to her character. Even in Grattius’ poem, which is specifically about hunting, Diana is assumed to have powers far beyond that domain. To begin with, Grattius sets the scene of the ritual in a significant context: a grove that was the centre of crossroads (\textit{compita}). This reminds us of a well-known feature of Diana, who was typified with the epithet Trivia (‘at the crossroad’) several times in Augustan and later literature; in other works the names Diana and Trivia are used interchangeably.\textsuperscript{179} This was the case with Diana in general, but more in particular with Diana’s grove at Aricia: several authors refer to it as Trivia’s lake or grove.\textsuperscript{180} Diana shared the association and the epithet with Hecate,

\textsuperscript{177} Grattius, \textit{Cyn.} 481-496: \textit{ [...] ex alto ducendum numen Olympo, supplicibusque vocanda sacris tutela deorum. Idcirco aeriis molimur compita lucis spicatasque faces sacrum ad nemorale Dianae sistimus et solito catuli velantur honore, ipsaque per flores medio in discrimine luci stravere arma sacris et pace vacantia festa. Tum cadus et viridi fumantia liba feretro praevienniunt teneraque extrudens cornua fronte haedus et ad ramos etiamnum haerentia poma, lustralis de more sacri, quo tota inventus lustratuque deae proque anno reddit honorem. Ergo impetrato respondet multa favore ad partes, qua poscis opem; seu vincere silvas seu tibi fatorum labes exire minasque cura prior, tua magna fides tutelaque Virgo. The Loeb editors point out the many connections between the ritual described here and the Ambervalia, a spring festival in which agricultural lands were ritually cleansed and that involved an animal carried in a procession that was killed at its conclusion (Cf: Cato \textit{Agr.} 141; Strabo 5.3.2; Macr. \textit{Sat.} 3.5.7; Serv. \textit{Ecl.} 3.77).

\textsuperscript{178} See pages 65ff.


\textsuperscript{180} \textit{Triviae Lucus}: Verg. \textit{Aen.} 7.516; \textit{Triviae nemorosa [...] regna}: Mart. 9.64.3; \textit{Aricinum Triviae Nemus, ipsa [...] Diana}: Stat. \textit{Silv.} 3.1.55, 68. For the fragment of Statius see below, page 44-45.
traditionally the mediator between the world of the living and the underworld. Consequently, as Diana Trivia, the goddess looked over the junction of paths, particularly the trivium, but was also the goddess of crossroads in a more figurative sense, namely at the intersection between life and afterlife.  

A procession of women carrying torches – mentioned by Ovid and Propertius as part of the festival of the Nemoralia – is often associated with this aspect of Diana as a somewhat ominous figure that guided paths that led into a darker realm.

In addition to these elements of transition or liminality, Roman poets describe Diana as a goddess who was threefold in essence. Vergil, for instance, speaks of a triple faced Virgin Diana (\textit{tria virginis ora Dianae}) and Horace labels her as \textit{diva triformis}. From these examples it becomes clear that the triplicity was presented as an essential characteristic of Diana; sometimes it was expressed with the epithet Trivia, but at other times the Roman poets chose different phrases to emphasize the multifaceted nature of the goddess. Although there is a discourse of poetic syncretism between Artemis and Hecate in Greek literature, the explicit reference to Diana's threefold nature developed in Roman-era poetry and seems to be used specifically with regard to Diana Nemorensis. But what exactly were her three faces meant to represent or symbolize? In Seneca's \textit{Phaedra} a nurse prays to Diana and provides us with a possible answer. She ascribes attributes to the goddess that we have seen before, calling her 'great goddess of woods and groves' and 'three-formed Hecate'. In the same passage however, a third aspect of Diana appears, when she is described as the 'bright star of heaven, glory of the night, by whose changing beams the universe shines clear'.

It is clear that Seneca refers to the moon and its workings, a heavenly domain that is usually mythically looked after by the goddesses Selene or Luna. The reference in the \textit{Phaedra} is by no means the only occasion in Roman literature where Diana is linked to the moon, as similar allusions are made by Catullus and Horace; in the works of Varro and Cicero, 'Diana' appears as a synonym for describing the moon. Apart from her role as huntress and guardian of the wild and her dominion over crossroads – in both a literal and metaphorical sense – Diana thus assumes a third role as a

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Pairault (1969) 465-470.}
\footnote{Ov. \textit{Fast.} 3.270 (cited above, on pages 42-43) and Prop. 2.32.15.}
\footnote{Verg. \textit{Aen.}, 4.511; Serv. \textit{Ad. Aen.} 4.511; Hor. \textit{Carm.} 3.22.}
\footnote{For the association between Artemis and Hecate, mainly established through the myth of Iphigenia, see: Pairault (1969) 456-472.}
\footnote{Sen. \textit{Phaedr.} 406-412: \textit{[...]} magna silvas inter et lucos dea \textit{[...]} Hecate triformis.}
\footnote{Sen. \textit{Phaedr.} 410-411: \textit{clarumque caeli sidus et noctis decus, cuiaus relucet mundus alterna vice.}}
\footnote{Who are, in their turn, often associated with Hecate as well. For lunar gods and discourses on the moon in Rome: Lunais (1979).}
\end{footnotes}
lunar goddess. According to the influential hypothesis of Andreas Alföldi, this threelfold appearance of Diana Nemorensis was the established notion of the goddess in Italy from the early Roman Republic onwards. Alföldi dismisses any relation with the bloody cult of Artemis Tauropolis as a late and rather incoherent invention. Instead, he argues that the existence of the time-honoured threelfold (and therefore potentially confusing) image of the goddess was the reason for mythological speculation in the first place.

Here we touch upon discussions on the original nature of Diana in Rome and Italy, over which modern interpreters have debated considerably and to which we will return later. For now, it is important to accentuate that the diffuse picture we have of Diana Nemorensis derives mainly from the Roman (poetical) writers, who creatively used multiple characteristics to create an image of an enigmatic, intangible goddess. As was shown throughout the analysis above, authors like Ovid and Horace employed the variety of mythological stories surrounding Diana and lake Nemi to its fullest extent. When the goddess is visited or honoured in their poems, her assumed sphere of influence is seldom straightforward: she appears as huntress, guardian of liminal spaces and moon goddess all at the same time or in changing combinations. The references to the strange rex Nemorensis and minor deities Egeria and Hippolytus seem to add complexity to a mythological discourse that – in modern eyes – is already confusing and difficult to relate to cultic practice. Perhaps the most vivid illustration of Diana’s multifaceted identity is displayed by Statius’ Silvae, which describes a summer ritual for the goddess in all her complexity:

It was the time when the heaven’s vault broods over the earth at its most torrid and fierce Sirius, hit by Hyperion’s lavish rays, burns the panting fields. Now the day was nearly come when Trivia’s Arician wood, apt for runaway kings, makes smoke and the lake privy to Hippolytus shines with many a torch. Diana herself wreathes her veteran hounds and furbishes her darts and lets the wild beasts go in safety; all the land of Italy celebrates Hecate’s Ides at its chaste hearths.

The fourth century grammarian Servius provides an explanation of the association between the deities: *Ad Aen.* 511: ‘when she is above the earth, she is believed to be the Moon; when she is on earth, Diana; when she is under the earth, Proserpina. Some see her as being triple because the Moon has three appearances […]’ (*cum super terras est, creditur esse Luna; cum in terris, Diana; cum sub terris, Proserpina. quibusdam ideo triplicem placet, quia Luna tres figuras habet*).

Alföldi (1960) 137-144.

Stat. Silv. 3.1.52-60: *Tempus erat, caeli cum torrentissimus axis incumbit terris ictusque Hyperione multo acer anhelantis incendit Sirius agros. Iamque dies aderat, profugius cum regibus aptum fumat Aricinum Triviae nemus et face multa conscius Hippolyti splendet lacus; ipsa coronat emeritos Diana canes et spicula terget et tutas sinit ire feras, omnisque pudicis itala terra focis Hecateidas excolit idus.* The Ides mentioned here are those of August, when it was indeed very hot and when, more importantly, there is a general festival of Diana confirmed in other sources such as several inscribed *fasti*. Cf: Scullard (1981) 173-174 and pages 56ff of this chapter.
Statius sets the ritual in the mysterious scenery of a torch-lit lake, mentions multiple dimensions of Diana but is – like other poets earlier – not very explicit in his details about the cultic activity itself. While I want to stress again that encountering a god in a poem was just as much part of the religious experience of lake Nemi as performing a ritual on site, a number of questions nevertheless remains unanswered. One might wonder, for example, what kind of ritual activity – apart from a procession with torches – took place at the sanctuary, and who the participants were. Were all of Diana's faces equally addressed in these ceremonies? And was Diana Nemorensis indeed – as Statius suggests above – venerated in the whole of Italy? Later in this chapter we will investigate the material evidence that can shed further light on the cultic experience around the lake, but first we must continue our exploration of the literary sources, including some of the more historical narratives. As will be shown, these accounts broaden the perspective on the origin and identity of Diana Nemorensis even further and also connect the goddess with the city of Rome and the Diana venerated there.

2.4 Wives and mothers?

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Georg Wissowa was not particularly impressed by Frazer's analysis of the cult of Diana Nemorensis and the dominant presence of the violent rex in that analysis. His own evaluation of the cult was very different, although he based it on many of the same sources. According to Wissowa, Diana was first and foremost a protectress of women, whom she assisted in the ‘needs of their gender’ – particularly with reproduction and childbirth. He labels the goddess as one of the di novensides (‘new gods’, imported in the Roman pantheon, according to Wissowa) from Italian origin and reads the sources accordingly. Servius for example, so often drawn upon by Frazer, presents an etymological explanation of Diana’s identity that fits well into Wissowa’s assessment:

Some call the same goddess Lucina, Diana and Hecate because they attribute to the one goddess the three powers of birth, growth and death.

The epithet Lucina was usually reserved for Juno, in her role as a goddess of birth. Servius is however not the only nor the first ancient author who uses it as a characterization for Diana.

---

193 Serv. Ad Aen. 511: non nulli eandem Lucinam, Dianam, Hecatem appellant ideo, quia uni deae tres adsignant potestates nascendi valendi moriendi
Catullus, for example, states that Diana is called upon as Juno Lucina by 'women in pains of childbirth'. Varro makes the same claim and explains it by a complex etymology that connects Diana's association with the moon – that shines (lucet) – with Juno Lucina: as the goddess of the moon, Diana guided births into the light of day. The attempt to connect Diana's various spheres of influence finds a parallel in works of Cicero and Pliny, who rationalize her association with Luna/Selene by combining Diana's moon character with the menstrual cycle necessary for reproduction.

According to Wissowa, the sanctuary at Nemi testified to the particular Italian identity of Diana, who as a goddess cared for women in labour and was venerated by wives and mothers. She had developed her Artemis-iconography and diverse spheres of influence only when she came into contact with the Hellenistic world. All other mythological speculation – such as to Egeria, Virbius and the moon – would be derived from her matronal character. Few others have emphasized this feminine role as clearly as Wissowa did, but the idea that Diana's guidance over women was an essential characteristic of her cult at Nemi has influenced scholarship on the site for decades. Recently, Carin Green has gone so far as to assume that women specifically went to the sanctuary to receive assistance in pregnancy: good food, kind attention and comfort, which was, according to Green, given by Diana's priests on the site.

It is clear that in Roman myths – and in antiquarian investigations of those myths – Diana as a goddess was sometimes associated with feminine spheres of life. But is there evidence of the cult at Nemi being especially visited by women – in search for advice on pregnancy or motherhood, as Green suggests? In the scarce descriptions of religious activity at lake Nemi we have seen so far, a few female worshippers are specified. Ovid is most explicit, as he portrays the procession that was part of the celebrations as an occasion where garlanded women whose prayers were answered by

---

194 Juno Lucina is well known for her concern for mothers: she had a temple on the Esquiline and was venerated during the Matronalia, on the Kalendae of March. See further: Palmer (1974) 19-21, Ziolkowski (1992) 67-73.
195 Cat. 34.12-13: tu Lucina dolentibus / Iuno dicta puerperis.
196 Varr. 5.69: Quae ideo quoque videtur ab Latinis Iuno Lucina dicta vel quod est et Terra, ut physici dicunt, et lucet; vel quod ab luce eius qua quis conceptus est usque ad eam, qua partus quis in lucem, luna iuvat, donee mensibus actis produxit in lucem, ficta ab iuvando et luce luno Lucina. A quo parientes eam invocant: luna enim nascentium dux quod menses huius. ('She appears therefore to be called by the Latins also Juno Lucina, either because She is also the Earth, as the natural scientists say, and shines [lucet]; or because from her light in which conception takes place until that one in which there is a birth into light, the Moon continues to help, until She has brought it forth into the light of day when the months have passed, the name Juno Lucina was made from iuvare [to help] and lex [light]. From this fact women in labor invoke her; for the Moon is the guide to those that are born, since the months belong to her'.)
199 There is no (material or literary) proof for these activities on the site. Green (2007) 137-138.
the goddess carried torches towards the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{200} Propertius' mistress Cynthia seems to have participated in the ritual, but Propertius does not specify whether it was a women-only ceremony or if men were also present.\textsuperscript{201} Statius certainly seems to suggest the latter when he mentions the procession as part of a festival for families and hunters.\textsuperscript{202} Finally, the cultic activity that was described in Grattius' poem on hunting, does not designate women as exclusive or special participants, nor speaks of specifically female preoccupations of Diana herself.\textsuperscript{203} While the goddess is attributed with healing qualities here, birth or reproduction are not specified as such.\textsuperscript{204}

Of course, Wissowa based his argument on more than literary material alone – we will deal with his evaluation of some inscriptions and votive material later – but in the literary material it is very difficult to find evidence in support of his statement that the cult in Nemi was predominantly a cult for women or mothers (to be). Historical sources like Livy or Dionysius of Halicarnassus do not mention any special relation between Diana Nemorensis and women, although it must be added that in general they devote very little attention to the cult at lake Nemi or to its administrating city Aricia. What does emerge from these sources however, is a political 'face' of the goddess Diana, that shows her as a patroness of the affairs Rome had with its neighbours; and a face that has had a profound influence on our understanding of her cult at Nemi as well. This political discourse will be the subject of the final section of my treatment of the literary material.

### 2.5 Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis

As previously mentioned, a considerable part of the scholarly debate concerning Diana Nemorensis was centred on the early history of the cult and the original meaning of the deity. Therefore, unsurprisingly, a lot of attention went out to the earliest splinter of Roman literature that mentions the sanctuary, a fragment of the \textit{Origines} of Cato the Elder from the second century BC, preserved by the fourth century grammarian Priscian:

Egerius Baebius of Tusculum, the Latin dictator, dedicated the grove of Diana in the wood of Aricia. The following peoples took part jointly: people of Tusculum, Aricia, Lanuvium, Laurentum [i.e. Lavinium], Cora, Tibur, Pometia, Rutulan Ardea.\textsuperscript{205}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[200] Ov. \textit{Fast.} 3.269-270. See page 42-43.
\item[201] Prop. 2.32.14-16.
\item[204] For Diana's healing qualities, see: Green (2007) 235-256.
\item[205] Cat. Or. Fr. 58 (Peter) = 28 (Cassignet): \textit{Lucum Dianium in nemore Aricino Egerius Baebius Tusculanus dedicavit dictator Latinus. Hi populi communiter: Tusculanus, Aricinus, Lanuvinus, Laurens, Coranus, Tiburtis, Pometinus, Ardeatis Rutulis}. The translation is that of Cornell (1995) 297. Laurentum was the mythical seat of king Latinus, who
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The fragment seems to reflect a dedication ceremony, in which a magistrate with the title of Latin dictator dedicated a grove to the goddess Diana on behalf of a number of Latin communities. It has been observed that Cato might have transcribed the dedication from an original inscription at the site, which would explain its somewhat fragmented formulation. However, the interpretation of the dedication is seriously complicated by the fact that Priscian was only interested in the form 'Rutulan Ardean' (Ardeatis Rutulis) and did not quote Cato any further; this means that it is unclear whether there were other communities present than the ones mentioned and, most crucially, if Rome was involved in the dedication as well.

Nevertheless, most scholars have assumed that Cato's fragment is a reflection of the joint efforts of the Latin tribes against Rome and that the ceremony was performed somewhere before 493 BC, when the foedus Cassianum established Roman superiority over the people of Latium Vetus, the so-called Prisci Latini. Thus, the fragment would be a commemoration of a significant moment in the sixth or very early fifth century BC, when the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis was a political and religious centre for a number of Latin towns. Seen from this perspective, Cato's use of the word 'grove' (lucus) is quite significant: this is usually defined as a section of consecrated woodland, and according to Roman literary tradition, there were a number of luci that served as meeting places for Latin tribes. According to Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, these tribes held several assemblies to organise their efforts against Rome at the lucus Ferentinae, which has never been archaeologically traced but was probably located somewhere on the southern slopes of mons Albanus, the sacred mountain towering over lake Nemi. Other luci that served as meeting places are mentioned near Anagnina, were the Via Labicana and the Via Latina split, and at Corne (near Tusculum), the latter even being a lucus devoted to Diana, according to Pliny. Furthermore, Filippo Coarelli has argued that many of the other large Latin sanctuaries in Latium – at Gabii and Tibur, for example -

209 Liv. 1.50.1; 2.38.1; 7.25.5; Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. 3.45; 3.51; 4.45; 5.61; Fest. 256L. For the mons Albanus, see chapter IV from pages 143 ff.
210 Anagnina: Liv. 27.4.12; Corne: Plin. NH 16.242.1. Like the lucus Ferentinae, these meeting places have never been identified in the landscape.
originated as sacred woods, a feature that was respected in the later monumentalized sanctuaries by the maintenance of a sacred garden around the temples.\footnote{Coarelli (1987) 89-90. The evidence can however be considered meagre: archaeological traces of such a garden have been discovered only in Gabii (Lauter (1968) 626-631, Jiminez (1983) 52-55). This feature has then been extrapolated to the other sanctuaries, but neither archaeological, nor literary nor epigraphic sources confirm the assumption. Rüpke (2007) 175-176, Rous (2010) 205-207. See further, on the analysis of the sanctuaries as a prescriptive rather than a descriptive tool: page 29ff.}{211}

So, apart from a religious focal point, Diana’s lucus at Nemi could have been a centre of Latin political bonds as well: an anti-Roman association that was remembered well into the Roman Republic (if we interpret Cato’s fragment in this way). Diana’s face as a political goddess gains extra significance if we confront the history of the cult at Nemi with Diana’s cult in the city of Rome, where her main temple was on the Aventine hill. In the literary tradition concerning this temple, its dedication is dated back to the time of Servius Tullius, who established Roman superiority over its neighbours and – taking inspiration from the temple at Ephesus – persuaded the Latins to build a temple to Diana. According to Livy, king Servius, after he:

\[
\text{[...]} \text{ had promoted the grandeur of the state by enlarging the City, and had shaped all his domestic policy to suit the demands of peace as well as those of war, he was unwilling that arms should always be the means employed for strengthening Rome's power, and sought to increase her sway by diplomacy, and at the same time to add something to the splendour of the City. Even at that early date the temple of Diana at Ephesus enjoyed great renown. It was reputed to have been built through the cooperation of the cities of Asia, and this harmony and community of worship Servius praised in superlative terms to the Latin nobles, with whom, both officially and in private, he had taken pains to establish a footing of hospitality and friendship. By dint of reiterating the same arguments he finally carried his point, and a shrine of Diana was built in Rome by the nations of Latium conjointly with the Roman People. This was an admission that Rome was the capital —a point which had so often been disputed by arms.}\footnote{Liv. 1.45.2-6: Aucta civitate magnitudine urbis, formatis omnibus domi et ad belli et ad pacis usus, ne semper armis opes adquirerentur, consilio augere imperium conatus est, simul et aliquod addere urbi decus. Iam tum erat inclitum Dianae Ephesiae fanum; id communiter a civitatibus Asiae factum fama ferebat. Eam consensum deosque consociatos laudare mire Servius inter proceres Latinorum, cum quibus publice privatimque hospitia amicitiasque de industria iuxserat. Saepè iterando eadem perpulit tandem ut Romae fanum Dianae populi Latini cum populo Romano facerent. Ea erat confession caput rerum Romanorum esse, de quo totiens armis certatum fuerat. The translation is slightly adapted from the Loeb edition.}{212}
Dionysius of Halicarnassus relates a similar story and adds that Servius set up a stone to commemorate the meeting between the Latin tribes and establish the rules that were agreed upon on that occasion. He was able to see the plaque for himself, apparently still in place centuries later, and for him the ancient Greek letters proved that these early Romans were no barbarians:

And to the end that no lapse of time should obliterate these laws, he [Servius] erected a bronze pillar upon which he engraved both the decrees of the council and the names of the cities which had taken part in it. This pillar still existed down to my time in the temple of Diana, with the inscription in the characters that were anciently used in Greece. This alone would serve as no slight proof that the founders of Rome were not barbarians; for if they had been, they would not have used Greek characters. 211

The archaeological remains of the temple have never been securely identified, although on the basis of a fragment of the Forma Urbis Romae, the current hypothesis is that it was located at the northwestern corner of the Aventine, in the area between the Santa Sabina, the Santa Prisca and the San Alessio churches. 214 The temple probably faced northwest, overlooking the forum Boarium and the Tiber river. 216 The stele with regulations that Dionysius of Halicarnassus saw in the first century AD and that regulated the affairs between the Romans and their Latin neighbours, might have become some sort of role model for the regulation of other cults: from several leges sacrae (inscriptions with cult regulations) we know of a lex Area Dianae in Aventino in which the arrangements at Diana’s cult seem to be a reference point for cults in Roman colonies. 216 The best known example is from the

---

211 Dion. Hal. 4.26.5: ἡν δὲ χρόνος αὐτῶς ἀφανὶς, στήλην κατασκευάσας χαλκῆν ἔγραψεν ἐν ταύτῃ τά τε δόξαντα τοὺς συνεδρίους καὶ τὰς μεταχειρίας τῆς συνόδου πόλεως. Αὕτη δὲ ἐς τό ποὺ κάθε ώρα ἧλιος ἡλικίας ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἀρείων ἱερῷ κεῖμέναι γραμμάτων ἔχουσα χαρακτήρας Ἑλληνικὸν, οἷος τὸ παλαιὸν ἢ Ἐλλάς ἔχρητο. Ὁ καὶ αὐτὸ ποίησαι ἐν τις ὑμῖν μικρὸν τεκμήριον τοῦ μὴ βαρβάρους εἶναι τοὺς οἰκίσαντάς την Ρώμην. οὐ γὰρ ἐν Ἑλληνικός ἔχρωντο γράμμασιν ὄντες βάρβαροι ἔχουσα χαρακτήρας Ἑλληνικὸν, οἷος τὸ παλαιὸν ἢ Ἐλλάς ἔχρητο. δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ ποίησαι ἐν τις ὑμῖν μικρὸν τεκμήριον τοῦ μὴ βαρβάρους εἶναι τοὺς οἰκίσαντας την Ρώμην. οὐ γὰρ ἐν Ἑλληνικός ἔχρωντο γράμμασιν ὄντες βάρβαροι.

The inscription was probably in Latin, but the archaic characters must have looked Greek to Dionysius. See further: Beard, North and Price (1998)II: 239-243

214 The fragment was identified by its inscription Cornificiae or Cornificianae, because Diana’s temple was known by that name after its restoration by L. Cornificius during the reign of Augustus (Suet. Aug. 29). Cf: CIL VI 4305. Vendittelli (1995) 12, Vendittelli (2005) 237-238.


216 Not to be confused with the lex Icilia de Aventino publicando that arranged the conversion of public land to private land on which plebeians could build houses (which turned the Aventine into a plebeian
altar dedicated to Augustus at Narbo, where the inscription – after mentioning some specific rules for the sanctuary – reads 'the other laws for this sanctuary shall be the same as those for the altar of Diana on the Aventine'.

The paradigmatic status of the lex should not be exaggerated – otherwise it would have perhaps been quoted more often – but it has been argued that the cult of Diana on the Aventine was a principal site for negotiating the status and cooperation between Rome and its neighbours, and so in provincial contexts it became a model for cult practice as a meeting-ground between Roman and non-Roman peoples. So, in the context of the expanding Roman empire, the early relation between Romans and Latins acquired a metaphorical meaning and the narratives surrounding the early history of Diana gained new significance.

The allusion that Diana was patroness of the relation between Romans and their neighbours is further strengthened by a casual comment of Varro, who, when he investigates the etymological origin of the Aventine, offers as one of the explanations that the hill was named after the word adventus, the 'coming of people, because there a temple of Diana was established in which all the Latins had rights in common'.

The cultus of Diana reflects a tradition of joint history and shared celebrations, but also an early and fundamental element of rivalry. While the Latins had joined the Roman cause, the fact that they had once fiercely opposed Rome was remembered and communicated as well. The thin line between partnership and competition of Rome and its surrounding communities is well illustrated by an anecdote in Livy, which allegedly took place after the construction of the temple, still during the reign of Servius Tullius. While the Romans were almighty in the region and the surrounding tribes had given up almost all attempts to rival their supremacy, a Sabine man appeared with a gigantic cow at the sanctuary of Diana on the Aventine. The cow was considered a prodigy because the citizens of the state who would sacrifice it to Diana, would make their state the seat of an empire. However, the Sabine man was cleverly deceived by a Roman priest, who send the man away to purify himself, quickly sacrificed the cow himself and thus

neighbourhood) and that was supposedly also placed in the sanctuary of Diana, in 456 BC: Liv. 3.31; Dion. Hal. 10.32.

Other examples: a dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus from Salona, Croatia (CIL III 1933 = ILS 4907) and an inscription from what was possibly a temple to Salus in Ariminum (modern Rimini) (CIL XI 361). The last inscription has the formula in an abridged form: H(aec) A(edes) S(alutis) A(ugustae) H(abet) L(eges) Q(uas) D(ianae) R(omae) IN A(ventino). This suggests that the formula (and therefore the status of Diana’s sanctuary) had a certain renown and that its regulations – to a certain degree – became standardized.


Varro, ILS 43: Aventinum aliquot de causis dicunt...alii A<ventum ab adventu hominum, quod co-munie Latinorum ibi Dianae templum sit constitutum.
secured the supremacy of the Roman state. Livy states that the horns were still in the vestibule of the temple, testifying to the prodigy many generations later.\textsuperscript{220}

2.6 Signs of syncretism

The fact that traditions of collaboration and rivalry between Rome and its neighbours existed around both Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis, has sparked a vivid modern debate about the relation between both goddesses, the antiquity of their temples and the presumed federal status of their cult practices.\textsuperscript{221} The long and complex discussion – most clearly articulated by Andreas Alföldi and Arnaldo Momigliano – centres around a few questions that with the current state of the evidence are difficult to answer.\textsuperscript{222} The first problem concerns the actual age of both sanctuaries. While the first activity on the site of Nemi can be traced back to protohistoric times and there was probably a temple on the site from the third century onwards, the absence of secure archaeological data on the Aventine makes a real comparison impossible.\textsuperscript{223} Much of the discussion has therefore dealt with their relative chronology and was based on the literary sources alone. Consequently it is inextricably linked to fundamental debates about the trustworthiness of the literary tradition on early Rome. Difficulties include – but are not limited to – the uncertain rule of Servius Tullius and the Etruscan kings and the limited knowledge of the organisation of the Latin League(s) in the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BC.\textsuperscript{224} This chapter is not the place to go into all these discussions, but what can be stated is that most scholars have now agreed on the hypothesis that the sanctuary at Nemi preceded that in Rome. Many have recognized literary commonplaces in the origin story of Servius’ dedication of the Aventine cult and, at the same time, have adopted Alföldi’s position that the dedication of the lucus by the dictator Latinus at Nemi (tentatively dated to the early fifth century BC) did not mark the start of the activities there, but happened in a later stage of the cult practice.\textsuperscript{225} With some reservations with regard to the scanty evidence and the identity of the early goddess that was later associated with Diana, we may therefore assume that the cult in Nemi preceded that in Rome.

\textsuperscript{220} Liv. 1.45.4-7. Cf: Plut. Quaest. Rom. 4, Val.Max. 8.3.1. The story is probably also commemorated by a coin of A. Postumius A.f. Sp.n. Albinus (RRC 372/1).


\textsuperscript{222} The different positions are most clearly expressed in: Alföldi (1960) 137-144, Alföldi (1963) 48-55, Momigliano (1966) 641-648.

\textsuperscript{223} For the archaeological remains in Nemi, see section ‘Temples and votives’, on pages 58-65.

\textsuperscript{224} The best introduction to these issues to my opinion still is Cornell (1995), see especially pages 1-30 (on the realliability of the sources), 173-197 (on the traditions of Etruscan Rome and Servius Tullius) and (on Roman Latin relations). Cf: Smith (1996a) 185-223, Forsythe (2005) 59-79, 93-124. For similar issues regarding the kingship of Tarquinius Superbus and his interference with Roman religion, see chapter IV, pages 143ff.

With this, however, the second question is not automatically resolved: were both of the sanctuaries federal cults for the Latins and what was the relationship between them? In other words: was the sanctuary in Rome explicitly built to rival the federal cult at lake Nemi, or – vice-versa – does the dedication narrated by Cato reflect an attempt of the Latins to politically isolate the Romans and give a new significance to the existing cult at Nemi? Alföldi, and Wissowa before him, maintained that the Arican cult was not only the oldest of the two, but that Diana Nemorensis protected the political relationships between the Latins from the earliest history of the sanctuary onwards – the moment recorded by Cato being only a rededication or refocus of that association.\(^{226}\) The other position, again most strongly advanced by Arnaldo Momigliano, claims that it was Servius Tullius’ temple and festival in Rome – inspired by the Artemis cult at Efese – that established Diana’s guardianship over the Latin political bonds. The other tribes would have resisted this by asserting a competing claim to the goddess at Nemi.\(^{227}\)

Apart from arguments based on iconography, which will be discussed later in this chapter, the fact that both Dianas celebrated their festival on the same day has played an important part in the discussion. As we have seen, Statius claims that ‘all of Italy’ celebrated the Arican cult on the Ides (the thirteenth) of August, hereby implying – as emphasized by Alföldi – that the cult at Nemi took priority over that in Rome.\(^{228}\) The obvious primitive elements in Nemi – around the rex Nemorensis, that is – would add to this argument. Nevertheless, the same date appears in the inscribed fasti, referring specifically to Dianae Aventinae.\(^{229}\) According to Festus this was a dies natalis dedicated especially to slaves, because Servius Tullius was born from a slave woman himself.\(^{230}\) Plutarch also explains the date by connecting it to slaves and Servius’ Tullius background, adding that it was also a day on which women – after slave women started the custom – ritually washed their hair.\(^{231}\) Momigliano and others consider it very significant that the Roman date is remembered...


\(^{227}\) Momigliano (1966) 644.

\(^{228}\) Stat.Silv. 3.1.52-60. See page 47 and note 191.


\(^{230}\) Fest. 460.33-36L: Servorum dies festus vulgo existimatur [das Au[gusti], quod eo die Ser[vius] Tullius, natus servus, aedem Dianae dedicaverit in Aventino, cuius tutelae sint cervi; a quo celeritate fugitivos vocent cervos.

\(^{231}\) Plut. Quaest. Rom. 100: Ἡ δὲ τὰ ταῖς Ἀὐγοῦσταις εἴδος. Σεκστιλίας δὲ πρόετρον λεγομένας, ἐπιστήμων αἰτεῖ τὲ δουλαίαι καὶ οἱ δουλοί πάντες, αἰτεῖν τὸν γυναικὸς μάλιστα ὑπεπέθεοι τὰς κεφαλὰς καὶ καθαίρειν κατατρίβοντιν; ἢ δὲ τὰ δερόντα τὸν βασιλέα κατά ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν ἡ ζυγάλωτον γενόθηκεν θεραπανίδος ἄρειν ἔργων ἔχουσιν οἱ θεραπόντες, τὸ δὲ πλούνει τὰς κεφαλὰς ἁρξάμενον ἀπὸ τῶν θεραπανίδων διὰ τὴν...
at several instances and by several authors, and that it is presented in connection with Servius Tullius and his efforts to unite and control the Latins. In absence of additional references to the Latin league at Nemi (other than the Cato fragment), they judge the connection of the Aventine cult with the political relationships and rivalries of the Latins as older and more important than that at Nemi.

As mentioned before, the debate has not produced any definite answers so far. While further archaeological exploration of the Aventine perhaps might provide some insight on – absolute or relative – chronologies, it is likely that the specific role of Diana will remain one of the many uncertainties that surround Roman-Latin relationships in the archaic era. However, what has not been emphasized enough, to my opinion, is that the many similarities between both Dianas in later (Republican and Imperial) times are significant by themselves. They show that by the time our sources were written there was a considerable degree of syncretism between the respective literary traditions and the memories sustaining and surrounding them. Their common connection with Latin political bonds and the shared festival date are perhaps the most illustrative parallels between Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis, but the overview of literary sources in this chapter has brought out others as well. For one, both goddesses had an established literary association with servitude: the rex Nemorensis was necessarily a runaway slave whilst the cult on the Aventine was allegedly visited by slaves, in remembrance of Servius Tullius’ background. Furthermore, the discourse about Diana Nemorensis’ special bond with women worshippers – so important in modern analyses of the cult, as we saw earlier in this chapter – finds a parallel in Plutarch’s remark about women visiting the Aventine sanctuary. Finally, even the accounts involving the nymph Egeria, the consort of king Numa that was venerated in the form of a spring at lake Nemi, coincide with accounts of another spring dedicated to her at Rome. According to Livy and Plutarch, king Numa consulted Egeria in a ‘dark grove’ near the Porta Capena, which was at the foot of the Aventine hill

έορτὴν ἀχρὶ τῶν ἑλευθέρων προῆλθεν. (‘Why is it that on the Ides of August, formerly called Sextilis, all the slaves, female and male, keep holiday, and the Roman women make a particular practice of washing and cleansing their heads? Do the servants have release from work because on this day king Servius was born from a captive maidservant? And did the washing of their heads begin with the slave-women, because of their holiday, and extend itself to free-born women?’). In another fragment (C.G. 16), Plutarch refers to Diana’s association with servitude as well: Gaius Gracchus, after being defeated in his attempt at revolution, flees to the temple and out of disappointment prays to Diana that the Romans ‘might never cease to be in servitude’ (μηδέποτε παύσασθαι δουλεύοντα).


and through which a little stream ran. Suggestively, it was located roughly at the point where Diana’s temple overlooked the valley of the Tiber.\footnote{Liv. 1.21.3; Plut. Numa 8.6. Green (2007) 224-225.}

What becomes clear from this short comparison is that the supposedly rival cults of Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis in fact showed a considerable degree of resemblance. The modern attempts to attribute certain characteristics or cult practices to either the Arician or the Roman goddess miss the point, to a certain degree, because they fail to acknowledge the many ways the ancient memorial cultures around both Diana’s had grown towards each other over time. In our desire to understand the role of Diana Nemorensis in the Roman landscape, it is important to recognize the syncretism with Diana Aventinensis, because it shows a religious dynamism that has often been denied to the cult. In other words: it was not a static relic from a long forgotten past, which stood, ‘in striking isolation to the polished Italian society of its time’.\footnote{Frazer (1911) 10.} On the contrary, the literary sources show Diana Nemorensis as a multifaceted goddess, whose many faces were surrounded with stories and memories that brought her into direct contact with not only the city of Rome and its inhabitants, but also with her supposed opponent Diana on the Aventine.

One could argue that the observed dynamics in Diana’s character were merely a result of literary playfulness, a creative or intellectual enterprise that had little to do with the cultic reality at lake Nemi or the Aventine. While poetic elements can certainly be recognized in many of the descriptions we have seen so far, it would be, to my opinion, mistaken to see this syncretism as solely a literary phenomenon. We have already seen that in the case of the festival on the Ides of August, the literary and epigraphic sources can be seen to overlap, and different versions of the Latin past complement but also contradict each other. It makes no sense to try to distinguish between literary discourses that would be somehow less ‘real’ or ‘believable’ than ritual practices or material remains: these representations might be relevant at different occasions or situations, but together – as I have argued before – they formed an image of Diana Nemorensis. With this in mind, we now turn to some of the material remains that shed further light on the worshippers that visited lake Nemi, the ritual and memorial practices that occurred there and the goddess that was at the centre of the ceremonies.

### 2.7 Temples and votives

As mentioned above, many modern scholars assumed that the mythology around Diana’s cult at lake Nemi reflected a time-old cult practice, with roots in archaic pre-Roman times. At the moment the site of the sanctuary was definitively identified by lord Savile Lumley, ambassador to the British
Crown in Rome in the late nineteenth century, the excitement was quite high, not the least because of the large quantities of sculpture that were discovered in its votive cells. The site was excavated – one might say plundered – in several short campaigns that unearthed a rather complex arrangement of building structures. The hasty and largely undocumented search for sculptural treasures in these early excavations has proved an obstacle for later studies, and although excavations since then have provided us with new insights on the sanctuary, its individual elements and its natural setting, many of the big questions regarding the cult practice remain open. While promising results have been recorded in the latest campaigns – culminating in a recent book and an exhibition – it remains difficult or even impossible to relate the various remains and building periods to each other and to the literary sources available. The aim of the brief survey of the archaeological evidence in this chapter is not to solve all these matters – which is impossible – but to present their implications for our understanding of Diana Nemorensis in the Roman religious landscape.

Of course, the archaeological evidence for the sanctuary of lake Nemi consists of more than just the remains of buildings. The earliest evidence of activity on the site is formed by miniature pottery and a variety of bronze objects dating from the late eight or early seventh centuries BC, and large deposits of sixth century material have been found as well. Strangely, material from the fifth century seems absent, but after that gap, votive activity continued well into the middle and late Republic. The material itself is closely comparable to other votive depots in Latium: apart from pottery, there are considerable quantities of fibulae, small statuettes in bronze (mostly of Diana), coins jewellery, (miniature) weapons and large quantities of terracotta figurines and anatomical votives from the fourth and third centuries BC. In these anatomical votives, which include an uterus and male and female genitals, Wissowa saw his theory confirmed that Diana originally and primarily watched over the affairs of women, and many have followed his suggestion. However, a

---

236 The earliest excavations are described in Rossbach (1890) 147-165, Wallis (1893), Borsari (1895) 424-431. There were a few earlier finds as well, summarized in: Blagg (1983) 22. A good overview of the early campaigns is provided by Ghini (1993) 277-280 and note 6. With regard to the excavation of the sculptures and their transportation to Nottingham, Pennsylvania and Copenhagen, see: Blagg (1983) 21-23, Guldager Bilde and Moltesen (2002) 7-14, Moltesen (1997b) 26-33. The sculptures themselves are briefly discussed on pages 65-66.

237 Bouma (1996b) III 61-62.

238 The fifth century decline in votive material is visible in all of Latium, and is also clear from the small number of new religious sites identifiable in the archaeological record and the large number of sixth century sites that ceased to exist. Although it is possible that we do not recognize certain types of votives or that the century is underrepresented because of a lack of archaeological research, the decline seems sufficiently strong to assume that the lack of votive finds also represents a lack of votive activity. A satisfying explanation for the phenomenon has however not been found yet. Rous (2010) 78-81.

239 A more complete overview, with the finding locations of the deposits, in: Bouma (1996b) 60-64. See also: Gierow (1966) 39-40.

240 Wissowa (1912) 199-200. For the literary aspects of this interpretation, see page 48-49, with notes.
closer examination of the material, in the light of general studies on Latial votive culture and recent evaluations of the role of gender in Roman religion, points to another conclusion. Comparative research has shown that votives referring to fertility and pregnancy are very common in sanctuaries across Latium, and that the habit was not limited to either female or male deities. Furthermore, the votive deposits are only rarely gender exclusive – in the sense that they show only breasts and uteri or only phalluses. Nemi was no exception to this; both male and female genitals were found and in (relative) quantities that are comparable with other sites. A few remarkable finds – notably an inscribed spear with a dedication to Diana from a *noutrix* (wet-nurse) *Paperia* – have perhaps coloured our view but in light of the bigger Latial picture, the votives do not characterize Diana Nemorensis as a special goddess for women. Modern attempts to categorize her as such have overlooked the actual diversity of the material and the multifaceted nature of the cult practise itself.

The votives show that the cult had an early phase in which there was no stone temple, as the earliest structural remains on the site date from the late fourth or early third century BC. Foundations from this time were recently discovered in the building that since the earliest excavations by Lord Savile has been labelled as the main temple of the sanctuary, and that has become known as ‘building K’ on site maps (see figures 2.1 and 2.2). Giuseppa Ghini and Francesca Diosono, the latest excavators, have established three building phases in building K: after the beginnings in the fourth or early third century BC, the temple was completely rebuilt and reoriented in the second half of the second century BC, after which it – with much of the rest of the

---

241 For overviews of votive material in Latium, see: Comella (1981) 717-803, Bouma (1996a). With regard to the religious position of women in Republican society, Celia Schultz (2006a) has convincingly argued that many cults were not gender restricted and that women worshipped largely the same gods as men did. Although modern scholarship has often identified cults as being either male or female, ancient evidence (inscriptions, votives) does not support this.

242 Blagg (1986) 214. The spear point (CIL I² 45) has been studied by Holland (2008) 95-115, who denies the specific female connotation but suggests that the *noutrix* may have been a *liberta*; the spear point being a symbolic reference to Diana as a patroness of freedom. According to Holland, there was a parallel with Diana’s dominion over animals as well: *manumission* turned slaves from the legal status of animals into the status of human beings. Although her reconstruction of *Paperia’s* status of freedwoman (based, e.g. on the *gentilicium*) seems plausible, the entire hypothesis to me seems a bit far-fetched.

243 A similar point could be made with regard to Diana’s qualities as a healing goddess, much emphasized by for example by Green (2007) 235-236. The typological overviews show that health concerns were expressed at many sites and that a great number of gods – certainly not all with healing aspects – received anatomical votives. Other evidence for Diana’s healing qualities is scarce, and votives alone are not reason enough to label a cult as a specific healing cult. Cf: Schultz (2006a) 119, Glinister (2006) 16-32 and see the introduction, pages 33-34.

sanctuary – took its final form in the middle of the first century BC. Large numbers of architectural decorations, like terracotta antefixes and pedimental sculpture, have been found, as well as exquisite gilded bronze revetments, dating from about 300 BC to early Imperial times. The earliest fragments reveal a rich and highly diverse roof decoration scheme but it is unclear to what extent they can be connected to one of building phases of building K established by Ghini and Diosono – or more accurately: if they can be connected to (a refurbishment of) that structure at all. Even more uncertain is the status of the fragments of two or more votive model temples, which have been dated to the fourth century BC, and may have depicted the earliest temple on the site. Debates remain about how to reconstruct these miniaturite temples, but at first sight their design does not seem to match the foundations from the fourth century BC at all.

Here, we touch upon some of the great interpretation problems regarding the temple at lake Nemi. Apart from the diverging chronologies of the architectural decorations and temple foundations, the main difficulty is presented by a fragment of Vitruvius, who briefly comments on Diana’s temple and categorizes it in a list of temples that had an unusual shape. They had ‘columns added right and left on the sides of the pronaos’, the length of their cellae was twice its width and this meant that ‘all the features which are customary on the front are transferred to the flanks’. From the other examples Vitruvius gives it becomes clear that this meant that the cella of the temple was not positioned in line with the pronaos, but was rotated 90 degrees, a feature which in modern literature has been labeled as a transverse cella and may have been a convenient solution in case there was limited space available. Problematic in the case of Nemi is that none of the excavated ground plans of building K seem to match Vitruvius’ description. Ghini and Diosono have suggested that the second building phase (early second century BC) might have resembled the transverse cella.

---

245 Ghini (2012c) 273-275. I have recently understood (from the director of the excavation campaigns, dr. Francesca Diosono) that the last excavations (in the summer of 2015) have produced traces of an earlier small temple building, with fragmentary terracotta decorations and a small stretch of wall that seems to predate the fourth century BC wall. If the chronology is correct, this structure would predate the Roman dominance over the cult and could thus be connected to the early Latin cult site noted by Cato (Or. Fr. 58, see pages 50ff with notes). For the moment however, the finds are still under investigation and have not been published yet.

246 The terracotta building decorations are thoroughly investigated by Känel (2000) 131-139. He identifies four main phases in roof decoration: the first terracotta’s were produced around the year 300 BC, a second style appeared around the middle of the second century BC and subsequently there are antefixes that can be connected to the monumental refurbishment of the sanctuary around 100 BC. Finally, some antefixes and a relief plaque remain from the early Imperial age. Especially the first two stages of this chronology do not match the building phases of building K. See further, for the terracotta’s: Andrén (1940) 282-283, Blagg (1983) 31-34. For the fragments of the gilded bronze frieze: Morpurgo (1903) 318-330.

247 Some of the later antefixes (100 BC) most certainly belong to the area of the porticus and the theatre (see below), but the contextualization of the earlier fragments is insecure.


249 The temple of Castor on the Circus Flaminius and the temple of Veiovis (on the Capitol) apparently had this unusual layout as well, Vitr. 4.8.4: [...] Nemori Dianae columnis adiectis dextra ac sinistra ad umeros pronai. [...] ex is omnia quae solent esse in frontibus, ad latera sunt transdata.
type from one sight point, but given the very fragmentary state of the evidence at this moment – even the location of the entrance in this building phase is uncertain – this seems rather premature.\textsuperscript{250} Also, it seems unlikely that Vitruvius would include a temple in this category that by his time had long been rebuilt and was orientated differently. So, either Vitruvius was wrong in labelling the temple in Nemi as one with a transverse cella, or building K was not the main temple of the sanctuary. In the latter case, it has to be searched for elsewhere.

Before we however turn to possible solutions for this problem, we must briefly discuss the other elements of the sanctuary. Most visible today, are the walls and niches that surrounded the main terrace and can be dated to the late Republican monumental refurbishment of the sanctuary. The terrace measures approximately 250 by 200 metres and is supported on the side of the lake by a series of triangular niches. On the other (north east) side there is a high wall with circular niches that supports the terrace above; in front of this a colonnade of which some bases and columns remain. Also against this wall, are the so-called \textit{celle donarie}: a set of covered rooms that have produced the rich amount of statuary that was mentioned above, and that was of both votive and honorary nature.\textsuperscript{251} A small theatre, first built in the first century BC and already mentioned as the site of the possible reinterpretation of the duel of the \textit{rex Nemorensis}, was excavated in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century but is at the moment covered by the buildings and grounds of a modern farmhouse.\textsuperscript{252} Finally, adjoining the theatre, part of a small thermal complex has been identified, as well as rooms that possibly housed \textit{sacerdotes} and visitors of the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{253}

With the late Republican terracing, the colonnade and the theatre, the sanctuary has many of the characteristics of the standard monumental Latial sanctuary and indeed it has been included in the typology by Filippo Coarelli.\textsuperscript{254} There are, however, some notable discrepancies: the theatre, the baths and the housing facilities have a different orientation than the rest of the buildings and, being outside the walls and porticos, they do not seem to be included in the area of the \textit{temenos}. Although the landscape has obviously been altered (by the construction of terraces) to provide a

\textsuperscript{250} Ghini (2012c) 275.
\textsuperscript{251} See for the sculpture, pages 65-66. Due to the undocumented and very uncertain finding conditions it is hard to establish the context of these finds, but there is a reasonable suggestion that at least part of the material was not found in situ but deposited in a later stage, either in antiquity or later, as a destiny for a lime kiln: Guldager Bilde (2000) 101. Remarkable for example, is the fact that many of the architectural decorations were found in the votive rooms, apparently preserved there after a rebuilding of the temple in the first century BC. The mixed display of honorary portraits and cultic statues in several rooms is also significant, but this seems an original characteristic of the sanctuary layout, rather than the result of later deposition.
\textsuperscript{252} These excavations are published in Morpurgo (1931) 237-305. See further: Poulsen (1941) 1-52, Ghini (1993) 280-281
\textsuperscript{253} Published along with the theatre in: Morpurgo (1931) 237-305.
\textsuperscript{254} Coarelli (1987) 165-185.
scenic background for the sanctuary, building K is not at the centre of this arrangement and, moreover, is positioned not at the highest but almost at the lowest point of the slope.

Earlier, we have been warned against using the model of the monumental Latial sanctuary as a prescriptive rather than a descriptive tool, and this might seem reason enough to accept the somewhat unusual layout of Diana Nemorensis’ sanctuary as one of the many idiosyncracies that existed within this category of Latial sanctuaries. Yet, there still is the problem of Vitruvius’ description that does not match the excavated remains on the site. To solve the inconsistencies, Coarelli – and others before and after him – has proposed that the main temple of Diana Nemorensis was not building K but was located higher on the slope, on the upper terrace overlooking the other buildings. Excavations since 2003 have indeed brought forward substantial Roman remains on this terrace, but nothing that resembled a temple, let alone one with a transverse cella (figure 2.3). Instead, a monumental nymphaeum was excavated, which was probably connected to a natural spring and is consequently – but hypothetically – interpreted as a place of worship for the nymph Egeria. The nymphaeum itself is very big and extends over two terraces. It can be dated to the first century AD, and was the refurbishment of an already existing cistern from the first century BC. It was richly decorated, with a monumental façade on the first terrace and a basin in the form of a cavea on the second.

In their publications of the finds, the excavators have attributed the monumental fountain on the basis of the bricks and decoration used to the Julio-Claudian age, more specifically to the reign of Caligula. This would be another proof of the emperor actively interfering in the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis. We already saw his involvement with the ritual of the rex Nemorensis, and his presence at lake Nemi is further confirmed by the famous luxury ships that were lifted from the bottom of the lake in the 1920s, only to be destroyed by fire in the final stages of the second world war. In recent years, the connection between Nemi and Caligula has become even stronger, with the discovery of a larger than life statue of an emperor, wearing typical soldiers boots and seated on an elaborately decorated throne (figure 2.4). Although much of the body is missing, the figure was quickly identified as Caligula: the archaeological remains of the find spot (on the south east side of

---

255 See the Introduction, pages 29-31.
256 Coarelli (1987) 172-173, with earlier bibliography. Other scholars who have assumed that the main temple was on another – higher – terrace: Pairault (1969) 448-452, Blagg (1986) 216, Rous (2010) 190, who calls it a plausible theory.
259 For an introduction of the history of the ships, see: Ghini (1992), Bonino (2003). The ships are attributed to Caligula on the basis of lead pipes that were inscribed with his name (C. CAESARIS AUG. GERMANIC) and that also prove the presence of plumping and running hot water on the ships.
260 The stylistic elements of the statue are described in: Ghini (2012c) 279-288.
the lake) consequently were assumed to be a plausible location for the palace of the princeps that was long hypothesized there.  

The reasoning has somewhat of a circular character, since the ships are the only finds that can be attributed to Caligula with some degree of certainty. At the present state of research, the statue, imperial villa and monumental nymphaeum cannot be dated to the princeps’ reign specifically, and with one hypothesis building on the next, the verifiable basis of Caligula’s presence at the lake is actually quite weak. At the same time, it is at least clear that the first century AD was a period of great activity for the sanctuary, which underwent big changes and was further monumentalized. The involvement of the Julio-Claudian dynasty in this process would not be out of the ordinary, and since we already have multiple references to Caligula in the literary sources and in the epigraphic record (which we will discuss further ahead), he may very well be our best candidate. In any case, within this context of prosperity and renewed attention, endorsed by the involvement of the imperial family, it is conceivable that the stories around Diana’s sanctuary were re-emphasized and reformulated, and thus gained new meanings.

For now, we must conclude our analysis of the archaeological record with a few of the most recent and exciting finds on the upper terrace of the sanctuary. Here, in 2009, a square structure with low walls was found with a clearing in the middle that was tiled with pieces of brick (figures 2.3 and 2.5). It was located next to stairs that led up from the location of the votive cells and connected both terraces. Behind the square structure, there is a rock-strewn area with materials dating from the late Bronze age, apparently untouched by later monumentalization of the sanctuary. The square brick walls are difficult to date and even more difficult to interpret, but this has not prevented the excavators and other commentators from drawing a rather striking conclusion: the square structure would be the base of the sacred tree of the rex Nemorensis and the rock-strewn area a reminiscence of the lucus that was the religious focus and the very beginning of the site. Further analysis is eagerly awaited, but at present there seems to be good reason for caution in the interpretation of these remains. Even if they prove to be the base of an actual tree – which to me seems hard to believe in the first place, considering the tiles bricks that would prevent any roots from growing inside – and some sort of lucus, these are not straightforward testimonies of the existence of the rex Nemorensis. We would be skipping at least one important step: what we

---

261 See, on the presence of the emperor at the lake: Ghini and Diosono (2013) 231-236.
262 Diosono and Ghini (2013) 41, Diosono (2013) 81-82. The square structure has not been precisely dated by the excavators, but they claim the walls are in opus quasi reticolatum, which would date them to the late Republic. A quite devastating modern reconstruction however makes the analysis – and any personal observations - of the structure even more difficult.
263 It has been suggested that the tree was ceremonially placed there and removed again after the rites, which would make it a sort of bonsai avant la lettre. Ghini and Diosono (2012) 135.
primarily would see is the conscious choice of an individual or a group to commemorate the tradition of the priest king and the lucus and to inscribe it in the landscape. This would constitute a significant memorial practice, in a society that was well aware of the ancient roots of Diana’s cult and actively promoted them. But again, on the basis of the square structure alone, this scenario is not very likely.

2.8 Images old and new

While the excavations in Nemi continue and many questions remain open, the archaeological remains of Diana’s temple have attracted much scholarly attention. Not only because of Frazer, his rex and the possible connection with Rome’s archaic past, but also because of the remarkable amount of statuary that the excavations have produced. The bulk of these finds was, as we have already discussed, discovered in the so-called celle donarie in the centre of the colonnade of the lower terrace. The most elaborate of these rooms seems to have been the ala of Servilius Quartus, which was decorated in the late Republic with a mosaic floor that had an inscription in a tabula ansata that devoted all the things that were in the room to Diana. A few decades later, in the Claudian period, the room was redecorated to display the honorific statues and herm portraits of the so-called Fundilia group, named after the local patrona Fundilia Rufa. Apart from her life size statue, there is a herm with Fundilia’s portrait and a statue of her libertus, C. Fundilius Doctus, who erected the sculptures of both Fundilia and himself. Furthermore, the room revealed a statue of a local magistrate and several portrait herms, of which two libertae and one rhetor can be identified with certainty.

The display of public sculptures in a votive room dedicated to Diana is remarkable, and many questions remain about the position of Fundilia’s group in the sanctuary and its relation to the cult practice. The hasty excavation of its context has done little to solve these problems, nor does the fact that the statuary is now spread over three museums. I will discuss the social status of some of the public figures later on in this chapter, but the artistic and technical characteristics of the statues themselves have been discussed and described many times, and are of little interest for our current discussion of Diana Nemorensis. I therefore gladly refer to the earlier studies on the subject, such as the overviews by Mette Molteese and Pia Guldager and the excellent discussion in

265 Guldager Bilde (2000) 101 and earlier interpreters have dated the statues to the Tiberian age, based on the hairstyles that resemble the courtly hairstyles of that period. Fejfer (2008) 285-290 however, points out that the sharp lines and asymmetry in the elderly faces are not in line with the idealistic values of the early Julio-Claudian period and seem more fitting for the later Claudian age.
266 Because of the accompanying inscriptions. The rhetor: CIL XIV 4102: Q(uintus) Hostius Q(uinti) f(ilius) Capito / rhetor. For the libertae, see page 72.
Jane Fejfers study on Roman portrait statues.\textsuperscript{267} Among the rest of the sculptures found in the sanctuary, it is not surprising that images of Diana occur most frequently. Still, the finds confirm the presence of a number of other gods and goddesses as well, like Bacchus, Apollo and Venus, of which it is uncertain whether they had a decorative function only or were ‘visiting deities’ of some religious importance.\textsuperscript{268} In lack of epigraphic or literary evidence for cult activity for these deities, we can only hope that further investigation of the terraces of the sanctuary (were most of the sculpture was found) brings forward more of the architectural context of the finds.

Part of the sanctuary probably had a strong Egyptian connection, as we know of figurines of Bes and Harpocrates that were found at the site, along with a small ivory head of Isis and a fragment of a marble frieze (dated to the first century AD) with a Nilotic scene of two playing pygmies and a crocodile.\textsuperscript{269} It is likely that this decoration was connected to the worship of Isis and Bubastis, who – according to a treasury inscription excavated in the theatre area – had a fanum on the sanctuary grounds and received rich gifts there.\textsuperscript{270} While the relation between Diana Nemorensis and Isis remains unclear – some have suggested syncretism on the basis of their common interest in the workings of the moon – it seems clear the Egyptian gods were part of the cultic activity on the sanctuary grounds.\textsuperscript{271} At the same time, we must realise that the sanctuary may have displayed a sculptural programme that does not fit our distinction between ‘decorative and ‘religious’ imagery as neatly as we would like.

For this moment, we will concentrate on the portrayals of Diana herself and look at the iconography of the goddess. Can we distinguish a distinctive appearance of Diana Nemorensis, one that sets her apart from Diana’s with other epithets elsewhere? Looking at representations of the goddess that were found at the sanctuary, in the form of statuettes, terracotta’s and a bronze figurine, this does not seem noticeable. From the earliest evidence – votive images in the third century BC – onwards, Diana is clearly depicted as the huntress: a young woman wearing a chiton, a cloak wrapped around her waist and sometimes carrying a bough, a quiver or both.\textsuperscript{272} She is occasionally accompanied by a hunting dog, and at other times by a deer or a stag.\textsuperscript{273} Also notable are the statuettes in which Diana’s hair is styled with a characteristic bow knot on top of her head:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{268} Guldager Bilde (2000) 103-104.
  \item \textsuperscript{270} CIL XIV 2215. For further discussion, see: Leone (2000) 31.
  \item \textsuperscript{271} See especially: Moltesen (2009) 345-368.
  \item \textsuperscript{273} For example: Blagg (1983) 48 no 67.
\end{itemize}
the hair is tied in two loops, a string of hair in the middle ties the knot, and bundles of locks lead towards it (figure 2.6).274

Interestingly enough, some of the Republican antefixes – dated to the second century BC – show a female head with a bow knot and thus may be recognized as representations of Diana as well.275 Somewhat harder to identify, are the two larger than life-size marble acrolithic heads of late Republican date that have been found in the most southern votive room (figures 2.7 and 2.8).276 Because of their size, the quality of the marble and the find context, they have been identified as cult-statues of Diana, but the iconography of the heads of does not confirm this with complete certainty. Both heads exhibit a mature character, and their faces have been described as queenly or matronal.277 As such, they are rather different from the young and fierce posture that we know from the smaller statuettes. One of the acroliths, although the back of the head is severely damaged, does seem to have the a coiffure that closely resembles the bow knot that is so characteristic for earlier Diana images.278 Besides, it might be entirely possible that the late Republican statues carried a bough or a quiver that distinguished them as Diana in her hunter guise, but from the remaining heads we cannot tell.

Aside from these uncertainties, it is clear that from the earliest depictions onwards until Imperial times, the young female hunter was the most widely used representation of Diana in her sanctuary at Nemi. The association was reinforced by the terracotta building decorations of the different temple phases, in which multiple boughs and quivers appear.279 It is clear that by the fourth century BC, when she becomes recognisable as an anthropomorphic figure, Diana had appropriated the visual image of Artemis, the Greek goddess of hunting. This iconographic syncretism is by no means unique for Nemi: as early as the sixth century BC it had taken place all over Latium, and a possible depiction of the archaic statue of Diana on the Aventine shows the goddess in her hunting guise as well.280 For the Nemi representations, the bow knot may have been a distinctive

---

276 Morpurgo (1903) 318, Guldager Bilde (2000) 103-104, fig. 6, Blagg (1983) 31-37. The largest one (figure 2.7), which is about 48 cm in height, is now in the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (cat. no. MS3483), a slightly smaller one (figure 2.8) is kept in the Glyptothek in Copenhagen (cat. no. 1517). Both heads were found during the 1895 excavation campaign, probably in the same room and in a secondary context, although the unclear excavation rapport leaves room for doubt. Guldager Bilde (2000) 99-100, Guldager Bilde and Moltesen (2002) 19.
278 Guldager Bilde (1995) 201-212
280 Malaspina (1994-1995) 15-36. The image is presented on a coin: RRC 448.3. For discussion see: Simon and Bauchhensch (1984) no 223, Ampolo (1970) 200-201. The latter suggests that the coin represented the cult statue copied from the Artemis temple at Massilia (cf. Strab. 4.1.5), which was built in the sixth century BC. He uses this to suggest a sixth century dating for the statue in Rome as well, and assumes that the temple for Diana in
feature, since it appears on several of the archaic and Republican heads, but the lack of material does not allow for any definitive conclusions. All in all, we have not been able to establish a distinct image of Diana Nemorensis so far, one that was either older than or different from other Artemis and Diana representations of the time.

The perspective changes, however, when we shift our attention away from the sanctuary finds and take into account numismatic sources as well. Andreas Alföldi, in an influential article from 1960, suggestively argued that an illustration of the original archaic statue of Diana Nemorensis may be found on the reverse of a denarius, issued in 43 BC by the quattorvir monetalis P. Accoleius Lariscolus (figure 2.9). The coin image had previously been identified as three Querquetulanae, nymphs of the oak groves, but Alföldi identified the depicted trees as a grove of pines. Furthermore, he established Aricia as the origo of the moneyer Accoleius, by relating the name to inscriptions of local Accoleii found at the sanctuary. The triple cult statue in the front of the picture, he then recognized as the original archaic statue of Nemorensis. It shows three representations of the goddess standing side-by-side and connected by a bar at shoulder level. The figure at the right holds a bow in her right hand and that at the left holds a flower in her left. The figure at the right wears a chiton; the other two seem to wear a peplos. There are three dies of the obverse with three different archaistic heads and different hairstyles: each coin is thought to have represented one of the heads of the triple statue.

Alföldi suggested that the triple image represented Diana Nemorensis in her appearance as Diana Trivia: the connected deities being Diana the huntress, Selene the moon goddess and Hecate, the goddess of the underworld. The connection of the three deities finds parallels in the Greek world, but the maker of the cult statue was – according to Alföldi’s interpretation – more likely trained in the artistic language of the Etruscans, making the representation a local tradition. If we follow Alföldi’s interpretation, the representation on the coin gives us an idea of the original cult image from the sixth century BC, which was already present in the lucus before the first temple and was the real focus point of the Latin alliances in pre-Roman times. In 43 BC it still stood, as a valuable relic of the past. The presence of the time-old image, in Alföldi’s view proved that the cult

---

282 CIL XIV 4196: M(arcus) Iulius M(arcii) f(ilius) M(arcus) Accoleius M(arcii) f(ilius) aed(iles) d(e) s(enatus) s(ententia) ; CIL XIV 4197: L(ucius) Pontius [3] / Q(uintus) Petreius[s 3] / C(aius) Pupilius[s 3] / M(arcus) Luvcai[3] / L(ucius) Accoleius[us 3] / L(ucius) Velleius [. These are the only Accoleii we know of, so the gens seems to have been fairly small.
283 Alföldi (1960) 137-138, where he argues that the different obverses of RRC 468 represent a deliberate choice of the moneyer in charge of the design. – in contrast with the reverse, which was becoming cruder because the design was too complicated for the average die-cutter.
284 Alföldi (1960) 142.
at lake Nemi was long established before the (re-)dedication of the lucus in the Cato fragment took place. It also meant that the cult practice preceded that of the Aventine Diana in Rome.

The identification of the triple statue on the denarii of Accoleius Lariscolus as a representation of Diana Nemorensis – as Diana Trivia – has found general acclaim, and many scholars have also followed Alföldi in his suggestion that the coin presents a genuine archaic image. In support of that theory, Poul Jørgen Riis suggested that a bronze head from the fifth century BC, found in the town of Aricia, was one part of the original triple statue (figure 2.10). A marble head from the early Imperial age, found on the sanctuary site, was interpreted by Enrico Paribeni as a copy of such an archaic image of Diana Trivia as well (figure 2.11). Strikingly, the hairstyle of both the bronze and the marble head very closely resembles the bust on the obverse of the Accoleius coin and so the parallels strengthen the idea of the continuity of an archaic statue type. Finally, somewhat more arguable, Filippo Coarelli suggested that the unusual triangular form of some of the Diana antefixes from the second century BC alluded to this archaic image of Diana Trivia as well.

Whereas the presence of a triple statue of Diana at Nemi was widely agreed upon, Alföldi’s further analysis was not. We already discussed the view of Arnaldo Momigliano, who insisted that the beginning of the Diana worship in the region was on the Aventine in Rome, and thus concluded that the statue at Nemi could not have preceded the reign of Servius Tullius. Others, most notably Mark Fullerton, have maintained that the image copied on the coin was not an archaic but an archaizing statue, which cannot be dated earlier than the second quarter of the first century BC and was modelled after archaizing trends from the Hellenistic world that took root in the late Republic. Still, even when the statue was made to feign an archaic image of Diana rather than actually being one, the allusion to the early history of the cult of Diana Nemorensis is in my opinion very significant. Admittedly, the archaic and archaistic appearances of Diana Trivia are highly outnumbered by the images that present Diana as a hunting deity, but the triple goddess does seem to be an appearance that was that of Diana Nemorensis alone. When the moneyer P. Accoleius Lariscolus depicted the triple statue on his coin issues, he used the old and venerable connotation of

286 Riis (1966) 67-75.
287 The head was found during the excavation of the theatre in the 1920’s and is now in the collections of the Museo Nazionale Romano. Morpurgo (1931) 259, fig. VI, Paribeni (1961) 55-56, Simon and Bauchhenss (1984) no. 106.
290 Fullerton (1990) 15-22, who argues that the coin types are modelled after the ‘Alkamenean’ archaistic hekataion, which was a popular reference point for sculptural archaism at the time and with which the triple statue shares a similar garment style.
the cult of Diana Nemorensis to promote his own *origo*. Whether the statue really was old or was an archaistic invention does not really matter, since it was the allusion to the past that gave the image – and therefore Lariscolus’ *origo* – its authority. The reference to the religious past could thus be made into a asset in the competitive aristocratic society of Republican Rome, and – vice-versa – the tradition of Diana of Nemi was re-actualized and re-emphasized by the issue of the coin type and the circulation of the imagery on it. This example may perhaps be considered debatable, but we see the same phenomenon of *monetarii* using archaic images of their hometown deities in the next chapter on Juno Sospita.

### 2.9 Epigraphic testimonies

So far, we have observed that the various literary traditions around Diana Nemorensis have stimulated modern authors to speculate on her original nature, specific character and archaic history. The epigraphic record offers a new chance to confront this rich story world with the tangible reality of her cult practice at the lake. Overall, we know of about 60 inscriptions that can be connected to the sanctuary and its cult practice. More than half of them are votive plaques, which commemorate private dedications to Diana Nemorensis and sometimes to other deities as well.²⁹¹ Apart from these humble – and often fragmentary – testimonies of individual worshippers visiting the sanctuary, larger building inscriptions and honorary statue bases testify to the involvement of local communities, Roman generals and even the imperial family. As we have seen earlier in this chapter while discussing the archaeological remains of the temple and the iconography of the goddess, modern attempts to label the cult and create easy dichotomies are challenged by the variety of the material sources themself. At the same time, some key patterns can be discerned and interestingly enough, some of the expressions of communicative memory that we have seen traces of earlier in this chapter are detectable in the epigraphic record as well.

From the time of the middle Republic onwards, inscriptions increasingly seem to be the medium of choice for addressing Diana, replacing the offering of anatomical and other votives.²⁹² This distinction should however not be taken too rigidly, since the earliest dedications are inscribed on crafted objects in bronze and stone, and were discovered in a deposit with non-inscribed votives as well. The oldest example is the arrowhead already mentioned, which bears the inscription *diana mereto / noutrix paperia* and dates from about 300 BC.²⁹³ It was quickly interpreted as an offering *pro*

---

²⁹¹ Such as the inscription for Isis and Bubastis (CIL XIV 2215, see page 62).
²⁹² This is a phenomenon that is observable in all of Latium and Italy: Schultz (2006a) 100-102 although at Nemi the practice of offering votive materials seems to have continued relatively long in comparison to other Latin cult sites. Rous (2010) 221.
²⁹³ CIL I² 45.
lacte and consequently as a proof of Diana's guardianship over women. A small bronze plaque, found in the same deposit and datable to the early second century BC, might support this notion: it refers to a woman who bestowed a little statue to Diana on behalf of her son. The other inscriptions from the third and second centuries BC however, lack this feminine interest: some do not mention the dedicant's name, the others are from men. Ovios Scarbenios for example, devoted a small simpulum (a libation ladle), Cn. Arbusxeus Bas(s)sus and L. Lucretius Sedulius dedicated a small statuette to the goddess and a bigger one was donated by Marcus Livios, possibly a local praetor.

When we look at the later votive plaques and statue bases, it is clear that the notion of Diana as a goddess who was only, or mainly, worshipped by women cannot be upheld. Within the surviving corpus of private dedications, only a few women appear. Aerentia, daughter of Lucius, devoted a small statue with inscribed bronze plaque to Diana in the early first century AD. Two women acted as part of a couple. First, there is Lania Thyonoe, wife of the Roman baker P. Cornelius Trophimus, who in 100 AD made a dedication to Diana Nemorensis Vesta. On the basis of this inscription, Frazer has suggested that Vesta appeared here as an otherwise unknown epithet for Diana, but it seems more likely that the baker chose to honour Diana together with the patron goddess of his profession. The other woman to appear together with her husband is Vargunteia Nais, wife of L. Curius Eutrapelus, whose dedication to Diana from the second century AD is not entirely certain because it is formulated in an abridged formula that is difficult to interpret.

---

294 The inscription was linked in modern literature to an un-inscribed bronze breast found in the same deposit, but there is no indication that the finds were donated at the same time or were otherwise related – no more than the other inscriptions and votives were related to each other. Holland (2008) 99-100. That the arrowhead and the breast formed a pair was first stated in the CIL by Mommsen, and then repeated by Degrassi in ILLRP 81 and by Dessau in ILS 3235. Diana as a women's goddess: see note 198.

295 CIL I² 42: Poublilia Turpilia Cn. uxor / hoke seignum pro Cn. filioid / Dianai donum dedit. The woman dedicated the signum (for the health or birth of) her son, here without a full name and thus possibly a newborn. See: Hänninen (2000) 47, Schultz (2006a) 104.

296 Simpulum: CIL XIV 4122.1: Ov(ius) Scarbenio(s) C(ai) l(ibertus); statuette, inscription on small base, inscribed on three sides with two names.: Cn(aeus) Arbuxseius Cn(aei) f(ilius) Dianae / d(onum) d(edit) l(ibens) m(erito) / Bas(s)sus / L(ucii) Lucreti(ius) / L(ucii) f(ilius) Sedulius / Dianae d(onum) d(edit) / l(ibens) m(erito). Bigger statue, inscription on base of approximately 60x60x45 cm: CIL XIV 4182a: Diana / M(arcus) Livio(s) M(arci) f(ilius) / pra=ce=i=tor dedit. Mommsen states that Marcus Livios was probably a local magistrate. See further: Granino Cecere (2000) 35, 42.

297 CIL XIV 4182: Aerentia / L(uci) f(ilia) / Dianae sacr(um) / d(onum) d(edit) l(ibens) m(erito).

298 CIL XIV 2213: Dianae / Nemore(n)si Vestae / sacrum Dict(atore) / imp(eratori) Nervae Traiano Aug(usto) / Germanico III co(n)s(uli), praefecto / eius T(itio) Voltedio Mamiliano, / quaestorib(us) / L(ucio) Caeccilio Urso II, M(arci) Lucretio / Sabino II, aedilibus Q(uinto) Vibenna Queto, T(berio) Claudio Magno / P(ubli) Cornelius Trophimus pistor / Romanienis ex regione XIII idem curator / vici Quadrati et Lana C(aii) filiae Thyonei coniux / eius votum libens solverunt. The couple came from the fourteenth regio of Rome, in which there was a vicus Quadratus (see CIL VI 975), of which the man apparently was a curator.

299 Frazer (1911) 13, who even proposes the presence of a perpetual fire in Diana’s temple. For the reference to Vesta as a baker’s goddess: Hänninen (2000) 47,50. For the title of dictator, see below, pages 77-78.

300 CIL XIV 2214: L Curius Eutrapelus Varvunteia Nais V S D N E R I M. In the CIL, Detlefsen (after an older transcription) reads: L(icius) Curius Eutrapelus Varvunteia Nais v(otum) s(olverunt) D(ianae) N(emorensi) E R I M. The meaning of the last letters is insecure and the inscription was already lost by the time it was presented in the
In an honorary context, inscriptions belonging to the herms and statues discussed above testify to the activity of Fundilia, who was acting both as benefactress and as beneficiary. Furthermore, Volusia Cornelia, a lady of senatorial rank, seems to have been involved in a restoration of the theatre and some water works (perhaps baths), since her name appears on a building inscription and on lead pipes.\(^{301}\) In general, these inscriptions show that women were involved in the development and daily worship at the sanctuary, but their number is limited and there is no mention of gender-specific issues like motherhood or fertility. What we have earlier established while discussing the literary sources and anatomical votives, can apply to the epigraphic record as well: the categorization of Diana Nemorensis as a women’s goddess who was visited mainly by female worshippers and for female reasons, is largely a modern construct that is not supported by the gender diversity of the ancient material.

With regard to the social background of the worshippers, a similarly divergent picture emerges. Modern scholars, like Robert Schilling and more recently Carin Green and Lora Holland, have proposed that the cult at Nemi held a special attraction to slaves or former slaves, who might have found some self-identification in the rite of the rex Nemorensis and visited the sanctuary to offer thanks for their freedom.\(^{302}\) In light of the literary tradition, which connected Diana’s cult on the Aventine specifically with slaves and servitude, and the established parallels between Diana Nemorensis and Diana Aventinensis, one might expect that this patronage would be reflected in the remaining traces of the cult practice at lake Nemi. Certainly, there are several liberti present in the epigraphic record, Fundilia’s freedman C. Fundilius Doctus probably being the most prominent one. He identifies himself as an actor and was probably active in the theatre on the site.\(^{303}\) Two other herms found in the ala of Servilius Quartus are identified by their inscriptions as the portraits of female libertae and the man who a few decades earlier devoted the room to Diana was possibly – since no filiation is given in his name – a freedman as well.\(^{304}\) The list of probable liberti continues with the Roman baker just mentioned – whose wife appears with a filiation in their votive


\(^{303}\) CIL XIV 4273, on the base of his statue: C(aius) Fundilius Doctus Apollinis parasit(us) // C(aius) Fundilius / Doctus / Apollinis / parasitus. The name is in the nominative case, which suggests Fundilius raised the statue for himself. As a parasitus of Apollo, the man was an actor and a stock character in ancient comedy. Guilds of these actors are known through several inscriptions. Fejfer (2008) 286.

\(^{304}\) Libertae: CIL XIV 4202: Liciniae Chrysarioni / M(arcus) Bolanus Canusaeus / h(onor) c(ausa) d(ianae?) / N(emorensi?) s(acrum?) / Liciniae Chrysarioni / M. Bolanus Canusaeus / h(onoris) c(asa) d(edicavit) n(epit) s(uae); CIL 4203: Staia L(uci) l(iberta) Quinta. Servilius Quartus: CIL 4183: M(arcus) Servilius Quintus alam expolit et [3] / et quae intus posita sunt Dia[nae].
inscription while he does not – and the couple L. Curius Eutrapelus and Vargunteia Nais, whose Greek cognomina may reveal a servile background. The status of the oldest reference to a possible freedwoman is insecure: the nutrix who offered the arrowhead may have been a wet-nurse for the gens Papiria, who was given freedom in reward for her services, but she may have been a slave of the family as well – the nomenclature for liberti was not yet fully developed in the Middle Republic. Finally, a peperino plaque from the late second century AD demonstrates the presence of tibicines and fidicines (flute- and lute-players) and magistri on the sanctuary grounds. The musicians were probably united in one collegium and accompanied the ritual proceedings for Diana Nemorensis. That they too were liberti (or perhaps even slaves) is likely, as it is in the case of the magistri, the members of cult personnel – perhaps involved with the daily maintenance of the site – who donated the plaque. All in all, it is clear that former slaves form a substantial group in our corpus of inscriptions.

At the same time, however, we have seen in the introduction that freedmen are well (or over-) represented in inscriptions from all over Italy, a group specific preference for epigraphic representation that was far from limited to the cult at lake Nemi. In none of the Nemi inscriptions, the act of manumission is specified as such and there is no indication that the dedications and donations of liberti were specifically connected to that change of status, as some scholars have suggested. The traces of their presence have provided a number of interesting insights into the functioning of the sanctuary, such as the presence of actors and collegia of musicians, but they do not characterize Diana as a goddess for slaves or freedmen. In fact, local and Roman aristocrats left their marks as well, and with the presence of several Imperial dynasties (discussed below), it becomes clear that the highest ranks in Roman society affiliated themselves with Diana Nemorensis just as gladly as freedmen did.

That the baker was a freedman is supported by his title of curator vici, which probably stands for the office of vicomagister. After the urban reorganization of Augustus, there were four vicomagistri in each newly instituted vicus, where they had administrative as well as religious functions, such as taking care of the shrines of the lares compitales and the genius Augusti. From the epigraphic evidence available from Rome, we know that these offices were typically held by rich freedmen. See: Rüpke (2005) 928 and Rüpke (1998) 27-44.


AE (2007) 307: D(onum) d(ant) tib(cines), fidi(cines). / Mag(istri) coerave(runt): / 

Caili(us) P. l., / 

Sextili(us) Sext. l. / 

+ l. / 

AE (2007) 307: D(onum) d(ant) tib(cines), fidi(cines). / Mag(istri) coerave(runt): / 

Caili(us) P. l., / 

Sextili(us) Sext. l. / 

+ l. / 

AE (2007) 307: D(onum) d(ant) tib(cines), fidi(cines). / Mag(istri) coerave(runt): / 

Caili(us) P. l., / 

Sextili(us) Sext. l. / 

+ l. / 

See for the first thorough discussion of the plaque: Granino Cecere (2000) 37 and fig. 2, who dates the inscription to the late second century BC. There is a parallel in Praeneste: CIL I 3070. For the collegia of tibicines and fidicines in general, see Rüpke (2005) 28-29.

As we know from comparable evidence from other cult sites. See, for the magistri and magistrae as paid cult personnel: Schultz (2006a) 70-72, Gaspar (2012) 142-147, Hemelrijk (2015) 89-90, notes 174-175.


Holland (2008) 111 refers to metal collars – mostly of Imperial date – that were found at Nemi and are now preserved at the Museo di Villa Giulia in Rome. According to her, this could be slave chains that were offered by liberti as relics of their awarded freedom. From my personal observation of the collars however, it is clear that this theory makes little sense, as they are far too small for human heads and too large for human wrists.
Once again, establishing a primary character for Diana seems impossible and contradictory to the variety in both the literary material and the literary sources. Does this mean that any parallel between the literary tradition and the epigraphic record is bound to be misleading? Not necessarily. We have already seen that the tradition of the *rex Nemorensis* gains a new dimension in light of the archaeological remains of the theatre and the – apparently influential – actors that were active there. The individual donations inform us on the functioning of the sanctuary and its interactions with the local community, Rome and the bigger world around it. In a few cases, as we will see, these inscriptions testify to Diana’s worshippers actively engaging with the myths and memories of kingship and Latin leadership surrounding the cult site. Vice-versa, the inscriptions suggest that the memories themselves were influenced by the individuals and groups visiting the site.

### 2.10 Myths and memories inscribed

As we have discussed earlier, the first century BC was a time of great prosperity for the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis: the sanctuary was significantly enlarged with the wealth from the Roman conquests in the east and cultic activity was booming. There are indications, however, that the conquests not only brought wealth to the sanctuary, but also had a decisive influence on the myths surrounding the rites. Two inscriptions from the first century BC may give us an insight into this changing story world. First, there is a bilingual statue base, donated by the Mysians living in Abbaitis and Epiktetos to the Roman *legatus* C. Sallvius Naso, because he had saved them during the war against Mithridates.\(^{311}\) We do not know Sallvius Naso from other sources, but his action was probably an early episode in the Third Mithridatic war (73 – 63 BC), when the Romans won a decisive victory in the land of the donors. A second inscription probably refers to this war as well: it is a now lost epistyle made of Travertine limestone that marks the erection of a building, possibly a temple, by a […] Leicinius L. f. and a C. Voconius L. f.\(^{312}\) The latter figure we can identify as a member of the *gens* Voconia – a local family from Aricia – and he may have been the Voconius who, according to Plutarch, was an officer under the commander L. Licinius Lucullus in 73 BC.\(^{313}\) So, at the sanctuary grounds in Nemi we have at least one but perhaps two monuments recording Roman victories in the Third Mithridatic war. Why were these victories in the far east celebrated at Diana’s


\(^{313}\) Plut. Luc. 13-15. Coarelli (1987) 178-179, Guldager Bilde (2003) 165-183. Licinius Lucullus was probably also involved in the monumentalization of the sanctuary of Juno Sospita, see pages 108ff of chapter III.
sanctuary on the shores of lake Nemi, not only by the commanding officers but also by the grateful Mysians of Abbaitis and Epiktetos?

According to Pia Guldager Bilde, the connection between Diana Nemorensis and the Third Mithridatic war does not need to surprise us: we know – through Plutarch – of at least two instances where an offer or vow to Artemis was of crucial help to the Romans in their war efforts, including one in which the local officer Voconius was involved.\textsuperscript{314} As the goddess had been so helpful throughout the war, it would have made sense for the returning officers to express their gratitude to Artemis in a temple for Diana. For the communities from the east seeking to honour a local Latin commander, the context of the Diana sanctuary would be fitting as well. As we will also see further ahead – when discussing the sanctuary of Juno Sospita in Lanuvium – the local history of the Latin sanctuary at this point becomes intertwined with the larger political and military developments of the expanding Roman Empire. While local elites like Voconius may have sponsored the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis out of commitment and pride for their hometown, it was the wealth coming from the Roman victories in the east that probably paid for the constructions.\textsuperscript{315}

Guldager Bilde goes one step further, however, and connects this Mithridatic history to the myths of bloodshed that surrounded the cult of Diana Nemorensis. As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, the violent succession of the rex Nemorensis is often presented in the literary sources as a barbaric and alien custom, a Scythian element that somehow persisted in the rites. It is Strabo who first presents the aition of the Latin cult being a copy from that of Artemis Tauropolis, who according to the famous Euripides play Iphigenia in Tauris required human sacrifices.\textsuperscript{316} The play – which was based on an already existing narrative – was written around 412 BC, and was by Strabo’s time (the late first century BC) well known over the entire Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{317} But how did the myth of Iphigenia become an aetiological explanation specifically for the rites in Nemi? According to Guldager Bilde, the connection was not invented by Strabo himself, but originated in the aftermath of the Third Mithridatic war. The Artemis cults in the Black Sea region were, by the time the Romans conquered these lands and visited the temples, thoroughly influenced by the Tauropolos myth, both in their iconography and in their rituals.\textsuperscript{318} When the victorious officers and appreciative communities after the wars expressed their gratitude to Artemis in the sanctuary of Diana at Nemi, they may have taken along Black Sea Artemis’ association with the human

\textsuperscript{314} Voconius incident: Plut. Luc. 13.1-4; other incident: Plut. Luc. 24.4-7.
\textsuperscript{315} For the first century monumentalization of the sanctuary of Juno Sospita, see page 105ff.
\textsuperscript{316} Strab. 5.3.12; cf. (for the more developed version) Serv. Ad Aen. 6.136. See page 37ff and footnotes.
bloodshed of Artemis Tauropolis – which in turn would have become an aetiological explanation for the rite of the *rex Nemorensis*.

The line of reasoning is fairly thin, as Guldage Bilde rightfully admits, and in my opinion cannot serve as a final explanation for the violent element in Diana Nemorensis’ mythology. Nevertheless, the inscriptions referring to the Third Mithridatic war prove that the Roman conquests not only brought wealth to Diana Nemorensis, but also brought her into contact with the Artemis cults of the east. There, the cult practice for the goddess had gradually become more closely associated with the bloodthirsty deity of Iphigenia in Tauris. And so, it is quite possible that the tradition of the violent rite at Nemi – however ancient or archaic it may have been – gained a new significance in the aftermath of the Third Mithridatic war.

There is a second instance where the epigraphic record may reveal an interaction with the literary discourse surrounding the mythical priest king of Nemi, and this time it is connected (albeit indirectly) to an emperor whom we have seen before in this chapter: Caligula. A curious building inscription offers insight into two moments of construction on the sanctuary grounds: it commemorates that the emperor Hadrian restored a *fanum* (a small temple, of which the location is unknown) that was originally built by a son of the Parthian royal family.\(^{319}\) There has been a debate on the reconstruction of the inscription on the damaged epistyle and on the identity of the Parthian prince, but Mariette Horster – with Coarelli– assumes that it must be Darius, son of Arsabanus the third and a member of the Arsacides dynasty.\(^{320}\) He came to Rome under Tiberius and both Cassius Dio and Suetonius claim that Caligula liked to be accompanied by the young boy.\(^{321}\) Allegedly, the *princeps* even let the boy sit next to him in his chariot when he drove his horses over the famous bridge at Baiae.\(^{322}\) Fragments of *fistulae* that were found near the nymphaeum have the peculiar inscription *Darii Regis* and seem to refer to the same prince.\(^{323}\)

If the reconstruction is right, it would be remarkable that the prince – who would of course never become king – named himself *rex*. Anna Leone, who has studied the presence of Darius at the sanctuary, thinks it plausible that Darius was inspired by the tradition of the *rex Nemorensis* that was

\(^{319}\) CIL XIV 2216: *[Imp(erator) Caesar divi Traiani Parthici filius divi] Nervae nepos Traianus / [Hadrianus Augustus pont(ifex) max(imus) trib(unica) potest(ate) VI co(n)s(ul) III / [fanum(?)] quartus regis regu[rum] Parthorum fil(ius) Arsacidis / [fecerat vetustate collaps]um restituit.*


\(^{322}\) Suetonius has the boy even sitting in front of the emperor.

\(^{323}\) Morpurgo (1931) 280, who claims that five fragments of *fistulae* were found. There there is however no detailed transcription or drawing of the finds. Cf. Leone (2000) 32, note 3.
so closely connected to the sanctuary at Nemi. Caligula, in his turn, may have been amused by the boy claiming kingship in the domain of the *rex Nemorensis*, just as when he earlier had Darius share in his royal honour during his ride over the bridge at Baia. We have discussed Caligula’s presence at the sanctuary before, and Suetonius confirms his connection to the tradition of the *rex Nemorensis*. While it remains uncertain whether the priest king held an actual office, was a staged character or was perhaps just a mythical figure, Leone’s suggestion that Darius was in fact the reigning *rex Nemorensis* for a while cannot be proven. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the royal hostage engaged with the existing story of the king priest at Nemi to articulate and reinforce his position at the court of Caligula. Vice-versa, the tradition itself may have taken on a new dimension in the presence of Darius and his imperial patron.

As a final category in the discussion of the epigraphic material, the inscriptions of local magistrates and the community of Aricia must be mentioned. Apart from the dedications that came from distant communities and imperial elites, there are a number of epigraphic testimonies that can be connected directly to local concerns and developments. We already saw the local praetor Marcus Livios and the officer Voconius, who was a member from a Arician family as well. The people of Aricia acted as dedicators too, expressing gratitude to Diana but also honouring and thanking the emperors Hadrian and Vespasian, probably for restorations to the sanctuary. Most intriguing however, are the inscriptions in which a title appears that seems to be of a local high magistrate: the *dictator*. In the dedication of the baker Publius Cornelius Trophimus, the emperor Trajan is marked as a *dictator* and this dedication is not unique: on a grave inscription that dates to the late first century BC or the early first century AD, a Cnaeus Dupilius, son of Cnaeus, is labelled as *dictator Ariciae*.

The appearance of this magistracy is especially remarkable, if we take into account the fragment of Cato discussed earlier. This piece of early Roman historiography mentions a ceremony at Nemi in which the presiding magistrate is described as a *dictator Latinus*. Could it be possible that the *dictator* of the Cato fragment, who was putatively dated to the pre-Roman history of the site, survived into imperial times and continued to perform some of his religious functions? In

---

325 Suet. Cal. 35.3. See page 41ff.
326 Aricians expressing gratitude to Diana: CIL XIV 4195; to Hadrian: Eph. Epigr. IX 653; to Vespasian: CIL XIV 4191. The dedication from the Aricians to Vespasian probably belonged to a larger group of statues, in which his sons were probably honoured as well. Granino Cecere (2000) 35-44.
327 CIL XIV 2169: Cn(aeus) Dupilius Cn(aei) f(ilius) / Hor(atia) tr(ibunus) mil(itum) in leg(ione) / flam(en) Mart(ialis) q(uaestor) aed(ilis) / dictat(or) Ariciae [...]. The inscription was transcribed by Jacques Sirmond: CIL I², 9; Antiquae inscriptionis, qua L. Scipionis Barbati F. expressum est elogium (Parijs 1617). Unfortunately, it has since then disappeared.
328 Cat. Or. Fr. 58 (Peter). See page 50ff.
the epitaph of Cnaeus Dupilius, his function of dictator is mentioned in a list of other magistracies and priesthoods, amongst which the flamen Martialis (another ancient priesthood) stands out. Other Latin towns had local dictatores as well, and considering the epigraphic evidence it seems clear that the function was in some way part of the local cursus honorum. Although many of these leading magistrates probably had religious duties, as we will also see in the next chapters on Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris, the magistracy was presumably not purely religious in nature.

So, while there is an obvious parallel between the inscriptions and early literary evidence like the Cato fragment, it is difficult to determine the exact nature of the dictatorship and the changes it underwent. The dictatores may have originated as Latin leaders in military alliances, coordinating – anti-Roman? – war efforts, and it seems plausible that these contacts were established and reaffirmed during religious festivals. In later times, the dictatorship may have developed into a more ceremonial position that retained its prestige: the magistrate that held the office would therefore be the appropriate person to carry out important religious duties throughout the year. The hypothetical nature of this reconstruction cannot be emphasized enough, and it is entirely possible that some of the inscriptions reflect a (re)invention of cultic practices rather than a direct continuity.

In any case, the comparison between the literary and epigraphic evidence demonstrates an antiquarian interest in the cult of Diana Nemorensis that, quite possibly, had an influence on the ritual practice on the site. While the dictatorship may have been perceived as a curious form of nostalgia by some, it also served as a reminder of the bond between Nemi and the bigger Latin world around it, most notably in relation to Rome. That the emperor Trajan himself was awarded the title of dictator, demonstrates that the position – that may have had an anti-Roman connotation in earlier history – was in fact fully integrated in the Roman religious landscape. In another instance, Beard North and Price have considered the preservation and reinterpretation of these religious forms in Latium as a case of constructive archaism, and this label seems very suitable for the dictatorship at Nemi as well. Just like we observed earlier with the rex Nemorensis, the origins of

---

330 In many of the aforementioned inscriptions, the dictatorship is part of a list of civil magistracies, which were part of the local cursus honorum. Distinguishing one of these functions as a purely religious affair, would be suggesting that there were strictly separated tasks for priests and magistrates. Such a dichotomy between the secular and the sacred cannot be maintained. Purcell (1983) 168.
331 Smith (1996a) 216.
333 Beard, North and Price (1998) 324. In this case, the rituals were centered around the cult of the Penates at Lavinium. Although there was no settlement there in the middle and late Republic, the renewed civic life from
the office of dictator at Aricia are hard – if not impossible – to trace, but we can see the memory of the function being accentuated and re-emphasized in different circumstances and through different media.

2.11 Conclusions
What kind of deity was Diana Nemorensis? As we have seen throughout this chapter, modern attempts to produce a definitive answer to this question and assign the deity with one dominant sphere of action, have failed in light of the ancient evidence. Diana Nemorensis’ identity was, certainly from the perspective of the literary sources, essentially multidimensional. As a hunting goddess in the lush surroundings of the shores of lake Nemi, she could exhibit a traditional role and appearance that was perhaps comparable to other Diana cults, but it is the epithet Trivia that most distinguishes the cult in Nemi. The threefold nature of Diana Trivia offered a host of possibilities for poetical exploration, and as early imperial writers like Ovid and Statius did not fail to exploit them, Diana became associated with the crossroads between day and night, the cultivated and the wild, and even life and the afterlife. In this chapter, I have not made another attempt to describe the original character of the goddess, but have instead looked at the cult practice of the site, its long history of worship and the ways in which the site’s history was perceived by the visiting worshippers.

An important factor in understanding the cult of Diana Nemorensis is the connection to Aricia, its administrating community. We can identify the involvement of local elites especially from the late Republic onwards, when for example the local officer Voconius used the wealth he had gathered in the Mithridatic wars to contribute to his hometown sanctuary. From the donations found in the votive rooms of the sanctuary, we can deduce that the adornment of the temple and the worship of its principal deity often went hand in hand with the public advertisement of the position of the donor. This was the case for Servilius Quartus, who donated a mosaic floor and all that was on it to Diana in the late Republic, as well as for Fundilius Doctus, the rich freedman who in the Claudian period adorned the same room with the honorary sculptures that became known as the Fundilia group. That the sanctuary functioned as a place for public representation testifies to the involvement of the local community in the rites, which is also indicated by several inscriptions donated by the Senate and people of Aricia as a whole. For earlier periods written evidence is unfortunately lacking, but we may assume that the various temple renovations and the series of rich

---

the first century AD onwards, included also a priesthood for the Penates that was taken up by Roman and local elites.
terracotta decorations identified in the archaeological record are an expression of the religious commitment of local elites as well. An interesting case of local involvement with and promotion of the cult of Diana is presented by the Arician moneyer Accoleius Lariscolus, who issued a coin in 43 BC, showing – as we follow Alföldi’s complex but plausible reconstruction – an archaic cult image of Diana Nemorensis as Diana Trivia. While we may express our doubts about Alföldi’s further argument that this image in itself proves that the Diana cult at Nemi was older than that in Rome, the identification of the statue as that of Diana Trivia is generally acknowledged – and supported by local sculptural finds presenting a similar image of a female deity. It is not clear if the archaic features displayed by the Republican coin represent an ancient cult image or a later archaistic invention. Nonetheless, the image suggests that the goddess was not only perceived and presented as threefold, but that she was also ascribed with archaic characteristics that suited the supposed long continuity of worship at the cult site on the shores of lake Nemi.

The cult practice for Diana Nemorensis was, however, not only connected with the local Arician community, but also encompassed the larger Latin world around it. Although the excavation campaigns in the temple area have so far not revealed if the first temple building was built before or after the Romans took over control of the region or after that moment, we can deduce from the large amount of votive material found on the site that the cult was a religious meeting place for large groups of Latins from at least the sixth century BC onwards. That this gathering of Latins was not only religious but also political in nature, is suggested by a fragment of Cato’s Origines, in which a dictator dedicates the lucus in the presence of a number of Latin communities, in what seems to be an episode in one of the wars between Latins and Romans. The episode gains significance if we compare it with the cult of Diana on the Aventine in Rome, which according to Roman tradition was instituted by Servius Tullius to celebrate the bonds between Rome and its Latin neighbours. As we have seen, this tradition was remembered in the form of several leges sacrae (cult regulations), which present the temple of Diana Aventinensis as a model for negotiating religious bonds in new colonies. So, leaving aside the discussion on the question as to which of the two Diana cults was the oldest, we can observe an active syncretism that connected the worship in Nemi to the cult on the Aventine and to the early affairs of the Latins and Romans. I have argued that this religio-political narrative surrounding Diana’s grove is significant in the context of the broader literary traditions on the early history of Latium, where other religious luci are also reported as meeting places for Latin tribes in preparation of war. This is the case not only because the narrative was preserved in the literary record, but also because Latin dictatores were still performing (religious) duties on the site in the first and second centuries AD, as we have seen in our discussion of the epigraphic evidence. It is hard to determine whether this was an antiquarian reinvention of a half-forgotten office or a direct
remnant of the earlier dictatorship (we shall return to this magistracy in later chapters), but the appearance of the office in the epigraphic record is relevant in either case. It gives us an idea as to how worshippers and cult officials memorialized the religious heritage of Diana Nemorensis’ worship and how these perceptions of a real or imagined past penetrated everyday cult practice.

Finally, apart from a local Arician and broader Latin association, the cult practice for Diana Nemorensis could also be described and perceived as something foreign that was far removed from the ritual world of the Roman state religion. This was most clearly expressed by the discourse surrounding the rex Nemorensis, the priest king of Nemi, who – as both the murderer of his predecessor and the victim of his successor – formed a violent and ostensibly alien element in the story world around the cult of Diana Nemorensis. According to an aetiology fully developed by Servius, the cult in Nemi would have received its bloody character from Artemis Tauropolis, the bloodthirsty goddess in Euripides’ Iphigenia in Tauris. As we have seen, in the Roman poetical sources, the goddess of Nemi was herself presented as a somewhat ominous figure, who from the lush surroundings of her wild grove – as Diana Trivia – watched over the boundaries between night and day, life and afterlife. These were the ideal surroundings for mythographers to project an invented priesthood in, and yet I have argued that the story of the priest king of Nemi resonated further than the pages of individual authors. Casual references in Ovid and Suetonius show how the priest king was connected with the sanctuary and the landscape from at least the early first century AD onwards, and several inscriptions suggest that the tradition gained new significance – or may have even originated after – Roman encounters with Artemis sanctuaries in the Mithridatic wars, since they were profoundly influenced by the myth of the Tauric goddess that required blood offers.

Suggesting that the sanctuary displayed an actual sacred tree under which an actual priest king sat – as recent excavators have proposed – to me seems to take the available evidence a step too far. But, nevertheless, it is not unreasonable to assume that the story about the priest king was repeatedly evoked on the sanctuary grounds, perhaps even staged in the theater found on the site. A final example of how the evocation of this bloodthirsty element in the myths could appear, can be detected in the involvement of the emperor Caligula, whose presence in the Alban hills around lake Nemi is well attested. That his royal hostage the Partian prince Darius claimed kingship on a building inscription (even though he was not, and would never be, a king), may well have been a deliberate reference to the existing tradition of the rex Nemorensis – especially considering Caligula’s own alleged involvement with the rites. Vice-versa, the tradition could have taken on a new meaning because of the involvement of the imperial house. So, without claiming that there was a murderous priest active on the site, we may still argue that his story was interwoven with the cult
practice for Diana Nemorensis and, and as such, the discourse was part of the ritual landscape of lake Nemi.
CHAPTER III:  Juno Sospita: guardian of Lanuvium and Rome

When the ancient traveler took the Via Appia southwards from Rome, wandering through Latium Vetus and the beautiful surroundings of the Alban Hills, he would - having passed the town of Aricia and the road turning left to the sanctuary of Diana – soon get a view of Lanuvium. According to Strabo, this was a 'city of the Romans', from which both Antium and the sea could be seen. Appian locates it at a distance of 150 stades – about 27 kilometres – from Rome. The modern town of Lanuvio is still located here, although in academic literature there has been a considerable degree of confusion with Lavinium, the legendary site founded by Aeneas. In fact, the village was called civita Lavinia until 1914, when it was recognized that the ancient Lavinium was located some 25 kilometres west towards the sea, under the medieval hamlet Pratica di Mare.

Ancient Lanuvium was, as the modern city today, dominated by its highest hill, which was the oldest nucleus of the settlement and was probably inhabited from the ninth century BC onwards. The town is listed as a Latin town by Cato the Elder and eventually, as Cicero claims, it became famous for the numerous sacrifices and shrines that had a place within its walls. From the seventh century BC onwards, this religious activity revolved around the acropolis. Eventually, the largest and most renowned cult was that of Juno Sospita, and it was her sanctuary that covered most of the acropolis and dominated the landscape, especially after its monumentalization in the middle of the second century BC. Juno Sospita was the main reason for the fame of the little town and although she had temples in Rome as well, she remained intrinsically connected to Lanuvium. Ovid has the goddess talking about the town as 'my own' and Silius Italicus labels it Iunonia sedes.

Ancient historiographers deliberated on the antiquity of Juno Sospita and modern interpreters have often connected this literary discourse with the pre-Roman remains found on the

334 Strab. 5.3. 12: ὑπὲρκειται δ' αὐτῆς τὸ μὲν Λανούιον, πόλις Ῥωμαίων, ἐν δὲ ἔξω τῆς Ἀπίας ὀδοῦ, ᾧ ἦς ἐκπόπτος ἡ τε θαλάσσα ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον.
335 App. BC 2.3.20.
336 Chiarucci (1983) 19-23, Gordon (1938) 21 and the bibliography in the notes. Apparently, the names of both villages were so similar that they were confused already in antiquity, as is for example visible in a passage of Claudius Aelianus (De Nat. An. 11.16), who, curiously enough, lived in nearby Praeneste. See pages 89-90.
337 On Lavinium, its mythology, history and the archaeological remains there is an extensive bibliography. See for an introduction to the site: Castagnoli (1972), Beard, North and Price (1998) 12-14, Panella and Avilia (2005) 33-37.
338 Cat. Or. Fr. 58 (Peter) = 28 (Cassignet). For a discussion of this fragment and the list of Latin towns, see chapter II, pages 50ff. Cicero remarks on the density of the religious landscape in Lanuvium when he discusses Lucius Thorius Balbus, who came from there. (Cic. Fin. 2.63.3-4). For Balbus, see page 117ff.
Colle San Lorenzo that supposedly preserve earlier stages of her cult. Thus, they assume that there was a continuous worship of Juno Sospita on this spot from the sixth century BC onwards until – at least – the third century AD. This chapter does not take this continuity for granted and explores the goddess and her cult practice from a different perspective. Much like the previous chapter on Diana Nemorensis, the discussion will center not so much on the possible archaic history of the cult – which, as we shall see, is again hard to reconstruct – but on the way this history was perceived and remembered by the later Romans and Lanuvians who encountered Juno Sospita. In my analysis I wish to examine the position of Juno Sospita in the Roman pantheon and study the relationship between the goddess and her worshippers, both Roman and Lanuvian. Did the focus of the cult shift after the goddess received a temple in Rome, in the second century BC or long before? Did the pre-Roman, Latin roots of the cult play a part in the later ritual proceedings, during the Republic and early Empire? And, if so, in what form was this history evoked? What does the case of Juno Sospita tell us about the role of the past in the religious self-perception in Roman society?

3.1 Juno Sospita as patrona of Lanuvium and Rome

In 340 BC, the expanding power of Rome provoked a final rebellion from its Latin neighbours, which had united their efforts against Rome many times before in various federations, as we have seen in the previous chapter.341 This time, the war lasted for about two years and ended dramatically for the Latin cities: they suffered an unprecedented defeat with many casualties and, by 338 BC, the Romans controlled the region more firmly than ever. After their defeat, the fate of the individual cities, which previously had been more or less independent allies of Rome, was completely in the hands of the Roman Senate. It was the victorious consul Camillus who ensured the senators that the gods had given them complete control over the situation, and that it was their job to do whatever was necessary to bind the Latins to perpetual peace, either by cruelty or clemency.342 Because the circumstances varied from city to city, the Senate devised a plan that accounted for these differences. As part of the rebellious Latin League, the small city of Lanuvium was subject to Rome’s decision, but it received a rather mild punishment: the inhabitants obtained the civitas cum suffragio and no land was taken from them for the establishment of a colony.343

With this, the town was at the lucky end of the spectrum: after the Latin war only a few Latin towns received full Roman citizenship. The others were deprived of many of the rights they had as Latin allies: they were forbidden to vote, marry and trade amongst each other. Besides, large plots of land were confiscated for Roman colonists, harbours were closed and Velitrae, the town that

341 See pages 50-52 of chapter II.
342 Liv. 8.13.13-16.
had disappointed the Romans the most, even had his walls demolished.\textsuperscript{344} The fact that Rome was merciful towards Lanuvium, was perhaps the result of earlier friendly relations between the two cities, as Livy describes the town elsewhere as a \textit{fidelissima urbs}.\textsuperscript{345} There was, however, one important stipulation in the conditions of 338 BC, which is the only religious measure that Livy describes in the wake of the Latin war:

Lanuvium received the full citizenship and the restitution of her sacred things, with the proviso that the temple and grove of Juno Sospita should belong in common to the Roman people and the citizens living at Lanuvium.\textsuperscript{346}

As a relatively loyal city, Lanuvium retained part of the responsibility for the cult of Juno Sospita, but, from 330 BC onwards, it also had to endure the interference of the Roman conquerors in the management of the rites. This joint administration, in which local elites as well as Roman magistrates were involved, remained important throughout the history of the cult and we will return to the cultic organization later in this chapter.\textsuperscript{347}

For now, we will consider the literary traditions surrounding Juno Sospita, and analyse the character of the goddess as it was perceived by ancient and modern commentators. The narrative about her incorporation into the Roman state is an important aspect of that assessment, and Livy’s account of the Roman-Lanuvian relationship places it in a distinctively political context.\textsuperscript{348} By mentioning it as part of the negotiations after the Latin war, Livy suggests that the cult of Juno Sospita was a significant religious landmark with a long history of worship with which Rome sought to associate itself. From her temple on the acropolis, Juno could have acted as a \textit{patrona} for the community of Lanuvium, a role which she continued to perform after her incorporation into the Roman state.\textsuperscript{349} It is important to acknowledge that this importance in Livy’s time may have been a contemporary rather than a historical reality, but the fact that the author interweaves the religious episode in an account that is otherwise political and military in nature, suggests that Juno Sospita was associated – at least partly – with a political and military context.

This role as a protectress of the city is supported by her warrior-like appearance – which will be discussed later in this chapter – and also by her epithet \textit{Sospita}. This is the common form in

\begin{itemize}
\item Liv. 8.14.2: \textit{Lanuvinis civitas data sacraque sua reddita cum eo, ut aedes lucusque Sospitae Lunonis communis Lanuvinis municipibus cum populo Romano esset.}
\item See pages 126ff.
\item Orlin (2010) 54-55, 123-125.
\end{itemize}
the literary sources, which present Juno as the ‘saviour’, or ‘the saving’. On material sources, such as several inscriptions and coins, the epithet appears in other spelling varieties as well: Sospes, Sispita, Sispes or even Seispes. The altering vowel seems to reflect an older form, as the grammarian Festus explains:

Juno Sispita, who is usually called Juno Sospita, was a form used by the ancients, and it appears to have been taken from a Greek word, which is σωζειν [‘to save’].

Although the interpretation seems rather straightforward at first sight, the different epithets have presented modern commentators with a number of difficulties. Especially the relation between the variants Sospita and Sispita has provoked discussion. Early 20th century commentators rejected Festus’ explanation and have disconnected both forms, suggesting that Sispita and Sispes derived from sid(es) potis, referring to Juno’s role as power or influence over the moon and stars. This argument has however not found general acclaim and, in the absence of any other reference to Juno Sospita as a moon goddess, the etymological suggestion hardly seems convincing.

Problematic in this respect, is that the surviving literary sources do not comment on the exact nature and sphere of Juno Sospita’s influence, let alone her character and cult practice before Roman interference. Therefore, we have to rely on incidental accounts of what happened at the cult site in Lanuvium; events that happened long after the Romans conquered the region and that ended up in the historical record another several centuries later. Livy is, again, our most important source for the later history of the sanctuary and he mentions Juno Sospita and Lanuvium several times, in his recurrent rapport on the prodigia throughout the middle and late Republic. These extraordinary omens and portents were reported when the Roman state was in grave danger and were considered signs of divine wrath, demonstrating a disruption of the pax deorum after which placation of the gods (procuratio) was needed. The Senate decided what counted as a prodigium and the warnings could be very diverse in nature, ranging from unusual births of hermaphrodites and

---

351 See for the numismatic and epigraphic discussion, pages 117-122 and 126-139.
352 Festus, 262L: Sispitem Iunonem, quam vulgo sospitem appellant, antiqui usurpabant, cum ea vox ex Graeco videatur sumpta, quod est σωζειν.
353 There has been some debate on the implications of the use of the transitive and intransitive use of Sospes, which is also commented upon by Festus (preserved mostly in the summary of Paul the Deacon), according to whom the use dates back to the time of Ennius (Paul. Fest. 388L). For the linguistic implications of this usage see Radke (1965) 182-185, Harmon (1986) 1969.
354 The idea was proposed by Ehrlich (1907) 285 and has found some resonance in Pedersen (1922) 10ff and Gordon (1938) 36. For the etymological discussion, see Harmon (1986) 1967-1970, Schultz (2006b) 218 with note 41.
355 Liv. 21.62.4; 23.31.15; 24.10.6; 29.14.3; 31.12.6; 32.9.2; 35.9.4; 41.21.13; 42.2.4; 45.16.5; 45.19.2. Cf: Jul. Obs, Prod. Lib., 6, 9, 11, 12, 20, 46.
animals with too many limbs to voices appearing out of nowhere and frequent thunder and lightning strikes. After the recognition of a prodigium, the Senate also decided on the appropriate expiation ritual (procuratio) and the priesthoods that had to perform it. Livy devotes much attention to the signs and expiatory rituals; they appear throughout his description of Republican history. In addition to that, there is the Liber de Prodigis of the fourth century author Julius Obsequens, an epitome of Livy that preserves some records of the years for which Livy’s books have been lost.

The portents often happened outside the city of Rome and the temple of Juno Sospita was the site of no less than fifteen of them. In fact, in no other site apart from the capital, did the gods express their concern for the Roman state as regularly as in Lanuvium. The signs are diverse and sometimes Juno’s involvement is very direct: in 215 BC her statue was dripping with blood and in 181 BC it even cried. Especially during the second Punic war, when every movement of Hannibal’s troops caused a new wave of panic, there were many reports throughout Italy. The temple of Juno Sospita faced rains of stones, nesting ravens and other trouble. Surprisingly, considering the number of prodigia, we know of only one ritual of procuratio from Lanuvium from this period: in 217 BC the decemviri – after a number of prodigies elsewhere – advised to honour Juno Sospita with larger offerings than usual.

The list of divine warnings and expiation rituals obviously shows elements of a literary topos, and when he arrives at the end of the third Punic War, Livy even belittles the trustworthiness of some prodigia, classifying them as superstition:

This circumstance [the hope that the war with the Carthaginians would soon be over] had filled the minds of the people with superstitious notions, and they were strongly disposed to report and believe accounts of prodigies, and for that reason more were reported. It was said, “that two suns had been seen; that it had become light for a time during the night; that at Setia a meteor had been seen, extending from the east to the west; that at Tarracina a gate, at Anagnia a gate and the wall in many places, had been struck by

---

357 It is important to observe that Obsequens repeated Livy’s words almost literally. That the details surrounding the divine warnings and ritual placations were still remembered and retold in the fourth century AD, seems very unlikely.
360 Liv. 22.1.17.
lightning; that in the temple of Juno Sospita, at Lanuvium, a noise had been heard, accompanied with a tremendous crash”.

Livy’s hesitation about their trustworthiness did not stop the author from reporting on Lanuvian prodigia that forecasted later threats from overseas. Sometimes the signs left little to the imagination, as is clear from an incident in 173 BC, when a worried Roman delegation reported war preparations on the Macedonian shore and, promptly, a large fleet was seen in the sky above Juno Sospita’s temple.

Even if literary commonplaces are plentiful and standardized patterns are clearly visible, the position of Lanuvium in this discourse of prodigia and procuraciones is remarkable. Livy presents the site as a place where, during the third and second centuries BC, the concern of the gods for the affairs of the Roman state became more manifest than elsewhere. Whereas his narrative on the aftermath of the Latin wars emphasizes that the pre-roman cult was mostly a Lanuvian or Latin affair, this historical discourse emphasizes how the Roman cause had become the Lanuvian cause and vice-versa. In the light of new, overseas, enemies, the Latins and Romans had a joint war to win and Livy’s series of portents suggest that Juno Sospita’s role of protectress and guardian of the community now extended to the Roman people as well. By recognizing the prodigia and responding to them, the Senate secured the support of the goddess and at the same time underlined its own religious authority, which now extended to cults that were once distinctively non-Roman. As mentioned before, Livy’s account may be full of anachronisms, and the tight connections between Juno Sospita, Lanuvium and the Roman state may reflect the religious landscape of Augustan Rome rather than a historical reality from the third or second century BC. Still, the accounts show that Juno Sospita was perceived and remembered by later Romans as a goddess who had retained her political and military roles from pre-Roman times.

3.2 The goddess and the serpent
But was this the only manifestation of the goddess? Modern authors, most notably Georges Dumézil, have labeled Juno Sospita’s political aspect as secondary and have connected the goddess primarily


362 Liv. 42.2.4.
with the so-called feminine spheres of life, such as maternity, virginity and fertility. Part of this argumentation is based on the full name with which she appears on some of the inscriptions found at the sanctuary: *Juno Sospes Mater Regina*, or, in the abridged form *ISMR*. We shall return to this epigraphic evidence later, but first, we must look into a literary source that has highly influenced the characterization of the cult in Lanuvium as a fertility cult. It is one of the *Elegiae* of Propertius, in which he describes the town as the scene of a peculiar fertility rite:

Lanuvium, from of old, is guarded by an ancient serpent: the hour you spend on such a marvellous visit won’t be wasted; where the sacred way drops down through a dark abyss, where the hungry snake’s tribute penetrates (virgin, be wary of all such paths!), when he demands the annual offering of food, and twines, hissing, from the centre of the earth. Girls grow pale, sent down to such rites as these, when their hand is rashly entrusted to the serpent’s mouth. He seizes the tit-bits the virgins offer: the basket itself trembles in their hands. If they’ve remained chaste they return to their parents’ arms, and the farmers shout: ‘It will be a fertile year.’ My Cynthia was carried there, by clipped horses. Juno was the pretext, but Venus was more likely the cause.

So, Propertius tells us that his Cynthia, on her way perhaps to an encounter with another lover, witnessed a rite that involved young girls entering the cave of a giant snake, to ensure – provided that the girls were virgins and their offerings were accepted – prosperous crops for the following year. The snake, described by author as *draco*, apparently noticed when the girls were impure as he seized the food from their hands, making it a terrifying experience for the girls. Although the account seems purely a literary frivolity at first sight, there are a number of reasons to devote some attention to this peculiar ritual. Firstly, the story is reproduced in the third century AD by Claudius Aelianus, who came from nearby Praeneste and presents a more detailed and curiously different version of the rite:

---


365 See the section on epigraphy, from page 126 onwards.

366 Prop. 4.8.3-16: *Lanuuium annosi uetus est tutela draconis, hic, ubi tam rarae non perit hora morae, qua sacer abripitur caeco descensus hiatus, qua penetrat (virgo, tale iter omne caue!) ieiuni serpentis honos, cum pabula poscit annua et ex ima sibila torquet humo. Talia demissae pallent ad sacra puellae, cum temere aquino creditur ore manus. Ille sibi admotas a virgine corripit escas: virginis in palmis ipsa canistra tremunt. Si fuerint castae, redeunt in colla parentum, clamantque agricolae ’fertilis annus erit.’ Huc mea detonsis aucta est Cynthia mannis: causa fuit luno, sed mage causa Venus.*

367 Heyworth (2007) 245-247. That Cynthia was on her way to another lover, or that Ovid was afraid of that scenario, is implied by the reference to Venus. For Cynthia’s frequent escapes out of the city, see also chapter II, page 37.
It seems that one peculiarity of snakes is their faculty of divination. [...] Well, there is a sacred grove in Lavinium of wide area and thickly planted, and nearby is a shrine to Hera of Argolis. And in the grove there is a vast and deep cavern, and it is the lair of a Serpent. And on certain fixed days holy maidens enter the cave bearing a barley cake in their hands and with their eyes covered. And divine inspiration leads them straight the Serpent’s resting-place, and they move forward without stumbling and at a gentle pace just as if they saw with their eyes unveiled. And if they are virgins, the Serpent accepts the food as sacred and as fit for a creature beloved of god. Otherwise the food remains untasted, because the Serpent already knows and has divined their impurity. And ants crumble the cake of the deflowered maid into small pieces so that they can be carried easily, and transport them out of the grove, cleansing the spot. And inhabitants get to know what has occurred and the maidens who came in are examined, and the one who has shamed her virginity is punished in accordance with the law. This is the way in which I would demonstrate the faculty of divination in serpents.  

Remarkably, Aelianus mistakes Lanuvium for Lavinium and he labels the temple as that of Hera of Argolis. T

Claud. Ael. De Nat. An. 11.16: ἵνα δὲ ἦν ἁρὰ τῶν δρακόντων καὶ ἡ μαντική. [...] οὐκὼν ἐν τῷ Λαούνιῳ ἁλῶς τιμᾶται μέγα καὶ δαυς, καὶ ἔχει πληθύνων νεων ἡ Ῥάς Ἀργολίδος, ἐν δὲ τῷ άλλει φιλάθει ἐστι μέγας καὶ βαθυς, καὶ ἐστι κοίτη δράκοντος. παρθένωι τε ίερα νεομιμεμέναις ἡμέραις παρίσιν ἐς τὸ ἁλοῦ ἐν τῶν χεριῶν φέρουσαι μάζαν καὶ τοὺς όφθαλμοὺς τελαμωνίας κατειλημμέναι: ἄν ἐστι αὐτὰς εὐθυραυρίων ἐπὶ τὴν κοῖτην τοῦ δράκοντος πνεῦμα θεόν, καὶ ἄπαυστος προσίεται βάθην καὶ ἤρυχη, ὡσπερ οὖν ἀκαλυπτος ὄρωσι τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, καὶ ἐὰν μὲν παρθένην ὲσι, προσίεται τὰς τροφάς αὐτῷ ἄγνας τὸ δράκων καὶ πρεπούσας ἀγών θεοφιλεῖ: εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἄδοματοι μένοι, προεδότος αὐτοῦ τὴν φθορὰν καὶ μεμαντευμένοι. μύρμηκες δὲ τὴν μάζαν τὴν εἰς διακορηθείσης ἐς μικρὰ καταβρύσσατε, ὡς ἐν εὐφορα αὐτοῖς εἶπε, ἐταὶ ἐκφέρουσιν ἔξω τοῦ ἁλοῦ, καθαίροντες τὸν τόπον. γνωρίζεται τα ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπιχορων τὸ πραξάν, καὶ αἱ παρελθοῦσι εἴλεγονται, καὶ ἢ γε τὴν παρενίαν οἰκείονα ταῖς ἐκ τοῦ νόμου κολάζεται τιμωρίας. μαντικήν μὲν δὴ δρακόντων ἄν ἀποφήγημι τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον. Loeb translation with adjustments.


Propertius mentions: ‘if they’ve remained chaste, they return to their parent’s arms’. 
In the anonymous and curious Greek work known as the *Parallela Minora*, the Lanuvian *drakōn* appears as well, with a priestess who was sent to it by the goddess Vesta. This, and especially Aelianus’ more elaborate version of the tale shows how intertwined the story of the snake rite at Lanuvium was with discourses on the tending of sacred *dracones* elsewhere in the Mediterranean. In the mythological sphere, there is of course the Colchian dragon, the giant serpent that guarded the golden fleece in the cave of Aris and was – in one version of the tale – put to sleep by Medea. The Hesperides, mythological nymphs that guarded Hera’s golden apples are known for taking care of the *drakōn* Ladon. Slightly more tangible are the *draco*-tending girls that are associated with cult practices around the Mediterranean. In the same section where Aelian informs us about the rite at ‘Lavinium’, he mentions an oracular shrine for Apollo in Epiros, with a grove full of snakes that descended directly from the Python at Delphi. Once a year, the snakes were fed by a virgin priestess: if they accepted the food, it would be a prosperous year; if they denied it, they prophesied the opposite.

Another parallel is presented by Pausanias, who explains the origin story of a sanctuary on mount Cronius, in the polis Elis near Olympia. It was devoted to a serpent-god with the suggestive name Sosipolis – ‘saviour of the state’. As Pausanias explains, the cult was instituted after an important victory of the Eleans over the Arcadians. Just before the battle, a woman appeared with a baby boy suckling at her breast. At the sight of the approaching enemy, the boy turned into a giant *drakōn* and threw the frightened Arcadians into disarray. Afterwards, the *drakōn* named Sosipolis disappeared into the ground and on that spot he was worshipped by the Eleans, along with the woman suckling him, who was recognized as the goddess Eileithya. Again, the description of the rites for the serpent has familiar characteristics. An old woman who looked after the serpent Sosipolis was supposed to live in chastity, and could only approach the deity carrying a white veil.

---

372 The work was once attributed to Plutarch, but on the basis of stylistic arguments this is now refuted, although it is thought to be composed sometime around Plutarch’s era. Cf: Pailler (1997) 517-520.
374 The main sources for the story are Euripides’ *Medea* (lines 480-482), Pindar’s *Pythian* (2.424-50), Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica* (4.123-66), Diodorus Siculus (4.48), Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (7.149-158), Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* (8.54-121), Martial (12.53) and shorter references in other texts. The earliest evidence of the Colchian dragon is of material nature: it appears on the so-called Douris cup, a red-figure kylix, datable to 480-470 BC. See further, also for bibliographical references: Ogden (2013) 58-63, 202.
375 They appear, for example, in Hesiod’s *Theogony* (33-336), Sophocles’ *Trachiniae* (1089-1100), Vergil’s *Aeneid* (480-486) and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (4.643-8). For further ancient sources and modern literature, see McPhee (1990) 394-406, Ogden (2013) 33-40.
376 Claud. Ael. De Nat. An. 11.2.
378 Paus. 6.20.2-6. See for a discussion of this cult: Sinn (2004) 84-86, Mitropoulou (1977) 62-63. It has been suggested that the cult was related to that of Zeus Sosipolis but apart from the name and the connection with the name of the mountain (Cronius), the evidence for this is lacking. See Ogden (2013) 204, note 63.
379 The site is thought to have been identified and a small temple (of less than 10 square meters) was found. Sinn (2004) 84-85 and figure 67.
over her head and face. She brought water for his baths and fed him with barley cakes kneaded with honey. Several elements in this literary discourse provide a context for Lanuvium’s story: the lucus or cave where the drakōn was hidden, the blinded (virgin or chaste) women that were supposed to look after it, and the ritual food offerings, sometimes specified as μάζες (barley cakes).

We encounter Lanuvium’s serpent rite a final time in the work of Quodvultdeus, a bishop from fifth century Carthage. He presents a bizarre version of the story, in which a monk investigates the curious ritual, descends into the cave and finds out that the snake is in fact a mechanical device, with gemstone eyes and a sword as its tongue, which is triggered by stepping on one of the stairs. By destroying the mechanism, the monk saves the girls and proves the fictitious nature of the pagan gods. Once more, the line of events fits the description of other snake-slayers in the hagiographic tradition, often clerics who went out to expose pagan rites as works of the devil. The legendary vita of Saint Silvester from the fifth and sixth century AD, for example, present a story that shows a clear analogy to the events in Lanuvium. Silvester was one of the first popes of Rome, supposedly serving during the time of Constantine the Great and even baptizing the emperor. According to one version of his biography, he was responsible for stopping a draco that lived in the Tarpeian hill beneath the Capitol. The Vestal virgins had been feeding the beast with barley cakes on every kalend, descending a long cave of 365 steps. But suddenly, the draco unexpectedly and repeatedly came up from his hole, spreading pestilence and death with its foul breath. Silvester, after due prayers and fasting, descended the cave with his disciples and managed to lock the cave with a bronze door and bury the keys. In this way, they released the city from one of its false idols as well.

It is of course very difficult to say anything about the historicity of the narratives and it seems clear that by the time Quodvultdeus wrote his account, he was influenced much more – if not: exclusively – by the ancient authors before him and by the circulating tales of saintly draco-defeaters than by anything he himself had witnessed or heard in Lanuvium. Several elements in the stories are clearly recognisable as literary topoi, and the discourse seems hard to relate to the actual

---

380 Paus. 6.20.2.  
381 Quodvult. Lib. Prom. 3.43. The work was long thought to be written by Prosper of Aquitaine. Translation and commentary in: Braun (1964) 572-573, note 1., Hermans (2016) 210-211.  
383 There are, broadly speaking, two versions of the tales of Saint Silvester. The first, known as the Actus Silvestri, was composed at some point in the late fourth century AD, while the second, known as the Vita Silvestri, was composed at the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries. See Pohlkamp (1983) 5-44, Pailler (1997) 559-568, Canella (2006) 184-188, Ogden (2013) 391-393 for the tale of the draco in these versions.  
384 This is the more recent version of the story, which is from the fifth/sixth century.  
385 Cf. also Tertullian, Ad ux. 1.6.3, where he identifies a dragon to which virgin women tended as a work of Satan. The same motive appears in Paul. Nol. Carm. 5.143-8, where the tale of the draco in the capitol is explained as being either a fantasy or a former work of the devil. Cf: Pohlkamp (1983) 14-15, where the texts are reproduced as well.
cult practice of Juno Sospita and the site of the sanctuary. Still, the connection between Juno Sospita and the agricultural rite did not begin with Propertius and is not solely restricted to the literary sources. As we will see further ahead, the goddess appears with a snake on several Republican denarii and the discovery of a long, man-made corridor under the Colle San Lorenzo, in the vicinity of Juno’s temple, has caused many archaeologists and historians to connect it to the goddess and ritual as well. At the same time, none of the ancient authors mention Juno Sospita as actually being involved in the proceedings or receiving offerings herself. Moreover, as Celia Schultz has pointed out, even if the story of the ritual does confirm the goddess' interest in agricultural fertility, this does not necessarily imply her influence over female fertility or childbirth as well. The fact that Propertius and his successors mention female worshippers in this particular rite has perhaps tempted modern interpreters to regard Juno Sospita solely as a women’s goddess, who consequently had to have a female sphere of influence. As we have also seen in the previous analysis of Diana Nemorensis, the conclusions are based on preconceptions about the gender specificity of Roman cults rather than on the sources themselves – a line of reasoning that will be challenged again further on in this chapter.

At this point, it is important to note that the village Lanuvium was not only known for its cult of Juno Sospita, but also for the agricultural rite that involved young girls and a snake. Already in antiquity, both discourses were connected and although it remains unclear what the exact relation was between the literary sources and the possible cult practice on the sanctuary grounds, the story of the ritual adds another perspective to our understanding of the character of Juno Sospita. Apart from her rather obvious competence in military and political matters, she may have had an influence over agricultural matters as well. At least for some worshippers visiting the sanctuary, the snake and the girls formed part of their knowledge of Juno’s cult site and – as we will see further ahead – recent discoveries near the sanctuary seem to provide clues on how the narratives about the snake and the girls became part of the religious landscape of Lanuvium.

### 3.3 Cult place(s) in Rome

The esteemed sanctuary of Juno Sospita in Lanuvium was less than 20 miles away from Rome, and as we have seen, the Romans were involved in the cult practice and organization from the moment they conquered the region. Nonetheless, Juno Sospita received a cult in the city of Rome as well. We find proof of her presence in literary and material sources, but there is debate about the moment

---

See pages 109-110 and 120-121.

Schultz (2006b) 219-220.


See pages 109ff of this chapter.
the goddess was given a place in Rome, as well as about the location of her temple. As with many of the traditions we have discussed so far, problems arise when we try to compile the various sources and reconstruct one central narrative from the diverse literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources. The historiographical record is, unsurprisingly, presented by Livy, who relates how, in 197 BC, consul Gaius Cornelius Cethegus vowed a temple:

The consul at the beginning of the battle vowed a temple to Juno Sospita if the enemy [the Insubrians] should be routed and put to flight that day; the soldiers shouted out that they would bring about the fulfilment of the consul's vow and the attack on the enemy began.\(^{390}\)

Of course, the battle was won and four years later, in 193 BC, Cethegus' temple was inaugurated. Livy presents the details of this event, but this time, a peculiar change of names occurs:

A number of temples were dedicated this year. One was the temple of Juno Matuta in the Forum Holitorium. This had been vowed four years earlier by C. Cornelius, consul during the the Gallic war, and he dedicated it when he was censor.\(^{391}\)

Because, apart from this passage in Livy, there is no evidence for a cult of a Juno with the epithet Matuta, it is likely that the author is mistaken and confuses the temple of Juno Sospita with that of Mater Matuta, which was nearby. \(^{392}\) Consequently, the temple of Juno Sospita was almost certainly located on the Forum Holitorium, where it was squeezed in between the temples of Janus and Spes, which were both older. \(^{393}\) Although Juno Sospita's temple was the biggest, the temples were built so close together that their facades resembled a porticus; in the Middle Republic this was an architectural novelty, which emphasized the stylistic unity of the design as well as the individual position of each temple. \(^{394}\) Remains of the temple have been identified under the church of San

\(^{390}\) Liv. 32.30.10: Consul principio pugnae votit aedem Sospitae Iunoni, si eo die hostes fusi fugatique fuissent; a militibus clamor sublatus compotem voti consulem se facturos, et impetus in hostes est factus.

\(^{391}\) Liv. 34.53.3: Aedes eo anno aliquot dedicatae sunt: una lunonis Matutae in foro olitorio, vota locataque quadriennio ante a C. Cornelio consule Gallico bello; censor idem dedicavit. The translation is my own.


\(^{393}\) Janus' temple on the Forum Holitorium (not to be confused with that on the Forum Romanum) was, according to Tacitus (Ann. 2.48), built by C. Dupilius, after a victory in the battle of Mylae in 260 BC. According to Cicero (Leg. 2.28) and Tacitus (Ann. 2.49). The temple of Spes was vowed by A. Attilius Calatinus in the first Punic War. Although the exact year is unknown, this must have been around 250 BC.

Nicola in Carcere and on the Forma Urbis. The temples were repeatedly restored and most of the visible remains date from the first century AD.

So far, the arrival of the Lanuvian goddess in Rome can be reconstructed quite unambiguously, but some confusion arises when we examine Juno Sospita’s position in the Roman calendar. Ovid mentions a holiday for the goddess on the first of February:

At the beginning of the month Saviour (Sospita) Juno, the neighbour of the Phrygian Mother Goddess is said to have been honoured with new shrines. If you ask, where are now the temples which on those Kalends were dedicated to the goddess? Tumbled down they are with the long lapse of time.

There is an entry in the Fasti Antiates Maiores on the same date, reconstructed – not entirely without debate – as Iunon(i) S[osp(itae)] Matr(i) Re[g(inae)]. This corresponds with several other Juno cults that were celebrated on the calendae (first day) of a month. The connection of the Fasti fragment with the other sources, however, causes problems: Ovid claims that Juno Sospita’s was ‘the neighbour of the Phrygian Mother Goddess’, that is, Magna Mater, but that temple was on the Palatine, not on the Forum Holitorium. Besides, it seems highly unlikely that Juno’s temple had ‘tumbled down’ by Ovid’s time, since the archaeological evidence show restorations up until the first century AD, and the temple appears on the third century AD Forma Urbis Roma.

Was Ovid mistaking Magna Mater for Mater Matuta, who did have a temple on the Forum Holitorium, as is often assumed? Then why does he claim that the temple, or temples, had disappeared by his time? Filippo Coarelli proposed a solution for the inconsistency: according to him, Rome had an archaic or early Republican temple for Juno Sospita on the Palatine, which had fallen down and was almost forgotten by the time Cornelius Cethegus inaugurated his temple on the Forum Holitorium. His hypothesis is based on a very complex analysis of calendar dates, which is as attractive as it is problematic. According to Coarelli, the dies natalis of Juno Sospita’s temple on the Forum Holitorium was not February first, but July first. On the Fasti Antiates Maioris, July first has the

396 Coarelli (1996b) 128-129.
398 Fasti Antiates Maiores: CIL I.2.248-249; Degrassi, In.it. XIII.1, tab. I-III. Fasti Vallense: CIL 1.2.320; Degrassi, In.it.XIII.18.
399 CIL I.2.248-9, Degrassi, In.it.XIII.1, tab. I-III.
401 Coarelli (1996b) 128-129.
fragmentary entry [...]on(i) [...], to be reconstructed as [iun]on(i).\footnote{CIL I.2 248-249; Degrassi, In.It. XIII.1.} On the Fasti Vallenses, the same date has the entry [...]rcell(i), to be completed as [ad theatrum Ma]rcell(i).\footnote{CIL I.2 320; Degrassi, In. It. XIII.18.} The theatre of Marcellus is next to the Forum Holitorium and we can deduce from the dies natalis of the temple of Janus – which appears with the same phrase in the Fasti Vallensis and the Fasti Allifani – that it could be used as a reference to the location of the temples on that market place.\footnote{Fasti Allifani: CIL I.2 0217; Degrassi, In. It. XIII.24.} Eventually, the entire entry for July first on the Fasti Antiates Maioris is reconstructed by Coarelli as follows: [ion]on(i) [Sospitae ad theatrum Ma]rcell(i). Consequently, if the calendae of July were the dies natalis of Juno Sospita’s temple on the Forum Holitorium, the other dies natalis – February 1st, on the Fasti Antiates Maiores mentioned above – had to refer to another, older cult place of the goddess.\footnote{See note 398.} In agreement with the fragment of Ovid’s Fasti, Coarelli suggests the Palatine as a plausible location.

The tenuous nature of Coarelli’s reconstruction needs little explanation, but some additional evidence may support his theory. Two fragments of terracotta antefixes, dated to the early fifth century BC and identified as Juno Sospita, were found at the southwestern end of the Palatine, near the temples of Magna Mater and Victoria. They were found during an excavation in which the remains of a small structure from the archaic period also came to light.\footnote{Pensabene (1979) 67-71.} Coarelli, and scholars before him, thought it likely that the building – of which the remains of a colonnade may indicate that it was used as a temple – was the earliest shrine for Juno Sospita in Rome.\footnote{Coarelli (1996b) 128-129, Wiseman (1981) 35-52, Herbert-Brown (1994) 34-41.} Further archaeological research may perhaps provide more clarity but for now the argument is hardly conclusive. The iconographic identification of the antefixes as Juno Sospita is controversial as well, a difficulty to which we shall return later.\footnote{For the discussion of these antefixes and the problems with identifying them, see the section on iconography, pages 114-116.} Nonetheless, we can conclude that Juno Sospita was firmly based in Rome, at least from 193 BC and possibly even from the sixth or fifth century BC. What did this mean for the cult practice in Lanuvium? Did the cults compete with each other or did they perhaps reinforce each other?

Since there is no source directly connecting Juno Sospita’s cult in Rome with that in Lanuvium, these questions can only – if, at all – be answered indirectly. In one instance, the problem is of particular relevance, and for that we need to return to the prodigia discussed earlier in this chapter. In 90 BC, an ominous sign of particular nature was reported. Livy’s account of that year has not been preserved, but Obsequens, in his collection of omens and signs, gives a vivid description of the episode:

\footnotesize

402 CIL I.2 248-249; Degrassi, In.It. XIII.1.
403 CIL I.2 320; Degrassi, In. It. XIII.18.
405 See note 398.
408 For the discussion of these antefixes and the problems with identifying them, see the section on iconography, pages 114-116.
Caecilia Metella related that she had dreamed that Juno Sospita was fleeing away because her precincts were being desecrated with filth, and that Metella had by her prayers with difficulty called her back. Metella cleaned out the temple, which was befouled by ladies' attention to dirty and vile physical needs, and in which under the very image of the goddess, a bitch had her lair and her litter; ceremonies of prayer were held, and restored the temple to its original lustre.  

Cicero comments upon the prodigium in *De Divinatione*, and because that work is nearly contemporary, the description is especially noteworthy:

Nor, indeed, were the more significant dreams, if they seemed to concern the administration of public affairs, disregarded by our Supreme Council. Even within my own memory, Lucius Julius, who was consul with Publius Rutilius, by a vote of the Senate rebuilt the temple of Juno Sospita in accordance with a dream of Caecilia, daughter of Balearicus.

This was not a routine divine warning, visible to all, but the dream of an individual: one from an influential family, but still a private person. Cicero acknowledges the possible unreliability of such a prodigium and returns to the incident later on in his work, within the context of his narrative on prodigies in general:

In recent times, during the Marsian war, the temple of Juno Sospita was restored by the Senate because of a dream of Caecilia, the daughter of Quintus Caecilius Metellus [Balearicus]. This is the same dream that Sisenna discussed as marvelous, in that its prophecies were fulfilled to the letter, and yet later – influenced no doubt by some petty

---

409 Obs. 55: Metella Caecilia somnio Iunonem Sospitam profugientem, quod immunde sua templa foedarentur, cum suis precibus aegre revocatam diceret, aedem matronarum sordidis obsconsisque corporis coiquinatum ministris, in qua etiam sub simulacro deae cubile canis cum fetu erat, commundatam supplicationibus habitis pristino splendore restituit. Loeb translation with adaptations.

410 Cic. *De Div.* 1.4: Nec vero somnia graviora, si quae ad rem publicam pertinere visa sunt, a summo consilio neglecta sunt. Quia etiam memoria nostra templum lunonis Sospitae L. Iulius, qui cum P. Rutilio consul fuit, de senatus sententia refect ex Caeciliae, Balearici filiae, somnio. Balearicus was the agnomen of Quintus Caecilius Metellus, which he deserved by defeating the pirates of the Balearic Islands in 47 BC (Liv. *Per.* 60; Flor. 1.43; Oros. 5.13.1; Strab. 3.5.1).
Epicurean – he goes on inconsistently to maintain that dreams are not worthy of belief.411

In contrast to Obsequens (and thus probably Livy), Cicero attributes the restoration to one of the consuls of that year, who allegedly acted on orders of the Senate. It seems that the dream preceding that action was regarded as very reliable, considering the fact that even the historian Lucius Cornelius Sisenna – apparently an Epicurean – had to acknowledge its trustworthiness.412 Schultz however, who recently investigated the matter in detail, rightfully concludes that Obsequens’ more sensational version has somewhat overshadowed Cicero’s version of the account.413 The academic discussion has for example centered on the exact nature of the ‘dirty and vile physical needs’, with some authors assuming that Juno Sospita’s temple was effectively a brothel, whilst others suggested that the ladies used it as a latrine.414

Schultz herself pays attention to another discussion, which is also of importance in light of our investigation of the relationship between Juno’s cult in Lanuvium and that in Rome. That is, both Cicero and Obsequens fail to mention the location of the temple that needed restoration. Many of the scholars addressing the prodigy have interpreted the absence of a location as an implicit reference to the temple on the Forum Holitorium in Rome, which would be the obvious frame of reference for the Roman public.415 Schultz has considered the matter more carefully, but arrives at the same conclusion: in the tensions surrounding the Social War, the Senate would have had reason to emphasize the religious centrality of Rome.416 But, given the fame of the cult in Lanuvium, this assumption is not as self-evident as it seems. Perhaps the assumption should be reversed: Cicero fails to mention a specific location because for his readers Juno Sospita’s place was obviously in Lanuvium, where portents had been reported many times before at her main sanctuary. If accurate, this could indicate that Juno Sospita, notwithstanding her longstanding worship in Rome, retained her strong association with Lanuvium.

411 Cic. De Div. 1.99: Caeciliae Q. filiae somnio modo Marsico bello templum est a senatu Iunoni Sospitae restitutum. Quod quidem somnium Sisenna cum disputavisset mirifice ad verbum cum re convenisse, tum insolenter, credo ab Epicureo aliquo inductus, disputat somniis credi non oportere.

412 Sisenna is best known as a writer of Roman histories, which are now lost to us but were widely appreciated by his contemporaries and were also used as sources by Livy and Sallust. As a person, we mainly know him through descriptions of Cicero, in De Divinatione but also in other works. See: Beck and Walter (2001) 241-313.

413 Schultz (2006b) 208. She points out an illustrative passage in Scullard (1981) 71, who cites only Cicero but obviously has Obsequens’ more sensational version in mind.

414 Dumézil (1974) 431 assumed that the temple was a prostitution site, while its use as a latrine has been suggested by Balsdon (1962) 249.


416 Schultz (2006b) 223.
Cicero, in my opinion, hints at Juno’s Lanuvian sanctuary in *De Divinatione*, in the lines immediately after Caecilia’s dream, the second fragment discussed above. The sceptic Sisenna may have been suspicious of divine dreams (apart from that of Caecilia), but this did not stop him from believing in prodigies and Cicero has him mentioning one in Lanuvium:

This writer, however, has nothing to say against prodigies; in fact he relates that, at the outbreak of the Marsic War, the statues of the gods dripped with sweat, rivers ran with blood, the heavens opened, voices from unknown sources were heard predicting dangerous wars, and finally – the sign considered by the soothsayers the most ominous of all – the shields at Lanuvium were gnawed by mice.\(^{417}\)

Although it is unclear where the ‘shields of Lanuvium’ were located and if Juno Sospita was involved in the portent, it is significant that Cicero mentions both *prodigia* in the same section.\(^ {418}\) They both took place in the early days of the Social War, named the Marsic War here (after the Marsi that formed the core of the uprising). Schultz has argued that the shields visible in the frieze of the tomb of Caecilia Metella on the Via Appia – a younger niece of the Caecilia above – may refer to those same shields that were gnawed in Lanuvium, indicating that the family took pride in its involvement in the restoration and she also suggests a link between the Metelli and the town of Lanuvium.\(^ {419}\) However, that suggestion cannot be substantiated, nor are there other indications for such a connection.\(^ {420}\)

Nevertheless, there is reason to assume that Cicero referred to Lanuvium instead of Rome when talking about Juno Sospita’s temple. In *De Natura Deorum*, the work that preceded *De

---


\(^{418}\) Sacral shields are mainly known from the Salii, the priests of Mars who carried around a bilobate shield that had allegedly descended from heaven into the hands of king Numa Pompilius. Schultz (2006b) 224 and note 59-61. Actual weapons are not commonly found around temples, but we do know some cases of reliefs of shields being depicted as part of war booty, for example on Hadrian’s temple in Rome. In case of the sanctuary in Lanuvium, there is no evidence for this type of decoration. Apart from that, miniature models of shields, swords and shields are fairly common in votive deposits. The practice has been especially well researched for the North Western provinces of the Roman Empire: Kiernan (2009) 40-113. In a Latial context, miniature weaponry is known from burials from the fifth century BC in Satricum: Gnade (2007) 458-462, Meering (1992) 109-114. Although they are not attested for in Lanuvium, the *prodigium* may refer to votive models rather than to large shields.

\(^{419}\) Schultz (2006b) 223-227. She especially calls attention to the rare trilobate shield visible on the tomb, which also seems to be visible on Republican *denarii* portraying Juno Sospita (see page 118ff.)

\(^{420}\) Undermining Schultz’ theory is the fact that Cicero uses the term *clipeus* when he refers to Caecilia’s dream, which usually indicates a big round shield and not the trilobite form on the mausoleum. Also, in the fragment of *De Natura Deorum* (see following note), he uses *scutum* (usually referring to a semicircular, rectangular shield) when discussing the appearance of Juno Sospita.
Divinatione, he leaves little room for uncertainty. There, the politician and pontifex Gaius Aurelius Cotta defends the various natures and manifestations of the Roman gods against the Epicurean Velleius, by means of a well-known example:

[...] Precisely as much as you believe Juno Sospita of your native place to be a goddess. You never see her, not even in your dreams, unless equipped with goat-skin, spear, shield and slippers turned up at the toe. Yet that is not the aspect of the Argive Juno, nor of the Roman. It follows that Juno has one form for the Argives, another for the people of Lanuvium, and another for us.421

Apparently, Velleius came from Lanuvium and he is told that ‘his’ Juno Sospita is typically Lanuvian and distinctively different from other Junones, such as the Roman one. What sets the Lanuvian Juno Sospita apart from the other goddesses is her iconography, and the elements of Cicero’s descriptions have helped modern scholars to identify the Lanuvian Juno on a number of material sources. We shall return to the discussion of this iconography further below, but for the moment, it is important to acknowledge that Juno Sospita, although she had a longstanding worship in Rome – was described by Cicero as a typically Lanuvian goddess.422

Patrick Kragelund, in an article on religious dreams and politics, has drawn attention to the clause ‘not even in your dreams’ in Cicero’s description.423 In his view, this does not refer to some random dream but to Caecilia’s one, a well-known prodigy at the time. In a time of political turmoil, the Senate would have taken the warning in her dream (described in the passages above) very seriously and would have ordered the restoration of the temple in Lanuvium. Schultz agrees on the political significance of the prodigium, but believes that the Senate was more likely to devote attention to Rome as religious centre, precisely because of the political turmoil. Ultimately, the issue remains unresolved, if only because of the presumed decrepit state of the sanctuary in need of renovation. This is hard to imagine in Rome, where – as we have seen – the temple was located in the busy Forum Holitorium or perhaps on the Palatine. But it also seems unlikely in the case of the well-known temple of Lanuvium, which went through a process of monumentalization in the first century BC, as we shall see further ahead.424 It was rich enough to lend gold to Octavian to pay his troops in 42 BC and during the rule of Hadrian it still accumulated enough wealth to make a 209

421 Cic. Nat. Deor. 1.82: Tam hercle quam tibi illam vestram Sospitam. Quam tu numquam ne in somnis quidem vides nisi cum pelle caprina, cum hasta, cum scutulo, cum calceolis repandis: at non est talis Argia nec Romana Iuno. Ergo alia species Iunonis Argivis, alia Lanuvianis, alia nobis.
422 For the iconography, see page 112ff.
424 See pages 104ff.
pound gold and silver statue out of old votives. Although especially Obsequens’ late version of the story implies a high degree of neglect of the sanctuary, Cicero’s terminology in describing Caecilia’s dream (templum...restituit) indicates a restoration as well. Schultz, however, draws out an important ideological factor that may influence our interpretation: in general, there was a concern for the posterity and continuity of buildings as monumenta in Roman culture. The prestige of a restoration may have been an incentive to either exaggerate the antiquity of a structure or the extent of the damage that it had undergone – as is suggested by the language of many building inscriptions. So, an extension or a simple refurbishment – in a series of many – may have ended up in the family records as a large renovation.

We have seen that Juno Sospita, in the third and second centuries BC, mainly manifested herself in times of crisis. From her cult place in Lanuvium, she showed concern for the Roman state, and the historical tradition emphasizes that a goddess who was originally the protectress of Lanuvium, had expanded her guardianship to Rome. The confrontation with new enemies from overseas, like the Carthaginians, brought back memories of earlier wars and conquests. By taking the prodigia from Lanuvium seriously and acting on them, the Senate secured the support of Juno Sospita and at the same time underlined its own religious authority, which extended to previously non-Roman cults. In the build-up to the Social war, that authority was severely challenged, and this time even Rome’s position in Latium was under pressure. The gods show their concern in a great number of prodigia, and Caecilia Metella’s dream about Juno Sospita is a remarkable example of that. The account shows that even during a civil war – or: especially during a civil war – a local, originally non-Roman goddess should be placated. In 90 BC, when Roman authority in Latium was far from self-evident, the Senate may have welcomed Caecilia’s dream as an invitation to strengthen the ties with the old cult in Lanuvium, which not only secured Juno Sospita’s backing but also created political support amongst Lanuvians and other Latins. The temple restoration is in this perspective a conscious message from Rome to its neighbours and therefore I am inclined to situate it in Lanuvium.

\[\text{425} \text{ Appian (Bell. Civ. 5.24) refers to its wealth, stating that Octavian borrowed money from the sanctuary in Lanuvium to pay his troops their long awaited salary. The wealth during the reign of Hadrian is illustrated by an inscription (CIL XIV 2088), which states that the statue was made out of old votive gifts (vestutate corruptis) in the temple. For the inscription, see pages 124-125.}\]

\[\text{426} \text{ Schultz (2006b) 211. Schultz based her argument partly on an influential article of Thomas and Witschel (1992) 135-177. They argue that renovations claimed in Latin inscriptions are not always supported by the archaeological data, and thus should not be interpreted as direct testimonies, but as ideological statements with which the patrons sought status and public recognition. The argumentation is disputed by Fagan (1996) 81-93, who states that the claims made on building inscriptions could not be too far removed from reality, since everybody would know.}\]
3.4 The development of the sanctuary in Lanuvium

Can we identify this restoration of the temple in the archaeological record of Juno’s sanctuary in Lanuvium? To answer this question, we must shift our attention to the Colle San Lorenzo and to the excavations that have been performed there since 1888. In that year, the British ambassador to Italy Lord Savile Lumley – who we have already mentioned as the first excavator of the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis – started digging on Lanuvium’s highest hill, after earlier reports of the antiquities still visible there.\(^{427}\) The excavations did not reveal the same amount of sculptural finds as the campaign that had prompted the treasure hunt a few years earlier in Nemi, but the way they were undertaken was still very far removed from the scientific standards of archaeological research today. Especially the lack of documentation throughout the fieldwork did much harm to the later understanding of the site. In Savile’s quest for sculpture and other artefacts, he unearthed the remains of a large scale late Republican sanctuary that was spread out over several terraces on the south side of the hill and that faced west (figure 3.1). The excavations lasted until 1892 and the results have become the basis for subsequent studies on the construction and social embedding of the late Republican sanctuary of Juno Sospita.\(^{428}\) After the 19\(^{th}\) century campaigns the site was abandoned for decades and deteriorated rapidly, as was noted for example by the early 20\(^{th}\) scholar Guy Blandlin Colburn, who saw that the grand portico that had been unearthed by Lord Savile – and had been restored by Vincenzo Seratrine using the original material – was already partly destroyed by his time.\(^{429}\) Bombings during the Second World War further damaged the site and afterwards it was long neglected. A restoration in 1980 prevented the final decay, and since 2012, new restorations and excavations by the Museo Civico Lanuvino have not only protected the archaeological surroundings of the sanctuary but have also provided new insights into its building phases and use.\(^{430}\)

Before we turn to the analysis of the larger sanctuary however, we must first discuss the highest and most eastern terrace of the hill, on which the mid-Republican temple building for Juno Sospita was located. Now as in antiquity, it is separated from the other structures by a road that runs from the northeast to the southwest of the hill, so the temple was not immediately recognized as part of the sanctuary (and thus remained unaffected by the diggings of Lord Savile). When the

---

\(^{427}\) Antonio Nibby and Arthur John Strutt had, amongst others, pointed out the significance of the site, which was then known as civita Lavinia. See for further background on the 19th century excavations of the site: Attenni (2011) 164-168. For the excavations at the sanctuary of Diana, see pages 58ff.

\(^{428}\) The results were published in: Pullan (1884) 327-334, Savile Lumley (1886) 367-381, Savile Lumley (1892) 147-154, but the articles focused almost solely on the sculptural finds, without paying attention to finding circumstances and excavation methods. Additionally, some context is provided by the photos made during the campaigns by E. Moscioni, for which see: Attenni (2011) 164-168.

\(^{429}\) Colburn (1914) 26.

\(^{430}\) See for the results of these investigations pages 105-106 below.
temple was identified and excavated in the 1910’s and 1920’s, it soon became clear that the eastern terrace was the oldest nucleus of the sanctuary and earlier phases of the structure have been dated back as far the 6th century BC. After the first campaigns, the site of the temple was largely neglected, until a new series of excavations in the years 2006-2011 provided more clarity on the chronology of the remains and produced a more detailed study of the earliest stages of the cult practice.

The successive investigations have revealed a long continuity of religious activity on the hill, but many questions remain about the ground plans of the different phases of the temple building, as well as about the relation between the architectural remains and the terracotta decorations found nearby. The oldest structural remains consist of a tufa wall of about six meters in length, which was oriented north-east to south-west and which has been tentatively dated to the early sixth century BC. Colonna hypothesized that it belonged to the first temple on the hill, a small rectangular building, but the lack of other structural features cannot substantiate this claim (figure 3.2). In any case, the late archaic (late sixth or early fifth century BC) temple that was subsequently built on the site was much larger, had a different orientation, and was built in grey peperino tufa. After the recent excavations, Fabrizio Santi has plausibly reconstructed the ground plan of this temple, which according to him had two cellae and two rows of columns in the pronaos, whereas earlier interpretations had assumed a temple with one or three cellae (figures 3.2 and 3.3).

Relatively large amounts of ceramic finds from the late sixth century correspond with the dating of this temple, and suggest that it was relatively widely visited.

---

431 This was discovered in campaigns led by Angelo Pasqui (1914-1914) and reported by Galieti (1916-1917) 28-35, Galieti (1928) 75-118, 199-124, who also performed further archaeological research. Meanwhile, Bendinelli (1921) 293-370 had also studied the remains in relation to the discoveries made by Lord Savile, and produced the first formal plans of the entire area of the Colle San Lorenzo. For a more thorough discussion of the earliest excavations on the temple grounds, see: Santi (2014a) 103-138. Cf: Chiarucci (1983) 166-176.


435 Of this temple phase, a stretch of the northern wall is preserved, as well as some bases for columns, part of the podium and part of the stairs. On the basis of this, the structure had a reconstructed size of approximately 23 by 14 metres. In contrast to the earlier structure, it was oriented facing west.

436 Santi (2014a) 103-138. The argument is based on the pattern in the floor pavement and on the position of the column bases. Earlier, Galieti (1928) 105-111 had assumed a ground plan with just one cella, while Colonna (1984) 408ff reconstructed three cellae.

437 See Bouma (1996b) 44, note 405. Further information is provided by the collection of the Dionigi family, which has lived in the nearby villa since the 18th century and has recently donated many of the artefacts it has collected over the years to the Museo Civico of Lanuvium. Within the collection are many pieces of bucchero pottery from the sixth century BC, amongst which is a small kylix with (part of) the alphabet inscribed. According to Attenni and Maras (2004) 61-78, this is the oldest abecedary known in Latin and suggests the presence of some sort of writing school near the sanctuary.
According to Santi, however, it is likely that the cultic activity on the hill went even further back. Underneath the floor level of the late archaic temple, remains of an oval and rectangular hut and several graves were found, which can be dated to the eight or early seventh century BC (figure 3.5). Especially the (larger) rectangular hut is of importance, because – according to Santi and the other excavators – it is related to a votive pit that was discovered (centrally) in front of it. The pit was filled up in multiple phases and revealed fragments of bucchero and impasto pottery, roof tiles, bone material and fragments of black-figure ceramics. It was closed around the time of the construction of the late archaic temple and is thus a fairly clear indication of the ritual use of the hill before that time, in the sixth century BC. Santi, though, goes one step further and assumes that the rectangular hut – dated to the eight century BC – can therefore be considered the first cult building of Lanuvium, a chronology that would for example be paralleled by the capanna sacra ('sacred hut') of Satricum. Considering the fact that the votive finds in the pit cannot be dated precisely and may also belong to an open-air ritual context, this argument seems rather thin to me. The presence of huts on the highest part of the Colle san Lorenzo does not need to surprise us and a hut underneath a temple in itself does not necessarily prove functional similarity. Nevertheless, the material remains show a remarkably long history of worship, which proves that the religious site in Lanuvium was visited long before the Roman dominance of the area.

The final phase of the temple was built in the middle of the fourth century BC. Part of its grey peperino blocks can still be observed today, and the reconstructed ground plan shows a single cella flanked by two alae, behind a deep pronao with two rows of columns (figure 3.4). Along the sides of the temple and in front of it, stretches of basalt road have been discovered. This mid-Republican arrangement was kept intact when the sanctuary was expanded in the second and first centuries BC and large parts of the rest of the hill were covered, which meant that the older temple was separated from the rest of the sanctuary by the road (and also had a slightly different orientation). In comparison to other large sanctuaries in Latium, where a new temple building was often part of the monumentalization in the late Republic, the cult site in Lanuvium seems to have

---

438 See Zevi, Santi and Attenni (2011) 292ff, Santi (2014a) 103-138. The oval hut has a diameter of approximately 5 metres, while the rectangular hut seems to have been larger (with a length of at least 9 metres) and had a small ‘porch’ on the northern side.
439 See below for the other votive material found in the sanctuary.
440 Zevi, Santi and Attenni (2011) 297, Santi (2014b) 50-51. In the latter article, the author ‘does not exclude’ that the hut may have had a purely residential character. For the sacred hut of Satricum, see Stibbe (1980) 174-175. Guidi (2009) 145-146 has argued that remains of huts that were located under or nearby later sanctuaries in Latium, should be considered the earliest nucleus of this cult. See Zevi, Santi and Attenni (2011) 297, note 18 for further examples.
441 See Bouma (1996b) 94-101 for a similar critical view on the sacred hut of Satricum.
442 Coarelli (1983b) 123, Colonna (1984) 110-11,
developed in a more organic way, which integrated the older religious nucleus with the grand scale and visual impact of the new sanctuary buildings.  

The construction of the rest of the sanctuary took place in two phases. The most notable characteristic of the monumental design is the porticus on the western slope of the sanctuary grounds, partly reconstructed in the late 19th century and recently renovated. Originally it had two floors and extended over a length of more than 100 metres. It consisted of Doric semicolumns and was built in a slightly irregular opus reticulatum, dated by Filippo Coarelli to the middle of the first century BC. The wall behind this porticus, which supports a higher terrace that is now mostly covered, is in opus incertum and is about a century older. From underneath the arches, there is a staircase leading up this terrace, where the remains of a nymphaeum with niches and a cistern from the first century BC have been unearthed on the northern end. Behind the southern end of the monumental porticus, a series of rooms can be distinguished, again surrounded by a porticus with semicolumns. The function of these structures is unclear, but they may have been used as service quarters for the priests. 

In the most recent excavation campaign, a number of rooms have been (re)investigated that are facing the road and are oriented along its track: they thus show the connection between the temple area, the road and the later sanctuary buildings. The detailed study of these rooms – which has revealed several black and white mosaic floors and a pavement in opus scutulatum – confirms Coarelli’s dating of the monumentalization of the sanctuary, and proves that the sanctuary received its grand appearance around the middle of the first century BC. Although previous research has not yet identified the precise function for individual rooms, it is evident that an effort was made to integrate the older architecture of the temple buildings with the new monumental outline of the sanctuary. Finally, in a different series of archaeological campaigns, the eastern terraces of the Colle

---

444 After the excavation of Lord Savile Lumley, the porticus was reconstructed by Vincenzo Seratrice, almost completely with antique material. Savile Lumley (1892) 148. The site was cleaned and restored in 1980 and a new restoration campaign in 2012 left it in its current state. See: Chiarucci (1983) 176-186, Attenni (2014) 143, note 10.
445 This can be deduced from the fact that the collapsed ceiling contained pieces of mosaic floors. The hypothesis is that the second floor also contained semicolumns in opus reticulatum. Attenni (2004a) 223. For the individual elements of the architecture mentioned in this analysis, see figure 3.1.
446 Coarelli (1987) 142-143.
447 The area had been (partly) excavated by Lord Savile and is visible on pictures of Thomas Ashby (who visited the site) but was covered and damaged by bombings and later habitation. For the most recent excavation campaign on the part of the sanctuary grounds, executed by the Museo Civico Lanuvino, see Attenni (2014) 143-151.
448 Opus scutulatum is a form of mosaic, in which irregular tesserae of different colours are inserted into a monochrome (in this case white) mosaic floor.
San Lorenzo were investigated.\footnote{In 2006, 2008 and 2009, also under direction of the Museo Civico Lanuvino (in collaboration with La Sapienza University in Rome). See: Zevi, Santi and Attenni (2011) 297ff, Zevi, Attenni and Santi (2012) 186ff.} Here, the slope is steeper; gates, ramps and stairs in the terracing walls prove that the temple area could also be approached from the east. Pieces of architectural decorations seem to reveal that this entry also was monumentalized. A significant discovery under the \textit{opus reticulatum} wall of the first century BC, was an older wall in \textit{opus incertum}, dated by the excavators to the second century BC. This corresponds with the two building phases of the monumental porticus on the western side of the sanctuary. The eastern terracing walls also show signs of restoration in the second century AD, which may correspond with the new cult statue that was supposedly put up for Juno Sospita in the second century AD (as will be discussed further ahead), or with restorations mentioned in the \textit{Historia Augusta}, which are listed among the public works of Antoninus Pius.\footnote{The cult statue is discussed on pages 124-125 of this chapter. For the restoration of Antoninus Pius: Hist. Aug. \textit{An. Pius} 8.2-3. This last possibility seems credible, since Antoninus Pius was born in Lanuvium (Hist. Aug. \textit{An. Pius} 1.2) and a villa found nearby is identified as the ancestral seat of the Antonine family. For the villa, see: Aryamontri, Renner and Cecchini (2013) 135-141 (with earlier bibliography in the footnotes. Antoninus and Commodus also advertised their \textit{origo} in Lanuvium through coins of Juno Sospita: see pages 121-122.}

So far, the different architectural elements have revealed a relatively clear chronology: two archaic and one mid-Republican phase in the temple building that formed the religious nucleus of the site, with a later monumental sanctuary that was constructed in two stages in the late Republic. Additionally, we may assume that several restorations took place – one of which may have been triggered by the dream of Caecilia Metella discussed earlier in this chapter. The building activities thus span more than six centuries, and this continuity is matched by the votive material found on the site. As we have seen, the temple area revealed pottery fragments and animal bones that go back to (at least) the sixth century BC and after a notable dip the fifth century BC – as was the case for the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis – the votive activity continued well into the Imperial period. The material included various types of pottery, metal object, terracotta statuettes and anatomical votives.\footnote{If we look at the decoration of the sanctuary, some problems of interpretation arise, partly caused by the fact that the sculpture found by Lord Savile was poorly documented and hastily shipped off to Britain. From the start of Savile’s campaigns, large quantities of terracotta ornaments were found, including plaques, friezes, cornices and antefixes. The material can be dated to three} Although uteri and breasts are reported among the finds, there is – again – nothing that singles out the sanctuary as a cult site specifically directed at women.\footnote{Although uteri and breasts are reported among the finds, there is – again – nothing that singles out the sanctuary as a cult site specifically directed at women.}

If we look at the decoration of the sanctuary, some problems of interpretation arise, partly caused by the fact that the sculpture found by Lord Savile was poorly documented and hastily shipped off to Britain. From the start of Savile’s campaigns, large quantities of terracotta ornaments were found, including plaques, friezes, cornices and antefixes. The material can be dated to three
different stages: antefixes and ornaments dating to the late archaic period (the end of the sixth to the middle of the fifth century BC), a second phase with decorations from the fourth and third centuries BC and a third phase dated to the first century BC. The latter category could correspond to the late-Republican monumentalization of the sanctuary, which may have included a refurbishment of the mid-Republican temple. The first two phases of terracotta decorations, however, do not match the dating of the temple phases very well, although a fifth century refurbishment of a sixth century temple is certainly a possibility. Apart from the iconography and identification of the antefixes that will be discussed later, another problem arises from the scarce notes of Savile’s work, which locate the discovery of terracotta in the vicinity of the monumental porticus, and not on the terrace of the temple itself. Were the ornaments – of which at least a number of pieces seem to have been buried carefully, considering their undamaged state – ritually buried away from the temple grounds for some reason? Or was there an archaic cult building on the lower terraces as well? At the current state of research, these questions remain open, but they remind us of how little we really know of the nature and organization of the cult before Roman interference.

When it comes to the late-Republican decoration of the sanctuary, we are on somewhat steadier grounds. Perhaps the most important piece of evidence from this period is a large sculptural group, known as the equestrian group of Licinius Murena. Most of the fragments were found by Lord Savile around the area of the porticus and are now in the British Museum and the Leeds City Museum; a head that was excavated in the temple area is now kept in the local museum of Lanuvio. The group is somewhat smaller than lifesize, is made of high quality Greek marble and clearly has a Hellenistic appearance. Portrayed is a group of at least seven but probably eight or nine horsemen, of which seven torsos and seven horse heads have been found. One of the figures clearly stands out from the rest: he is unarmed and wears a tunic and a large mantle, in contrast to the cuirasses worn by the other figures. The heroic, non-military depiction of this individual, along with the expressive movements of the horses and some other details, have led Filippo Coarelli to assume that the group was copied from – or rather: inspired by – a famous victory monument made

---

455 Woodward (1929) 85, Coarelli (1987) 145. For some of Savile’s notes, see: Garofalo (2011) 552-553.
456 The head was badly damaged in the bombings of the Second World War and disappeared after. It was recovered in 1998. See: Attenni (2004b) 108-115. In 2010 the remains were exhibited together, see: La Rocca and Presicce (2010) 104-114.
457 In addition to these, the smaller pieces of sculpture seem to belong to at least eight individual horses. Moreover, one of the human heads does not belong to one of the known torsos either. Coarelli (1987) 153. Cf: Rous (2010) 227.
by Lysippos for Alexander the Great (figure 3.6). The original bronze group would have represented 25 riders and Alexander during the battle of the Granicus river, and would have ended up in Rome after the victory of Quintus Caecilius Metellus in Macedonia.

According to Coarelli, this *imitatio Alexandri* was directed at a famous inhabitant of Lanuvium, L. Licinius Murena, who was the first of his village to rise to the office of consul in 62 BC. He had fought in all three Mithridatic wars and the association with Alexander would thus make some sense. Licinius Murena would have shared this honour with L. Licinius Lucullus, who was Murena’s commander in the third Mithridatic war and a member of the same *gens*. The victories of the latter Licinius in the east (near the river Granicus) are identified with the deeds of Alexander the Great in epic poetry, and according to Coarelli this motif fitted well into Murena’s own political strategies in the years before his consulship. Consequently, it may be assumed that Licinius Murena was not only honoured by the sculpture group, but also as a donor and patron of the sanctuary, which was monumentalized precisely in the years he rose to political prominence and had returned from war with considerable rewards. The involvement of the *gens* Licinia with the sanctuary would moreover be proven by two small Republican *cippi* – both unfortunately lost at the moment – with the (reconstructed) names of both Lucullus and Murena.

Admittedly, the argument is rather complex and is not supported by all scholars who have studied the sculptural group. Patrick Kragelund, for example, has argued that it was not Licinius Murena who was the donor for the sculptural group and the sanctuary, but Q. Caecilius Metellus, who had conquered Macedonia and allegedly took the original Alexander sculpture to Rome; his granddaughter Caecilia Metella later dreamt about restoring the sanctuary of Juno Sospita. This suggestion seems to me even more hypothetical than Coarelli’s argumentation, which is at least backed by some (fragmentary) epigraphic evidence. In any case, if the connection between the sanctuary, the Licinii and the Mithridatic wars is correct, it is an interesting example of how the affairs of the Roman state enabled Latin elites to monumentalize the sanctuaries of their

---

459 Vel. Pat. 1.2.3-4; Plin. NH 36.42. Cf. Arr. Anab. 1.16.4.
460 Coarelli (1981) 250-261, Coarelli (1987) 155-159. In his defence speech for the poet Archias, Cicero (Arch. 21, 25) states that the man praised Lucullus and compared him to Alexander in his poetry. According to Coarelli (1987) 158, the composition of this *carmen Mithridaticum* was simultaneous with the construction of the equestrian group at Lanuvium.
461 The names on the two *cippi* are reconstructed by Coarelli (1987) as [L(ucio) licini]o muren[ae] and lucu[llus]. While especially the identification of the first personage is uncertain, photos of the *cippus* recovered by Garofalo (2011) 549, figures 11-12 show that such a reconstruction is likely.
462 See for example the work of Giuliana Calcani, who argues that it is possible that the statue group honoured Licinius, but that it was not inspired by the Lysippos statue: Gualandi (1980) 69-96 claims that there are no grounds for the connection at all. Cf: Attenni (2004b) 111-112, Rous (2010) 228.
463 Kragelund (2001) 170-175, who also points out that Cicero’s *Pro Murena* is suspiciously silent about Licinius’ supposed activities at the sanctuary.
hometowns. With the sculptural group and (possibly) the refurbishment of the sanctuary, Licinius Murena strengthened the connections with his fellow Lanuvians but also with their patron goddess, Juno Sospita. Vice-versa, the involvement with and promotion of his origo in Lanuvium can be understood as a political strategy directed at Rome: the reference to a local Latin goddess and her time old cult becomes an asset in the power politics of the late Republican urbs. As we will see further ahead in this chapter, this promotion of local religious heritage can be observed in the messages of Lanuvian monetarii as well.  

3.5 The Pantanacci votive deposit: the cave of the snake?

In the final part of my analysis of the archaeological remains, I want to take a look at some recent discoveries in the area of the Colle San Lorenzo, which shed new light on how Juno Sospita’s sanctuary in Lanuvium became associated with the literary motif of the draco and the virgins, a discourse that – as we have seen earlier in this chapter – was otherwise linked only to sanctuaries in the eastern half of the Mediterranean. What was it that triggered the connection and why was it so persistent over the course of multiple centuries? Could we perhaps imagine a physical location for the rite, or a ritual performance of some kind? Or could we even imagine the ritual to be a genuine religious experience?

Such questions are not new: in fact, the earliest observers and excavators of the sanctuary were highly intrigued by the serpent rite and actively searched for a fitting location. Rodolfo Lanciani, for example, believed that the snake was not an empty symbol, but that ‘a live specimen of a particular species’ was kept in a cave, adjoining the temple. At the far north end of the monumental porticus, discovered and restored in the first archaeological campaigns of Lord Savile, a small opening was found that led into a man-made corridor in the rock behind it. Although the corridor is part of the monumentalized outline of the sanctuary and the surroundings can hardly be described as a cave or a grove, the entry is narrow and the passage seems to go quite far into the rock, causing the archaeologists to believe that this was where the terrified girls went down (figure 3.7).

---

644 See pages 117ff.
645 I have published a more extensive version of this argument in: Hermans (2016) 196-227.
646 Lanciani (1902) 127. He finds confirmation of this hypothesis in a common but harmless species of snakes, living in the Roman countryside and called ‘serpenti della regina’ by the peasants. He identifies them as descendants of the serpents that escaped the sanctuary after its destruction. Although there is no evidence in the case of Lanuvium, the keeping of actual snakes is not unheard of in antiquity. See Ogden (2013) 347-342, who presents a number of ancient examples and modern comparanda.
However, other than the somewhat evocative entrance, there is no evidence to support this claim. In recent speleological campaigns, the passage into the rock was partly cleared and investigated, as were the small rooms adjoining it. What the researchers identified was essentially a hydraulic structure, and nothing in it designated it as a ritual space: the elements in the corridor are clearly functional for the transport and storage of water and not a single sign of religious activity was found (figure 3.8). The search for the physical surroundings of a ritual of which we know the details mainly through poetry seems not only fruitless but also methodologically problematic, just like the search for the sacred tree of Nemi that we have discussed in the previous chapter.

Nonetheless, a recent and rather accidental discovery near Juno Sospita’s sanctuary in Lanuvium may serve as a reason not to abandon this approach altogether. In the summer of 2012, a special heritage protection team of the Guardia di Finanza in Rome interrupted an illegal excavation at the locality of Pantanacci, about 1.5 kilometers from the sanctuary at the northern end of the Colle San Lorenzo. What was discovered, and was about to be shipped off to the Asian market, was a votive deposit of enormous dimensions. For the protection of the site, an emergency excavation was undertaken in 2012 and investigations continued over 2013 and 2014. They revealed a natural cave, enlarged by human hands and made approachable with large peperino slabs. There are several cavities cut into the rear wall of the cave, and man-made tunnels create a channel of running water with a little lake, as they must have done in antiquity (figure 3.9). The research is ongoing and a definitive reconstruction of the complexity of the system cannot be given at this stage, but considering the dimensions of the cave, the human interventions in the landscape and the remarkable amount of votive material found, it is clear that we are dealing with a ritual space of considerable interest.

For the dating of the cave we must rely mainly on the votive offerings that were found there in large quantities. A chronology between the fourth and third centuries BC can be established for

---

468 The first research was undertaken by the Centro Ricerche Sotterranee Egeria and published in Attenni (2009) 20-22. Recently, the excavations were continued and expanded by the Centro Ricerche Speleo Archeologiche. For a report on this investigation, see: Paglia (2014) 5-14.
469 Attenni (2009) 22, Paglia (2014) 13. The use of the corridor cannot be fully reconstructed yet, but it probably changed over the centuries. While it was probably built for the storage and transportation of water, it may have functioned in a later period as an entry to a system of passages underneath the sanctuary.
470 The first results were published in Attenni and Ghini (2014) 153-161 and, for a larger audience, in Attenni, Calandra, Ghini and Rossi (2013) 14-26. The excavations are expected to continue for several years, provided that funding is available and legal issues regarding the land ownership will be solved.
472 The excavated area has an approximate length of 15 meters, while the cave is roughly 10 meters deep. A large portion of the ridge under which the cave is situated is unexplored, as is path leading to it and the area further downstream, so further results are highly anticipated.
the majority of the more than 1000 objects investigated so far. The finds include ceramics, small bronzes and terracotta statuettes, but mostly – in line with other votive deposits in the region – anatomical votives, amongst which are unique and previously unknown models of lower jaws with open mouths (figure 3.10). What is remarkable about these offerings is that they were preserved in the context in which they were placed: in and near the cavities in the walls, or bundled in groups on the floor of the cave, surrounded by stones to keep them from moving. Some of the ceramic objects seem to have been laid directly on the floor stones, where water flowed over them. The ritual activity, therefore, was at least partly concentrated around running water, to which the visitors perhaps attributed healing qualities. The finding of seeds, oyster shells, animal bones and traces of burning shows that food offerings also were part of the religious ceremonies. All in all, the Pantanacci votive deposit allows us a glimpse into the functioning and significance of a *lucus*, which is a rare opportunity in the study of the religious landscape of the Alban Hills.

Unfortunately, pending further research, many questions must remain open. Perhaps the first issue that comes to mind is the relationship between the Pantanacci deposit and the sanctuary of Juno Sospita. Despite their close proximity, the first investigations at the grove revealed nothing that could link both cult centres. This changed at the beginning of 2014, when an important discovery was made just outside the cave entry. Four carved cylindrical blocks of peperino came to light, of considerable size and weight; two of the four have an incised groove spiralling over their entire length (figure 3.11). What makes these blocks so interesting is that they bear a pattern of scales, inscribed lightly but unmistakably. Considering the shape and pattern, the excavating researchers have identified the peperino blocks as parts of a giant statue of a snake, which could have been more than three metres in its original length. This, obviously and immediately, brings to mind the poetical accounts of the *dracon*, and of the *lucus* in which it lived according to Propertius, Aelian and other authors. Has the cave in which the virgins underwent their terrifying experience at long last been found? Were the scaled cylinders part of the serpent’s cult statue, as the excavators have tentatively suggested?

---

473 Attenni and Ghini (2014) 156.
474 With the votives, worshippers may have sought a cure for diphtheria or for a speech impediment. For the percentages of the different votives attested, see the diagram in Attenni and Ghini (2014) 158. For the votive material found at the sanctuary grounds, see page 103-104 of this chapter.
475 As is also clear from the concretions visible on the pottery.
477 See for a discussion of the *lucus* of Nemi and other *luci* as religious and political meeting places chapter II, pages 51-52. In general, we have little or no archaeological evidence for these sites, although a number of votive depots in the region could certainly be qualified as an early rural sanctuaries: Attenni and Ghini (2014) 159-160.
478 I am very grateful to Dr. Luca Attenni, director of the Museo Civico Lanuvino, who allowed me to inspect and study the stones myself.
479 Attenni and Ghini (2014) 158.
Even though the peperino blocks are an exciting find, the last assumption seems a little too ambitious at this stage of the research. The dating of the stones is still uncertain and even if they turn out to represent a serpent – which seems fairly likely – this would not necessarily mean that it was an object that received cult attention. The serpent may also be a votive statue, or be part of an architectural decoration. This changes the perspective on the discovery, but does not reduce the significance of it: it gives us a first indication of how and why the curious story of the draco became connected with Juno Sospita. The chronology remains uncertain, as the statue could reflect the decision of a group or an individual to make manifest an already circulating story, using the suggestive and sacred grove as a fitting context for it. Alternatively, the sculpture itself, already present at the site, could have been the source of the connection between the religious landscape of Lanuvium and the myth of the serpent rite, which was then further developed by poets like Propertius. In any case, the poetical discourse and the material representation will have reinforced and re-emphasized each other, triggering new stories and new images that connected the draco and the goddess, both to Lanuvium and to each other. As we will see in the next section of this chapter, some elements in the iconography of Juno Sospita – especially as it is expressed on coins – probably contributed to the connection of the serpent and the goddess, so that the ritual – as a literary discourse, but also as the visual representation of that discourse – must be regarded as an integral part of the religious landscape of Lanuvium.

### 3.6 Early representations of a goddess in goatskin

The modern identification of Juno Sospita is, as was briefly mentioned in the section on prodigia, primarily the result of the observation made by Cotta in Cicero’s *De Natura Deorum*. There, the pontifex describes several elements that define the Lanuvian Juno and distinguish her from counterparts in Rome and elsewhere: the goatskin, the spear, the shield and the shoes with the turned up toes (*calcei repandi*). The military attributes give her a distinctive warrior-like appearance, which suits her portrayal as a guardian and protectress in the literary sources. The image seems consistent and continuous, as we identify it in a relatively great number of material sources, dating from the sixth century BC to the second century AD. Also, Juno Sospita is portrayed in a variety of different materials, from terracotta antefixes and bronze statuettes, to coins and over life-size statues. But is this representation in fact so continuous or can we distinguish a change or shift in the portrayal of the goddess? And can her appearance be connected to her cult practice and

---

480 This process of interaction does not necessarily interfere with the hypothesis of the excavators, as we cannot exclude that the statue played an active role in the religious proceedings at the site, being worshipped as a deity or being at the centre of an ritual performance of some sort, in which the terrified girls could have had a role as well.

481 Cic. *Nat. Deor.* 1.82. See page 99ff.
the archaeology on the sanctuary grounds? As we have seen earlier in the context of Diana Nemorensis’ cult in Nemi, modern scholarship on Juno Sospita has been inclined to see a direct continuity between archaic and imperial representations. However, for a better understanding of the cult, reinterpretations and (re)inventions of that image have to be taken into account as well.

The first objects identified by modern observers as representing Juno Sospita date from the sixth and fifth century BC. They were mostly found in an Etruscan context and show the goddess in a characteristic military pose. To begin with, there are a number of interesting images in which Juno Sospita is accompanied by Hercules, wearing her goatskin just as Hercules wears his lion skin. An amphora dating to 530-520 BC from Cervetri depicts a female figure in fighting stance, wearing the goat skin and the shoes with their typical curls and brandishing both a spear and a shield (figure 3.12). Opposing her stands Hercules, wearing his lion skin and raising his club. On an applique of unknown provenance, which was part of an Etruscan helmet or cista lid, the goddess seems to battle with Hercules as well, as they both stand on the arms of a Silenus (figure 3.14). However, the pair do not always fight, as we can observe on a tripod from about 520-500 BC, found in an excavation in the present-day Castel San Mariano (near Perugia) (figure 3.13). We recognize a female figure identifiable as Juno Sospita, wearing a goatskin and carrying a big oval shield in her left hand. Her shoes are slightly curled up. On one of the other sides of the tripod is a Hercules, recognizable from the lion skin covering his head. Another example is represented on a golden ring, datable to the fifth century BC, on which Hercules and Juno seem to hold each other’s weaponry (figure 3.15). This seems much more a union than a fight, and the ring has therefore tentatively been identified as a wedding ring. The iconographic combination of Juno Sospita and Hercules may be explained as a purely compositional choice, since the god and goddess with animal skins and weapons form a nice symmetrical pair. We may deduce a cultic association between the two, considering the fact that Lanuvium had a sanctuary for Hercules as well, as we have seen earlier in this chapter. However, as far as the origin of the objects is traceable, the motif seems to be a local phenomenon from Etruria and none of the images can be connected to Lanuvium or, for that matter, Latium.

When we look at the single object from this early period that supposedly depicts Juno Sospita on her own, the connection with Lanuvium is equally problematic. It is bronze figurine from 500-480 BC, which seems to show the goddess in her familiar military pose: the weaponry is missing,
but with both arms raised and leaning forward, she seems ready to attack (figure 3.16).488 The goatskin is visible but the upturned shoes are lacking, which makes the identification a bit more uncertain. The exact provenance of the figurine is unknown, but it is kept in Florence and the iconography resembles that of similar Etruscan imagery. The striding posture and ‘battle glee’ are reminiscent of the famous Apollo of Veii and a close parallel is presented by the so-called Minerva of Modena, who also leans forward in attack, raises her weapons and even wears a similar cloak (figure 3.17).489 So, it is clear that, bearing Cicero’s later description in mind, these early images are inevitably and quite reasonably identified as Juno Sospita, but at the same time they have roots in a more general Etruscan tradition of depicting female deities and none of them can be connected to Lanuvium or its hill top cult site.

A similar problem emerges, when we look more closely at the antefixes that have been recognized as images of Juno Sospita. As we saw before, some of these terracotta images were found on the Palatine, near the site where Coarelli situated the first temple of the goddess in Rome.490 The semi-circular antefixes display a female figure wearing a Chalcidian helmet, with ears and horns coming out (figure 3.18).491 The type is not unique: from different towns in Latium Vetus – Falerii, Antemnae, Fidenae, Satricum, Norba, Lavinium, Signia, Ardea, Aricia – we know of antefixes with similar female helmeted figures, including moulds for them, all dating to the late sixth century BC and the early fifth century BC.492 Marleen Termeer has examined the typology in detail and divided them into four different production groups.493 All of them are identified as Juno Sospita in archaeological literature, probably because the ears and horns resemble that of a goat and because of the military guise. There has been considerable debate on the relatively sudden appearance and distribution of these images, which represents – along with the introduction of other new types – a change in decoration style of Latial sanctuaries. The conversion more or less corresponds with the establishment of the first colonies of the Roman Republic, and this has prompted a discussion on the role of Rome in the spread of these architectural motifs and the changing alliances in Latium around that time. This thesis is not the place to go into these discussions fully, but with regard to the antefixes identified as Juno Sospita, Termeer has argued that the spread of the terracottas cannot be

489 Richardson (1983) 256-257, fig. 602-604. The statuette is now in the collections of the Museo Archeologico Etnologico in Modena.
490 Pensabene (1979), 67-71; Coarelli (1996b) 128-129.
491 The Palatine antefix is now kept in the Altes Museum in Berlin.
493 Termeer (2010) 43-58. I thank Marleen Termeer for explaining the details of her typology and the implications of the chronology in the academic debate on early Roman colonies.
regarded as a sign of Roman hegemony or direct implementation: antefixes of only one of the specified groups were found in Rome, and antefixes from other places in that group predate the establishment of a Roman colony. The popularity of the theme and spread of the antefixes was likely a larger Latial phenomenon, although Rome may have played an important role in the development of these cultural models.

With regard to the iconographic identification, the evidence of the early antefixes may be interpreted as another sign of a continuous iconography of Juno Sospita and indeed they have been placed in line with earlier and later representations of the goddess. There are, however, some notable problems with that interpretation. Firstly, it is remarkable that the antefix types were found all over Latium Vetus, but not in Lanuvium itself. Instead, as we have seen in the previous section on the archaeological remains of the different temple phases, other types of antefixes and other terracotta decorations were found. Amongst those, the most complete one dates from the late sixth or early fifth century BC and represents a female figure, smiling faintly and wearing a tiara and other jewellery (figure 3.19). Surrounding her head is an elaborate circular decoration in the form of a shell, labelled as a tongue-frame in archaeological literature. The frame resembles Campanian antefixes from the sixth century BC and is interpreted as an intermediate phase between late 6th-century Campanian and early 5th-century Etrusco-Latin antefix types. Amongst the latter, is a depiction of a bearded satyr and a maenad in relief, also found on the sanctuary grounds. This is a variation on a well-known type, found in great quantities all over Latium and dated to about 460-440 BC (figure 3.20).

The sculptural decoration found in Lanuvium puts the development of the sanctuary in line with that of the larger world around it, showing a mix of Campanian, Etruscan and Hellenistic influences over the course of four centuries. Although the finds obviously may be far from a representation of the whole sculptural programme of the temple phases, antefixes identified as Juno

---

495 Andrén (1940) 420-1. Lulof (2016) 223-224. Five examples of the antefix were found, one of which is part of the collections of the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia in Rome and is at the moment of writing displayed in the Latium Vetus section, in the Villa Poniatowski. Three others are in the British Museum in London and one is kept at the Museum of the Philosophical and Literary Society in Leeds.
497 Knoop and Lulof (2017, in preparation) 54. I am grateful to Patricia Lulof and Riemer Knoop for generously allowing me to include parts of their work in my thesis. Their extensive comparative study on the roof decoration of Satricum will be published in 2017.
498 Andrén (1940) 100 ff; Gjerstad (1966) 178-192; Knoop and Lulof (2017, in preparation) 43-54 with further literature and statistics. The antefix type is found across central Italy in large quantities (complete antefixes, fragments and moulds) but most of the fragments come from Falerii, which causes Lulof and Knoop to assume that the workshop was there. Four different categories occur, with minor differences in the objects and animals that accompany the satyr and maenad. The Lanuvium type, with a snake and a goat, is the most common one.
Sospita are notably absent from the archaeological record. This may have consequences for the interpretation of the image as well as for the interpretation of the earliest phases of the cult practice. With regard to the iconography of the antefixes, another problem appears. As for example Riemer Knoop and Patricia Lulof have remarked, most of the elements that distinguish Juno Sospita in Cicero’s description – that is the spear, shield and the calcei repandi – are obviously not part of the antefixes that depict only the head. More problematically, the female figure is depicted with the goat skin over a Chalcidian helmet, leaving her ears and horns open. This helmet is absent from Cicero’s description, but also from the other early depictions of the goddess that we have just discussed. One of the variations of the antefixes even has bovine ears and horns, rather than a goatskin. So, the association between the goddess and the iconography of the antefixes that is taken for granted in most academic discussions of Juno Sospita, is actually based on the horns and the military appearance alone, and may thus be considered rather weak.

Finally, it is remarkable that actual deities are very rarely depicted on antefixes, but rather on large-scale individual acroteria, positioned at the top of the pediment or on the ridge-pole of the temple-roof. On the lateral sides were minor mythological figures that seem to have been placed there as decorations or possibly for their aprotopaic function, such as the female faces already discussed, satyrs, maenads, and gorgons. The inclusion of an established goddess within these visual depictions of liminal demigods, would be a rare exception. This does not mean that the connection between the antefixes and the cult of Juno Sospita should be entirely dismissed: there are iconographic similarities between the terracotta images of the figure in goatskin and (for example) the fifth century BC Etruscan bronze statuettes, and both visual traditions may well have mutually influenced each other. At the same time, it is important to recognize how influential the passage of Cicero and the later representations of Juno Sospita have been in our recognition and description of these early images and in connecting them to the sanctuary in Lanuvium, although they were found elsewhere.

---

499 Andrén (1940) 102 ff. makes the same observation, but states that this poses no problems for the identification of the antefix type, nor for that of the early temple. According to him, Juno Sospita would be considered as a principal goddess only in a Lanuvian context, and would therefore not be depicted on the lateral sides of a temple. In other temple contexts, she may have had a minor or decorative role, just as Hercules or Medusa had in some cases.

500 Knoop and Lulof (2017) 255.

501 This could also be a galerum (a helmet made of leather). Andrén (1940) 45-49.

502 It is of course very difficult to make any sort of distinction between ‘real gods’ and demigods, and it must be emphasised that our categorizations in this respect were probably not shared (or deemed interesting) by the ancient Latin public.

503 As emphasized by Helle Damgaard Andersen (1998) 164, who entirely rules out the possibility that the antefixes depicted Juno Sospita. It must be noted, however, that in the antefixes of the temple of Diana Nemorensis, her image was recognized as well (see page 67).
3.7 Lanuvian argo on coins

While the identification of the early source material poses some problems, the representations from the late second century BC onwards show a much more stable and standardized image of Juno Sospita that can be pretty securely connected to the sanctuary in Lanuvium. The development is most clearly visible in a number of coin series, of which the first issue dates to about 105 BC and was minted by the monetarius L. Thorius Balbus (figure 21a).\(^\text{504}\) The obverse shows the bust of Juno Sospita, clearly recognisable from the goatskin with horns tied around her neck. Apart from that, there is an inscription with the letters ISMR, which is usually reconstructed as Iuno Sospes Mater Regina, based on a comparison with the epigraphic material found in Lanuvium, to which we shall return later.\(^\text{505}\) The reverse of the coin has a depiction of a charging bull, possibly an allegorical reference to the name of the moneyer, which is also inscribed.\(^\text{506}\) Cicero confirms that the man was from Lanuvium, but the fact that he put the goddess on his coins may have had more to do with the prestige of the cult than with any personal religious devotion: Cicero claims that Balbus scorned the rites and shrines his native town was famous for.\(^\text{507}\)

After this, in the Republic another twelve coin types appeared with Juno Sospita on them, from six different moneyers. Some, such as the denarii of Lucius Papius (79 BC) and his relative Lucius Papius Celsus (45 BC), show only the bust of the goddess, and although the inscription of her name is lacking, the goatskin is clearly recognisable and very similar to that on the coins of Thorius Balbus.\(^\text{508}\) Most of the issues show the goddess in full length, brandishing her spear and shield in a characteristic battle stance. A denarius of the moneyer Lucius Procilius (80 BC) shows Juno Sospita both on the obverse – a bust – and on the reverse, where she stands in full armour, riding a biga (figure 21b).\(^\text{509}\) The latter image also appears on a coin of Marcus Mettius, which was minted during the dictatorship of Lucius Caesar (44 BC).\(^\text{510}\) From these series, it is clear why Cicero – in De Natura Deorum, written around 44 BC – emphasizes the stability of the image of the goddess.\(^\text{511}\) Notwithstanding the small size of the coins, all the elements of her appearance are visible, from the goatskin and the shield and spear to even – on the denarii where Juno Sospita is depicted from head to toe – the calcei repandi. This military image seems very suitable in the light of her character as a

---

\(^{504}\) RRC 316/1.  
\(^{505}\) See 'Priests, magistrates and devotees', pages 126ff.  
\(^{507}\) Cic. Fin. 2.20: L. Thorius Balbus fuit Lanuvius [...] ita non superstitiesus, ut illa plurima in sua patria sacrificia et fana contemneret [...] (‘There was a certain Lucius Thorius Balbus of Lanuvium [...] He was so devoid of superstition as to scoff at all the sacrifices and shrines for which his native place is famous’).  
\(^{508}\) Lucius Papius: RRC 472/1, RRC 472/3. Lucius Papius Celsus: RRC 384/1. For the gens of the Papii, see: Münzer (1920) 1097; Crawford (1975) 222, 267, 271, 278.  
\(^{509}\) RRC 379/2. Wiseman (1971) 254; Crawford (1975) 296.  
\(^{510}\) RRC 480/23. Crawford (1975) 279.  
\(^{511}\) Cic. Nat. Deor. 1.82. See page 99ff.
protective polis deity, as we have analysed it in the literary sources discussed in the beginning of this chapter.\textsuperscript{512}

There is a significant resemblance between these numismatic representations of Juno Sospita and the early fifth century BC images from Etruria that have been identified as the goddess; especially the bronze tripod from Castel san Mariano displays a very similar iconography. It seems reasonable to assume that the representation of the goddess that is so pronounced in the last years of the Republic was – at least partly – a survival of this archaic image. At the same time, the stabilization of that depiction of Juno Sospita reflects archaizing tendencies as well. Several scholars have drawn attention to the peculiar form of Juno’s shield on these coins: it has the shape of two (bilobate) or three (trilobate) joined circles, and was not Roman, nor is it visible on the Etruscan antecedents.\textsuperscript{513} Considering the lack of contemporary parallels, the illustration may be deliberately archaizing. More clearly, the \textit{calcei repandi}, so prominent in Cicero’s description, were definitely out of fashion by his time. They appear very often on the feet of gods on Etruscan vases from the fifth century BC, but by the time of the Middle and Late Republic, they were the exclusive attribute of Juno Sospita.\textsuperscript{514} So, while the iconography of the goddess displays influences of the distant past, it also reflects that she was perceived and actively remembered by later Romans and Lanuvians as an archaic goddess, and was dressed accordingly.

A number of additional inferences can be drawn from the numismatic evidence. Firstly, and perhaps most interestingly, several of the \textit{tresviri monetales} can be directly related to Lanuvium and as it seems, they used the cult to promote their \textit{origo}, just like Thorius Balbus had already done in 105 BC. In \textit{De Divinatione}, Cicero mentions that the moneyer Roscius Fabatus – who would later become a general under Caesar – was a friend of Velleius and was likewise from Lanuvium.\textsuperscript{515} From Asconius, we learn that Milo was a member of the gens Papii, and both Asconius and Cicero confirm that Milo was from Lanuvium, so we may assume that both Papii mentioned above as moneyers were also from there.\textsuperscript{516} Consequently, for four out of seven Republican \textit{monetarii} who minted coins with Juno Sospita a Lanuvian \textit{origo} can be established. Of the rest of the men we know nothing, although the depiction of Juno Sospita in itself has been – in a somewhat circular way – assumed to reflect Lanuvian origins. In that respect, the last series of coins in the Republic which depicted the goddess form an interesting example. They were minted in 42 BC, at the mint in Africa by Quintus Cornuficius, who was proconsul of the province. The series consists of two \textit{aureii} and three \textit{denarii},

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{512} See ‘Juno Sospita as \textit{patrona} of Lanuvium and Rome’, page 84ff.
\item \textsuperscript{513} Colonna (1991) 97-99; Schultz (2006b) 223-227.
\item \textsuperscript{514} As emphasized by Larissa Bonfante, who labels the depiction of the shoes as a typical Etruscan feature of clothing, used for depictions of humans as well as of gods. Bonfante (2003) 60-61.
\item \textsuperscript{515} Cic. \textit{de Div.} 1.79.
\end{itemize}
that all have Cornuficius on the reverse.\footnote{RRC 509/1-5.} He is shown wearing a veil and holding a \textit{lituus}, while being crowned by Juno Sospita. The goddess carries her shield and spear and also has a crow on her shoulder (figure 3.21d).\footnote{Palmer (1974) 31-32 and Rawson (1978) 196-197 state that crows were sacred to various Junones (cf. Fest. 56L), but for Juno Sospita this is otherwise unattested.} The coins were probably struck to celebrate the moment Cornuficius started his office as \textit{augur} in Africa, and on the obverse they refer very clearly to this province as well: the gods Ammon and Tanit are seen, as well as a personification of Africa. In this way, the coins combine a specific Roman African message with a reference to a cult in the heart of Latium Vetus.\footnote{Rawson (1978) 88-201; Farney (2007) 280-281.} Even if we cannot trace the roots of all these \textit{monetarii} to Lanuvium with certainty, the relation between \textit{origo} and cult image in the numismatic evidence is significant enough to assume that, at least for part of the public that observed the coins, the portrayal of Juno Sospita was understood as a direct reference to the town and cult of Lanuvium.

The advertisement of their Lanuvian origins by Republican \textit{tresviri monetales} does not stand on its own. In his book on ethnic identity among Republican \textit{gentes}, Gary Farney has assembled forty-three Republican coin issues that can be described as ‘private types’, which are coin issues that alluded to the \textit{origo} of the moneyer and his family and not exclusively to the state.\footnote{Farney (2007) 247-296.} He believes that most of these – some twenty-eight – were minted by moneyers that advertised their status as Latins. The reference to religious practice was a popular way to do so.\footnote{Farney (2007) 65-73.} Among this category, the Juno Sospita types are the most widespread, but members of some \textit{gentes} depicted other Latin cults as well. In the previous chapter, we already saw Publius Accoleius Lariscolus promoting his roots in Aricia by means of a representation of the cult of Diana Nemorensis; other examples include a Praenestine Plaetorius depicting his hometown cult of Fortuna Primigenia and a member of the consular Pisones from Tibur showing an image of Hercules.\footnote{Farney (2007) 271-272, 274-275.} The rank of the families using this strategy diverged considerably, but the \textit{tresviri monetales} – usually at the beginning of a political career – must have hoped to gain some prestige from their famous hometown cults, just as they may have participated in the rites or may have embellished the sanctuaries. Whether they did so out of religious devotion or out of hope for political gain – as Thorius Balbus was accused of – does not really matter; the motives may well have gone hand in hand.

But how widely was the iconography of Juno Sospita understood as a reference to her cult site at Lanuvium? We know from ample analyses of coin hoards that some of the \textit{denarii} circulated for a long time and over great distances; especially the issues of Thorius Balbus and Roscius Fabatus
circulated far and wide. It cannot be ascertained whether the ethnic message conveyed on them was understood beyond the direct neighbourhood of Rome, but it seems safe to say that the specific role of Juno Sospita and the connection between the gentes and Lanuvium was lost on most people that used the money. That does not mean that the image itself was unknown, as is illustrated by three Celtic imitations that were struck in the middle of the first century AD by the Eravisci, a tribe in the Roman province of Pannonia, near the Danube frontier area in modern Hungary. They depict the bust of Juno Sospita in a somewhat abstract way, but the goatskin with the horns is clearly visible and resembles that of the coin issues of Roscius Fabatus from 64 BC (figure 21e). They were made in line with the Roman denarius standard and had only a tribe name inscribed, in the form of RAVI2. That the Eravisci were allowed to mint their own coins in this way, must have been the result of a special treaty with the Augustan administration, although the terms of this agreement are unclear. As we see in other frontier areas, the imitation of Roman coinage became a way for local elites to establish economic and cultural links with both the Roman administration and their fellow tribesmen, by answering to a growing demand for Roman denarii in the monetary economy or to promote their own position in the tribe. Apart from Juno Sospita, the Eravisci coinage includes images of imperial gods like Jupiter, Venus, Apollo, Roma and Honos and Virtus. So, while in the centre of the Empire the representation of Juno Sospita served as a reference to Lanuvium, a municipium just outside Rome, in the periphery the copied and imitated version of the same image could stand for the economic and political power Rome itself.

The coin series reveal other information about the cult of Juno Sospita as well, and for that we need to return to the Roscius Fabatus issue just discussed. The reverse of the coin illustrates another clear allusion to the town of Lanuvium: we see a woman, who is standing opposite a serpent that is depicted almost as large as she is (figures 3.21c and e). The woman seems to be carrying something, either in a bag or underneath her stola and the snake has its mouth wide open. The
The serpent, consequently, seems to be eating whatever woman has brought him. Obviously, this is a representation of the agricultural ritual described by Propertius, of which we have traced the literary roots and a possible physical location earlier in this chapter. A second look at the other numismatic issues makes it clear that this is not the only reference to the draco and the ritual. One of the types issued by Papius Celsus in 45 BC has almost the same iconography, although here it is more obvious that the girl is carrying a bowl. Less prominent, but still clearly present, are the serpents that accompany Juno Sospita on the reverse of the coins of Lucius Procilius, from 80 BC. On one of the issues the serpent is depicted at her feet, on the other we see it under her biga.

We already noted that Juno Sospita is not actually described as taking part in the rite of the girls feeding the sacred snake, but the coins show that she was nevertheless associated with it. What also becomes clear, is that Propertius did not invent the connection between goddess and serpent himself, since the Republican coin issues all preceded the composition and publication of the Elegiae. Since the serpent is absent from all iconographic sources before the coins, it could be argued that the image of the goddess had not always been associated with a serpent rite, but that this connection formed at some point between the fourth and second century BC, when her appearance also became inseparably connected with Lanuvium. The statue of the serpent that was found in the votive cave of Pantanacci, discussed above, could have triggered the connection with the goddess, although further research is required to establish a more secure chronology. While the question of whether some kind of ritual was actually performed in the cave or not – and, if so, in what form – must for now remain unresolved. Yet, the numismatic evidence underlines what has been argued before in this chapter: the discourse of the agricultural rite with the serpent should not be seen as a purely literary invention but was an integral part of the religious landscape of Lanuvium. The coins reflect the story and at the same time continue to reinforce it, just like the physical surroundings and statue of the Pantanacci cave may well have done in earlier times.

During the Empire, Juno Sospita makes two more appearances in the numismatic record. Around 140 AD there is a series of sestertii of the emperor Antoninus Pius, which show the goddess in full on the reverse. Her appearance has changed little since the Republic: the goatskin, calcei repandi, the armoury and even the serpent are – about 180 years after the last Republican coin was issued – unmistakable. An almost identical image of Juno Sospita was struck during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, another thirty years later, with the emperor’s son Commodus on the reverse (figure 3.21f). There is one difference with the Republican coin issues however: the Antonine coins name the goddess not as Juno Sospita, but as Juno Sispita. Where this vowel change came from, is

---

529 See pages 88ff, 109ff.
530 RIC III Antoninus Pius 608
531 RIC III Commodus 1583.
uncertain. It has been suggested that the Sispita-variety represented the reappraisal of an older name of the goddess, and that the Imperial coin masters used it to reinforce the archaic dignity of the cult.\footnote{Gordon (1938) 32.} It is an attractive hypothesis and, as we have seen at the beginning of this chapter, Festus claimed as much as he explained the name of the goddess.\footnote{See page 86 for Festus’ explanation that Sispita was the older form of the name. This would mean another interesting example of a deliberate archaizing representation of the cult, but considering the lack of parallels this seems hard to substantiate.} There are no parallels for the use of Sispita however, neither on the epigraphic evidence after the Antonine era, nor on the earliest epigraphic testimonies with her name. Just as in the case of the Republican \textit{monetarii}, there is a clear link with the town of Lanuvium. According to the \textit{Historiae Augustae}, both Antoninus Pius and Commodus were born there.\footnote{Hist. Aug. \textit{An. Pius} 1.2; Hist. Aug. \textit{Com.} 1.2 Cf. Farney (2007) 68-74, 260, 267, 270; Chiarucci (1983) 44-6.} Furthermore, one of the large villas in the area between the lake of Nemi and Lanuvium was also identified as that of the Antonine dynasty.\footnote{For the villa, see: Aryamontri, Renner and Cecchini (2013) 135-141 (with earlier bibliography in the footnotes). Cf. footnote 450.} So, with the issue of the Juno Sospita coin, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius advertised their links with the old Latin town and cult, thus, also in the second century AD a depiction of the goddess was understood – at least by some of the public – as a reference to Lanuvium. Or, as Gareth Farney has stated: ‘As a symbol of Latin origin and pride, she was too great even for those emperors to resist.’\footnote{Farney (2007) 70.}

### 3.8 Cult images

As a last category of iconographic representations of Juno Sospita, we must pay attention to images that have been recognized as cult statues of the goddess. The most famous and most obvious example is a colossal statue that is now displayed in the Sala Rotonda of the Vatican Museums. It was obtained by the museums in 1798 but its exact origin is not known (figure 3.22).\footnote{The statue is 2,75 metres tall. Gorden (1934) 30-31. La Rocca (1990) 819-22; Chiarucci (1983) 56ff; Martin (1987).} It has been suggested that the statue came from the temple on the Forum Holitorium, where it would have stood in the \textit{cella}, but a provenance in Lanuvium would be just as possible.\footnote{That the statue came from the Forum Holitorium, was suggested by Delbrück (1903) 15-22 and according to Martin (1987) 112, note 541, evidence of a fire in the second century AD would have made the installation of a new statue plausible. Cf: La Rocca (1990) 821, note 28; Schultz (2006b) 213, note 27.} At first sight, all elements of Cicero’s description are present and the colossal statue depicts a Juno Sospita that is very similar to the images of the goddess on the coins, especially on later Imperial issues of the Antonine era.\footnote{RIC III Antoninus Pius 608; RIC III Commodus 1583. See previous page.} However, this resemblance is no coincidence, because immediately after its incorporation in the papal collections, the statue was heavily restored with exactly these images in mind. The eyes and hair, torso, shoulders and the upper part of the legs are original, but the lower
part of the face, the arms with weapons and the lower legs are later additions, as is the snake under Juno’s feet.⁵⁴⁰ From the first study onwards, the statue has been dated to the Antonine period and even though the restorations cloud the interpretation, several scholars have confirmed the analysis since then.⁵⁴¹ Thus, notwithstanding the lack of context, the statue may be an indication that the cult of Juno Sospita underwent a revival during the Antonine period, when the ruling dynasty had obvious personal connections with Lanuvium.

The colossal depiction of the goddess in the Vatican is however not the only representation of the goddess that, on the base of its size, was identified as a cult statue. After the Second World War, a large acrolithic head turned up at a villa near the sanctuary grounds in Lanuvium, with four holes on the sides that seem to have supported a – now lost – headdress (figure 3.23).⁵⁴² The larger than life marble head was immediately identified as the head of Juno Sospita, and the presumed headdress would have been a goat skin with the characteristics horns on the head and two of the hooves hanging in front of her chest. When the head was first published, it was dated to the Antonine period and linked to supposed revival of the cult by Antoninus Pius, who was born in Lanuvium.⁵⁴³ This hypothesis was soon abandoned, not least because the head bears no resemblance to the colossal statue in the Vatican. In fact, German Hafner, the scholar to discuss the piece in more detail, proposed a rather different dating.⁵⁴⁴ Comparing the acrolith to another acrolith with holes on the sides, the so-called head of Athena in the Vatican, he suggested that the head of Lanuvium was from the fourth century BC (figure 3.24).⁵⁴⁵ The origin of the ‘Athena’ is unknown, but according to Hafner the similar fixation holes on both statues suggest that this head had actually belonged to the first cult statue of Juno Sospita. It would have been set up in Lanuvium around 470 BC and was buried there when the Romans took over the cult in 338 BC. It was then replaced by the other acrolith – the one found after the Second World War – which was the main focus of the cult all through the Republic, until it was buried and replaced by the Antonine colossal statue now in the Vatican.

---

⁵⁴² The head has a height of 56 cm and was found and published by Kaschnitz-Weinberg (1955) 1-5 with pictures. The present location of the head is unknown and the claim of Chiarucci (1983) 66 that the head is in the Vatican museums is, unfortunately, false. Martin (1987) 114, note 544.
⁵⁴³ Kaschnitz-Weinberg (1955) 5.
⁵⁴⁴ Hafner (1966) 186-205.

---

123
Hafner’s theory has gained some support, but the rather meagre evidence for the resemblance of both acroliths was criticized as well, most notably by Hanz Günther Martin. He points out that there are other statues that have the same type of fixation holes, and that the marble head of the ‘Athena’ with unknown provenance looks nothing like the representations of Juno Sospita from the sixth and fifth centuries BC, discussed earlier in this chapter. The ‘Athena’, according to Martin, probably came from a Greek context in South Italy and there is no reason to connect it to the early stages of the Latin cult of Juno Sospita. With regards to the head found in Lanuvium, he does accept its identification as Juno Sospita, but rejects the early date suggested by Hafner. Although the eyes do seem to have an archaic gaze, the fleshy lips and cheeks reveal Hellenistic influences and suggest a late Republican date, giving the acrolith an archaistic rather than an archaic appearance. In line with Filippo Coarelli, who, as we have seen, dates the monumental sculptural decorations of the sanctuary to the first half of the first century BC, Martin proposes 60-50 BC as a more precise date for the acrolith head. The argument seems plausible and further comparison of the marbles used for the statue and for the monumental decorations could strengthen this hypothesis, but unfortunately the current location of the Lanuvian head is unknown.

More questions remain about the cult statues in Lanuvium, and the dispersed state of the evidence only adds to the confusion. One particular detail is a larger than life terracotta hoof, possibly of a goat, which was published in Hafner’s work as part of a private collection but has since disappeared (figure 3.25). Hafner noted that also the underside was painted, and hence deduced that it hung loose in the air, visible from underneath. He reconstructed it as part of the terracotta goatskin of one of the acroliths that he considered to be of Juno Sospita. Martin, however, considers it unlikely that the separate headdress of an acrolith was made of terracotta, pointing out that it was common practice to make these pieces of bronze or other metal – traces of iron have even been found in the holes of the acrolith. The hoof, in his view, would be part of another, earlier statue, possibly from the fifth or sixth century BC, which would be in line with terracotta statues in Italic temples of the time. It is a convincing suggestion, but again, it cannot be substantiated by further evidence.

For the final piece of evidence for a cult statue, this statement can be echoed. An inscription from the reign of Hadrian, found on the Lanuvian sanctuary site, mentions another statue for Juno Sospita. After the imperial titles it reads: ‘To Juno Sospita a statue from silver and golden votive

---

547 See pages 104-106.
548 Hafner (1966) 204ff. Hafner does not divulge the location of where the hoof was seen and photographed.
549 Martin (1987) 119-120.
gifts, destroyed by age, he ordered to be made and consecrated out of 3 pounds of gold and 206 pounds of silver. It is uncertain whether the inscription records a statue that actually received cult attention, but the use of consecrare seems a good indication of such a use. Apparently, in the first half of the second century AD, the sanctuary was still thriving and had accumulated enough votive gifts to make a statue of silver and gold out of them. The form of the inscription is somewhat remarkable, because the emperor ordered the statue to be made and consecrated, but used the gold and silver of the old votives for this instead of paying for the material himself. If we consider the weight and the fact that these statues were usually not made of solid metal but were hollow, it must have been of considerable height. Unsurprisingly, the precious metal did not survive and it is also unclear how it was related to the other cult statues we have evidence for. Did the gold and silver image replace the late Republican acrolith because that had been damaged and had to be replaced, as is suggested by Martin? And does that imply that the colossal statue in the Vatican did not stand in Lanuvium, since it is dated to only a few decades later? Or did the sanctuary have more than one consecrated image of Juno Sospita?

At the current state of the evidence, with the find spots of statues and even entire statues lost, these questions are impossible to answer. Besides, the discussion takes us back to an observation touched upon earlier in this thesis: the search for the temple statue that was the prime focus of worship in the sanctuary may reflect a modern rather than an ancient concern. The cult statue as a category, although it existed in Roman times, defies our easy dichotomies between decorative and religious imagery, between votive and consecrated statues, between signa and simulacra. In the case of Juno Sospita, the strong and continuous iconography of the numismatic evidence is reflected in some elements of the cultic imagery, most clearly in the colossal statue of the Vatican and possibly in the acrolith with the missing headdress. It seems likely that some of the

\[\text{CIL XIV 2088: Imperator Caes(ar) divi Traiani / Part(hici) f(ilius) divi Nervae n(epos) / Traianus Hadrianus Aug(ustus) / pont(ifex) max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) XX co(n)s(ul) III p(ater) p(atriae) / I(unoni) S(ospiti) M(aeter) R(eginae) statuam ex donis aureis / et arg(entariis) vetustate corruptis / fieri et consecrari iussit / ex auri p(ondo) III et arg(entati) p(ondo) CCVI.}\]

The plaque is now kept at the Musei Capitolini in Rome (Palazzo Nuovo, inv. no.589).


\[\text{Martin (1987) 113; Granino Cecere and Mennella (2009) 292-293. For other gold and silver statues, see Fejfer (2008) 166-168, Lahusen (1999) 251-266. The latter presents interesting information on the sizes and weights. He mentions the two golden emperor busts that have survived from antiquity: a life-size bust of Marcus Aurelius and a half life-size bust of Septimius Severus. They weighed 5 and 3 Roman pounds respectively. Entire silver statues have not been preserved, but Lahusen (1999) 262, footnote 99 sums up a number of inscriptions that testify to silver statues for deities, varying from a 15 pound statue of a Genius Coloniae in Taranto to a 150 pound Bonus Eventus statue in Castulo. In a discussion of the busts that have been found, he estimates that five pounds of silver should suffice for a life-size bust. The dimensions of the Lanuvian statue, therefore, were unusually big. Furthermore, considering the ratio of precious metals used, it is likely that only a relatively small part of it (possibly the face and hands) was made of gold.}\]

\[\text{Cf., for the debate around the cult statues of Diana Nemorensis: chapter II, pages 67ff.}\]
images discussed received worship, and although many questions remain open, the traces of the various Juno statues do demonstrate a continuous ritual activity that extended over a number of centuries. While the renovations and restorations of the sanctuary buildings reflect a continuous interest of local and Roman elites in the maintenance of the cult, the renewal of the cult image shows that this interest extended to the ritual practices as well. However, the religious history of the sanctuary in Lanuvium was shaped not only by these elites, but also by the large groups of common worshippers that visited the goddess and left traces of their devotion, gratitude or expectations. The best illustration of this diversity is presented by the epigraphic material, as will become clear in the following and final section of this chapter.

3.9 Priests, magistrates and devotees in the epigraphic record

As we have seen in the case of Diana Nemorensis, from around the half of the first century BC, there seems to be a shift in the worship of Juno Sospita. Whereas from the sixth century onwards, we can trace the public worship of the goddess mainly through the terracotta votives donated to her, in the late Republic the inscribed votive becomes more prominent in our analysis of the cult practice. The terracotta votives never disappear, but from that time onwards the written testimonies provide more insight into the background of the worshippers, their origins and the way the ritual practices for the goddess were organised. In total, there are about 40 inscriptions that can be related to the goddess and her cult, and remarkably enough only six of those mention direct gifts to Juno Sospita. The rest of the inscriptions record priesthoods, sodales associated with the sanctuary and traces of the administration of the munipicum, which was closely associated with the administration of the cult. Of course, no full picture can emerge from this incomplete and unrepresentative set of data, but the evidence gives a relatively rich impression of the cultic landscape of Lanuvium and the different officials that were active in it.

Let us begin with the expectations of the worshippers of Juno Sospita and the character of the goddess, a topic touched upon briefly earlier in this chapter. As we have seen, on a number of coins the name of the deity appears with the abbreviation ISMR. From dedicatory inscriptions, we know that this must have stood for the long name that was sometimes used for the goddess worshipped in Lanuvium: Iuno Sospita Mater Regina. The full name is visible on a Pre-Sullan inscription on a large marble epistyle, dedicated by Quintus Caecilius, a freedman of a minor branch of the gens Metelli. Remarkably, the spelling Seispita in this relatively early inscription suggests

554 See pages 103-104 of this chapter.
555 See page 117 for the coins of monetarius L. Thorius Balbus.
556 CIL XIV 2090: Q(uintus) Caecilius Gn(aei) A(uli) Q(uinti) Flamini leibertus Iunone Seispitei / Matri Reginae. The architrave is 235 by 60 centimetres and its letters are about 5 centimetres in height. It is unclear to which
that the goddess underwent a name change and that Festus, who – as we have seen earlier in this chapter – claimed that Juno Sispita was her ancient name, may have been right. Still, the form Sispita itself is not attested in the epigraphic record and appears only on the two Imperial coins issues discussed earlier. This leaves us with the same etymological questions we started with, and although the Republican inscription suggests that Juno Sospita was known under – slightly – different appellations, the nature of the name change cannot be reconstructed.

After this first example, the abbreviation appears in five other inscriptions, all from the Imperial period. It seems clear that the letters were commonly understood as a reference to the goddess and that her name, apart from the elements Juno and Sospita included the epithets Mater and Regina. Does this reflect or have implications for the cult practice at the sanctuary? Unsurprisingly, scholars have interpreted the nomenclature as a confirmation of Juno Sospita’s female tasks. Dumézil argued that the use of Mater was not an empty formulaic gesture: the position of the epithet right after the original name of the goddess would underline the significance of female worshippers in the cult. Dumézil links this to the draco rite described by Propertius and according to him, the epithet Mater reflects the fertility feast in which women who were both wives and mothers participated. In his reading, the cult of Juno Sospita had merged to a great degree with that of Juno Lucina in Rome and with the festival of the Matronalia, which involved a ritual of matronae as well. While the cult practice was, according to Dumézil, very much directed at women, the epithets Sospita and Regina reminded of the Lanuvian goddess’ military and ruling role, and thus she fitted perfectly into Dumézil’s theory of the three divine functions in Indo-European religion: sovereignty, force and fertility.

Other authors have emphasized the feminine aspects of Juno Sospita as well, as we have seen in the discussion of the fertility rite described by Propertius, and indeed they have used the ISMR inscriptions as a support for that interpretation. There is reason, however, to question such a direct relation between the name of the goddess and the ritual practices going on in Lanuvium. To begin with, Robert Palmer has convincingly argued that the epithet Mater can also have a purely honorific function and could thus be used for deities that had no primary cultic relation to fertility, pregnancy or parenthood. Vesta Mater is one example, or – in the male domain – Mars pater.
Apart from that, the epigraphic record from Lanuvium shows no sign of an exclusive or dominant presence of women in the sanctuary. On the contrary, none of the votive inscriptions with ISMR can be attributed to a woman. We have already seen that the freedman Quintus Caecilius used the formula; Hadrian’s votive plaque that mentions the statue made of old votives was devoted to I(unoni) S(ospiti) M(atri) R(eginae) as well. Then, somewhere around the start of the second century AD, a public contractor from Lanuvium paid honour to Juno Sospita by devoting a plaque to her, with her name abbreviated as Iunoni SMR. 564

Of the three remaining inscriptions with that formula, one has only the abbreviation itself and no further information, but the other two also reveal male worshippers – quite important male worshippers, so it seems. 565 In an honorary inscription on a statue base from the Augustan period, 5 vici of Lanuvium honour Marcus Valerius:

The citizens who share the crossroads of five vici [dedicated this monument] to M. Valerius, son of Marcus, aedile, dictator, prefect of the youth, because he cleaned out and rebuilt the drains for a distance of three miles, replaced the pipes, restored at his own expense the men’s baths and the women’s bath, gave a distribution of meat and gladiatorial games to the people, and he alone organized the illuminations and games in honour of Juno Sospita Mater Regina. 566

The final dedicator of this kind, a certain Gaius Agilleius Mundus, mentions a number of offices on his marble plaque: apart from having been an aedilis, he was a flamen dialis and had held the position of rex sacrorum. 567 In these inscriptions, we touch upon an interesting set of priestly offices, a subject to which we shortly shall return. For now, it is important to notice that the

563 Both Vesta Mater and Mars Pater appear in the annals of the fratres Arvales: CIL XIV 2074 (lines 10-12).
564 CIL XIV 2091: Iunoni S(ospiti) M(atri) R(eginae) / Q(uintus) Olius Princeps / redemptor oper(um) / publicorum / Lanivinorum / de s(uo) d(onum) d(edit). The plaque is now the Museo Archeologico, Naples. Redemptor as such has a wide spectrum of meanings, but in our case the redemptor operum publicorum was probably the contractor for public buildings in Lanuvium.
566 CIL XIV 2121: M(arco) Valerio M(arci) f(ilio) / aed(ili) dict(atori) / praefecto iuventutis / municipes compitenses / velicorum / quinque aud specus mil[lia] / passus III(milia) / purgavit refect / fistulas reposuit balnea virilia / uraque et muliere de sua / pecunia refecit populo viscerati(onem), gladiatores dedit, lumina ludos / I(unoni) S(ospiti) M(aaqnae) / R(eginae) solus fecit. The translation is that of Fagan (2002) 246, with adaptations. The current location of the marble base is unknown. See further: Fora and Gregori (1996) 61 and, for the offices of dictator and praefectus iuventutis mentioned in the text, pages 134-138 of this chapter.
supposed female character of Juno Sospita’s cult is not confirmed by the inscriptions in which she is
honoured as *mater*. All the dedicators so far are men and although we do not know how
representative the surviving corpus is, the epigraphic record shows male worshippers, such as
Quintus Caecilius, Marcus Valerius, and Gaius Agilleius Mundus as both active participators and
sponsors of the rites. Although direct evidence for female worshippers is missing, an honorary
inscription from the late second or early third century AD makes mention of a *curia mulierum* that
was active and dined in Lanuvium.\(^{568}\) Anna Pasqualini has recently argued that the ladies were
‘without a doubt’ concerned with the cult of Juno Sospita and the rite with the *draco*, thereby
establishing an autonomous realm for themselves in the religious sphere.\(^{569}\) The argument seems
rather overstated, however, and since similar female organizations in Rome and elsewhere were far
from restricted to a religious agenda, there is no reason to assume that the Lanuvine *curia* was cultic
in nature.\(^{570}\)

The last votive inscription for Juno Sospita is also dedicated by a male worshipper. Sextus
Valerius was a member of the seventh cohort of the *vigiles urbani*, and his humble plaque states that
it was devoted to *Herculi San[cto] / et Iunoni Sispit[ei]*.\(^{571}\) The inscription was found at the site of the
temple of Hercules in Lanuvium, among some other dedications to the god from other *vigiles*.\(^{572}\)
Valerius’ dedication is dated to the late second century AD and has been interpreted as evidence of
Juno Sospita’s cultic connection with the second greatest deity in Lanuvium, Hercules.\(^{573}\) As
illustrated earlier in this chapter, the deities appeared together on some of the earliest depictions
we have of Juno Sospita, but none of these sources can be connected directly to the cult practice in
Lanuvium. Paolo Garofalo has argued that the connection between the two was established by their
concern over fertility matters, referring to a passage in Tertullian in which he asks why the women
of Lanuvium did not participate in Hercules’ *polluctum* (banquet).\(^{574}\) To Garofalo, this exclusion of

---

\(^{568}\) CIL XIV 2120: *C(aio) Sulpicio Victori / patri eeqq(uitum) RR(omanorum) homini / innocentissimo patrono /
municipi(i) (enatus) p(opulascalus) L(anuvinus) ob in/parem obsequium et / erga se inmensam mu/nificentiam eius
eques/trem ponendam cen/suerunt dedicar umq(ue) / ob cuius dedicationem / viritim divisit decuri/ onibus et
Augustalibus et curias a(nimos) XXIII et curia(e) / mulierum epulum / duplum dedit.

\(^{569}\) Pasqualini (2005) 269.

\(^{570}\) In Rome, for example there is evidence for an *ordo matronarum*: a unofficial, undefined yet recognizable
group of privileged aristocratic women that mimicked the male senatorial order and carried marks of
honour that distinguished their status. Although they did seem to meet on religious days, their scope of activities was
much wider. See further: Thonemann (2010) 175, who assumes (without further evidence) that the women in
Lanuvium were the wives of male members of the municipal curia and, for the *curia mulierum* in general:


\(^{572}\) Other dedications: CIL I² 1428; EE IX 601; EE IX 604.


\(^{574}\) Tertull. *Ad Nat.* 2.7.17: *cur Hercule[um] polluctum mulieres Lanuv[ini]ae non gustant, si non mulierum causa p[lo]rit* (*Why do the women of Lanuvium not participate in the polluctum of Hercules, if not because he died on the*)
women from Hercules’ cult was a deliberate mirror of the fertility rites for Juno Sospita, in which men were prohibited from participation. Again, the actual evidence does not seem to support this – quite the opposite – and it seems that pre-existing ideas of gender specific and –exclusive cults shape the analysis to a considerable degree.\textsuperscript{575}

What, to me, seems more plausible is the second part of Garofalo’s interpretation. He argues that the presence of the \textit{vigiles urbani} in Lanuvium in the late second century and their worship of Hercules can be linked to the presence of the imperial house, and more specifically to the emperor Commodus. As we have seen, this ruler was born in Lanuvium and probably spent quite some time in the Antonine imperial villa. His activity in the village can be connected to an inscription with the month-name \textit{idus commodas}: one of the few examples of the actual use of the new names that Commodus gave to the Roman months.\textsuperscript{576} Furthermore, the \textit{Historia Augusta} has a peculiar statement about the emperor and Lanuvium: he supposedly fought there in the amphitheatre, deserving the title \textit{Romanus Hercules}.\textsuperscript{577} The dominant role of Hercules in Commodus’ representation and self-promotion is well-known and well-studied, and this identification between the ruling emperor and the deity may have reinvigorated the role of Hercules in Lanuvium.\textsuperscript{578} The dedications of the \textit{vigiles} can be considered evidence for that, as well as the fact that Tertullian – who wrote around 197 AD, just after the death and \textit{damnatio memoriae} of Commodus – chose to mention the cult site of Hercules in Lanuvium, instead of one of those in Rome.\textsuperscript{579} As already shown, Juno Sospita received attention from the Antonines as well, for example in the form of a coin series issued by Marcus Aurelius with his son Commodus on the obverse and Juno Sospita on the reverse.\textsuperscript{580} Thus, while there is no indication for a shared or related ritual practice, both the cult of Hercules and that of Juno Sospita may have prospered because of the attention and vicinity of the Imperial house, and the decision of a \textit{vigilis} to honour both ancient deities in one plaque, is, in that regard, hardly surprising.

---

\textsuperscript{575} Similar conclusions can be drawn for the scholarship around the cult of Diana Nemorensis, see pages 48-50 and 70-72 of this thesis. Cf: Schultz (2006a) 47-57.

\textsuperscript{576} CIL XIV 2113. See, for this inscription and the pantomime mentioned, pages 134-135. For the new names that Commodus gave to Roman months: Hekster (2002) 108, 166, note 13.

\textsuperscript{577} SHA, Comm. 8.5.

\textsuperscript{578} For example: Hekster (2002) 115-128.

\textsuperscript{579} As argued by Garofalo (2009) 1036-1037.

\textsuperscript{580} See pages 121-122 of this chapter.
Unfortunately, the limited number of votive inscriptions does not allow us more than a
glimpse of the different groups of worshippers that visited the sanctuary grounds in Lanuvium.
Honorary and funerary inscriptions, however, offer a more detailed image of another aspect of the
cult: the organisation of the priestly offices. According to Livy, Romans and Lanuvians shared
responsibility for the ritual practices from the moment that the town and the sanctuary were
incorporated into the Roman state, in 338 BC. Cicero mentions a few occasions in which this
involvement of Rome became tangible: he states that the consuls went to Lanuvium to worship once
a year, and that the most important magistrate – in Lanuvium known by the ancient name of dictator
– was in at least one case a Roman senator. What do the epigraphic sources tell us about the
priestly offices and the – Roman or Lanuvian – men that fulfilled them? The first thing that attracts
attention is the wide range of religious functionaries that can be associated with cult practice in
Lanuvium. Inscriptions found around the sanctuary reveal flamines who performed the rites, for the
Roman state or for the municipium of Lanuvium, but they also demonstrate the involvement of
members of an ordo iuvenum Lanuvinorum and various officials, amongst which are a rex sacrorum, a
flamen dialis and several dictatores, who will be discussed shortly.

There is one category of priests who are not so easily connected to the cult practice, and
these are the sacerdotes Lanuvini. We have nine inscriptions in which this title appears; they were
found all over Italy and even as far afield as Dougga, in Africa Proconsularis. Three of the
honorary inscriptions mention the same man: Gaius Sallius Proculus, who was honoured as a patron
of Amiernum and Peltuinum, the top magistrate of Septaquae (a pagus in the Sabine territory) and
was twice quinquinalis. His Lanuvian priesthood – indicated as sacerdos and pontifex Lanivinorum
without charge – is the only priestly office in this cursus honororum, and it is unclear if and how the
magistrate was related to Lanuvium. Proculus’ career was very similar to that of one of his family
members, probably his son, who appears in an inscription from Amiernum. The list of offices is

---

582 In Cic. Mur. 90.2-4, Cicero claims that all consuls were supposed to worship in Lanuvium. For Lucius Murena, a
consul who came from the town, these ancestral sacrifices were especially important. The dictator from
Lanuvium was Milo (Cic. Mil. 27, 45). For the latter, see pages 136-137.
583 CIL V 6992; 7814; CIL VIII 26582; CIL IX 4206; 4207; 4288; 4399; CIL X 4590; CIL XI 3014. For the sacerdotes
584 CIL IX 4206: (Cai) Sallio C(ai) f(ilii) / Quir(ina) Proculo / splendidissimo / viro I quin(a)ni quaennali) patrono
de/curionum et populi / Amiterninorum sacerdotes et pontifici Lanivinorum im/muni patrono decur(ionum) et pom(puli)/
/ Aveiat(ium) Vestinor(um) summo ma/gistro Septaquae patrono / Peltuinatum ob perpetuo et sim/plicissimo eius erga se
amore / provociti patrono dignissimo / pagani. Cf: CIL IX 4207, 4399.
patrono / [splendidissimi ordinis et populi Am(t)erno(orum) summo mag(istro)] / [Septaquae patrono Aveiat(ium)
/ Pet(luinatium quod) / ex indulgentia praetextatus adiuviore patre mul] / neris Corneliani editione primus om[nium hoc
sincera amoris adfect[ione officis om[ni]bus mortuuckerum non desinat plebs urba[na ex aere] / conlato bigam quam in
analogous, but in this case the benefactor is specifically thanked for adding a day of gladiatorial
games to a munus at his own expense and in his honour a statue on a two-horse chariot was placed
in the amphitheatre.586

Like both Proculi, the other people who carried the title of sacerdos Lanuvianus had municipal
careers and most of them at some point seem to have acted as benefactors and patrons of their
communities. Aulus Vitellius Felix Honoratus from Dougga, for example, received a statue from his
city during the reign of Gallienus; and according to the honorary inscription on the base he was a
former advocatus fisci and had held some minor military positions in Italy, before acting as an
embassy to Rome for the ordo of his home town, ensuring the ‘public liberty’ out of his own free will
and at his own costs.587 The travels to Italy will have brought him to Lanuvium and the cult of Juno
Sospita, but he does not seem to have lived there when he held the priesthood.

Some – or perhaps all – of the sacerdotes seem to have been of equestrian rank. Georg
Wissowa has argued that this was a result of the Augustan reform of priesthoods, which had revived
some of the traditional priestly orders – for example the Salii, the fetiales and the Arval brothers –
and had made them available only to men of senatorial rank, which would mean that the equites
focused on the municipal priesthoods.588 The fragmentary state of the evidence does not allow us to
certify the validity of this claim, but the fact that the datable inscriptions are all from the second
or third century AD, may suggest that the priesthood of the sacerdotes Lanuviani was a later addition
to the cult.589

What did these sacerdotes Lanuviani actually do? The fact that some lived far away from
Lanuvium and had otherwise no priestly careers may indicate that the function was purely honorific
in nature. Although it is very well possible that they paid one or several visits to the sanctuary site –

amphitheatr[fo postulaverat] / [. For the connection between this donor and the other sacerdos Lanuvianus from
586 Statues of bigae were rarely awarded to private citizens; apart from this example from Amiternum, we only
know of three examples, one from Pisauro, one from Djenlila and one from Leptis Magna. See: Fejfer (2008)
587 CIL VIII 26582 = Dougga 70: Honor[i] / A(ulo) Vitellio Pap(iri) Felici Honorato / eq(uiti) R(omano) / f(isci) a(dvocato)
at vehicula per Flaminiam / [et] Transpadum et partem No/rici f(isci) a(dvocato) at fusa per Numidiam / f(isci) a(dvocato)
at patrimonium Kartha(ginis) / p(rae)p(osito) agenti per Campanian Cala/briam Lucaniam Pecumen anno/nam curanti
militibus Aug(usti) n(ostri) sa/cerdoti Lanuvino pro liberta/te publica voluntaria(!) et gratu/ita legatione functo ob
merita / et obsequia eius in patriam et / in civis amorem res p(ublica) coloniae [[Lic(iniae)] / Thug(ensium) d(ecreto)
d(ecurionum) p(ecunia) p(ublica). There has been some discussion on the frase ‘pro libertate publica’ in the
inscription, which for Lepelley (1997) 109-110 was a sign that the privileges of Dougga – probably obtained
when the town became a municipium in 205 AD – had been under pressure. However, Christol (2004) 31 has
argued that the phrase was a sign that the town itself asked for more ‘liberty’, and as a result became a colonia
during the reign of Gallienus.
588 Wissowa (1912) 519-521. For a more recent discussion on the general influence of Augustus on the
589 Although, obviously, this timeframe also corresponds with a general peak in the number of Latin
inscriptions. See the introduction, page 27ff.
and perhaps sponsored the rites – it is not likely that they had an active part in the daily proceedings of the cult practice.\(^{590}\) Also, we cannot be certain that the priesthood centred around Juno Sospita, although modern scholars have generally assumed that that was the case.\(^{591}\) Consequently, the only thing that can be deduced from the epigraphic evidence for the sacerdotes Lanuvini, is that the men who received the title cherished it and were actively remembered as holders of the post, even though some of them lived and worked far away from the town that was its name-giver. The fame of the rites of Lanuvium reached far beyond Rome and its environment, and the fact that this priesthood developed – or: was revived – and thrived throughout the Empire demonstrates the vitality of the cult in a changing and expanding Roman pantheon.

In Lanuvium itself, the cultic landscape seems to have had many different religious functionaries as well, and it is conceivable that many of the notables of the municipium were at some point involved in the organisation of the rites. That considerable sums of money could be generated by the city from these offices becomes clear from an inscription for Septimius Severus and Caracalla. The senatus of Lanuvium announced that it had restored the baths of the town with the revenues from the summae honorariae for the priesthoods plus interest, and it thanks the emperor for his indulgentia to allow them to use these funds.\(^{592}\) Apparently, the use of the money obtained for the priesthood required imperial approval, which may imply that the summae honorariae were normally used for the cult practice of the town. Apart from an unspecified flamen and a man styling himself as flamen maximus without mentioning a specific cult, we unfortunately have no epigraphic evidence to construct a full religious hierarchy for Lanuvium in connection with the cult of Juno Sospita.\(^{593}\)

Much more clear-cut is the religious role of the ordo iuvenum Lanuvinorum. This Lanuvian association of young men appears in four inscriptions and on six types of lead tesserae.\(^{594}\) They seem to have been very active and visible in the civic life of the municipium, and their form of organization is far from unique for Lanuvium. Inscriptions attesting similar groups of iuvenes were found in many towns on the Italian peninsula and in fact all over the Western Roman Empire; in Greece, groups of

---

\(^{590}\) Contra Gordon (1938) 48, who believes that these were the priests responsible for performing the rites in name of the Roman state.


\(^{593}\) Flamen: CIL XIV 2115; flamen maximus: CIL XIV 2092. For the first see Fagan (2002) 260, no. 91.

\(^{594}\) Inscriptions: CIL XIV 2113; 2121; 4178b; AE (1994) 345. Tesserae: Rostowtzeff and Prou (1900) 81-82, nos. 4-9 and plate I, figures 1, 3 and 5., Rostowtzeff (1905) 83-93.
ephebia seem to have functioned roughly the same. Membership may have been rather exclusive and the functions they fulfilled in their towns could vary significantly, although many of them – in the western half of the Empire – were concentrated on competitive sports like sword-fighting or games in the amphitheatre. Apart from that, the groups of iuvenes took part in cultic activities, and that certainly was the case for the young men in Lanuvium, who seem to have had a considerable role in the rites for Juno Sospita.

In the honorary inscription for Marcus Valerius, already discussed in the context of the I.S.M.R. inscriptions, he is styled praef(ectus) iuventutis, or 'prefect of the youth'. The title appears also on an epitaph of an anonymous eques, approximately a century later, in which the deceased is credited for giving a banquet to the senatus and otherwise unspecified curiales, in honour of his assumption of the toga virilis. It is unclear what the tasks of these praefecti were, and although it seems logical to assume that they were older than the other members of the ordo – Marcus Valerius obviously was – the anonymous eques was only sixteen years old when he died. Earlier scholars, like Arthur Gordon, have hypothesized a military role for both the iuvenes and their leaders, but the general theory that these youth organizations functioned as recruitment agencies for the army has been challenged in recent years and seems also unlikely in the case of Lanuvium. We may tentatively assume that the praefecti were wardens of the iuvenes, but unfortunately evidence from other locations does not provide much clarity in this discussion. The epigraphic record from Lanuvium reveals two other people associated with the group, both from the reign of Commodus: an unnamed legionary who is honoured as a quaestor and patronus by the ordo iuvenum Laniviorun – and may thus not have been a member himself – and Agilius Septentrio, an imperial freedman and a

595 There has been a considerable debate on the composition, function, activities and social status of these youth groups. For an introduction see, in particular: Jaczynowska (1978), Ladage (1979) 319-346, Ginestet (1991), Kleijwegt (1994) 79-102. Although the activities of the iuvenes and the ephebia were similar, there is a substantial difference in their composition: the ephebia seem to have been exclusively open for aristocratic classes, whereas in groups of iuvenes in Italy, slaves and freedmen have been attested in numbers large enough to assume that membership was not restricted to the elite. See: Ginestet (1991) 123-128, Kleijwegt (1994) 83-84.
597 CIL XIV 2121. See note 566.
598 AE (1994) 345: ] praef(ecto) / iuventutis eq(uo) p(ublico) / allect(o) in V dec(urias) / ab divo Traiano / hic ob honorem / togae virilis / senatui Augusti et curialibus / epulum dedit v(ixit) a(nnos) XVI m(enses) VIII d(ies) VI
599 Gordon (1938) 53. The interpretation of iuvenes as recruitment agencies for the army was put forward by a number of early scholars on the subject, most notably Rostowtzeff (1905) 62, 65-68. Later, Ginestet (1991) 162-166 makes a similar point, but refers mainly to the function of provincial groups of iuvenes. Rostowtzeff’s assumptions were criticized by Jaczynowska (1978) 62-63, while Kleijwegt (1994) 81-83 claims that Ginestet’s interpretation of the situation in the provinces is too militaristic as well. Although there were certainly members of the iuvenes that later joined the army, the epigraphic evidence for that is scarce and Kleijwegt points out that comparisons between army-lists and lists of iuvenes in the same region, have not produced a single match.
famous pantomime. The latter received a statue from the Senate and the people of Lanuvium, and, according to the accompanying inscription Septentrio was freed by Marcus Aurelius, ‘launched’ or ‘promoted’ (productus) by Commodus, had received the ornamenta decurionalia (the honours and status symbols of the decuriones) and was adopted into the iuvenes of Lanuvium.

For the religious role of the youth association, the lead tesserae found around Lanuvium are much more informative (figures 3.26a-c). After it was catalogued and studied by Michael Rostowtzeff, this material has unfortunately been studied very little. Still, from Rostowtzeff’s overview we know that Lanuvium was not the only municipium where youths issued these tokens, as similar examples have been found in Tusculum, Velitrae, Bovillae and Verulae. The phenomenon seems to be restricted to Latium and the practice of iuvenes issuing tesserae stops after the reign of Nero. With legends like SACR(A) LANI(VINA) IUVEN(ALIA), IUVEN(ALIA), SODALES LANIVINI, SACR(A) L ANU VIN A) F(ILICITER) and IUNON(I) LANU VINAE, the tokens unambiguously refer to the cults of Lanuvium, as well as to the ordo of the iuvenes itself. The depictions on the tesserae make clear that the term sacra specifically refers to the cult of Juno Sospita: she appears on four of the six tesserae, according to Rostowtzeff, although from the blurred images available, it is hard to tell if all the elements of her iconography are represented. Interestingly enough, there are also four tokens that have the image of a girl approaching a snake with a bowl in her hand, a representation very similar to the one we have seen on the coins of Lucius Papius Celsus and Lucius Procilius, in the first century BC (figure 3.26a).

---


601 The man appears to have been very famous in his time: The same name appears on a honorary inscription from Praeneste (CIL XIV 2977), in which he is credited for being the prime pantomime of his time and honoured for the great affection he exhibited towards his hometown. That the emperor had to interfere to get him elected into the order was not because Septentrio was a freedman, but because his profession was not held in great esteem. Morel (1969) 525-535. See further: Kleijwegt (1994) 90, Bläsendorf (2004) 110-111.

602 Rostowtzeff and Prou (1900) 81-82 for the tesserae from Lanuvium. In a later monograph, Rostowtzeff studied the tokens in more detail and discussed the municipal iuvenes of Lanuvium as well: Rostowtzeff (1905) 50-51, 80.

603 Rostowtzeff and Prou (1900) 79-80, 82-85.

604 In one case, the legend NEROCAESAR refers to the reigning emperor of the moment: Rostowtzeff and Prou (1900); Roztovtzeff (1900) 82-83, no. 7.

605 Lucius Papius Celsus: RRC 384/1, Lucius Procilius: RRC 379/2. See pages 120-121 above.
the *draco* was well alive in the early first century AD, a century after it last appeared on a coin.\(^{606}\) Lastly, two of the tokens, with Juno Sospita on the one side, seem to depict members of the *ordo iuvenum* at the other side, clad in a tunic without a belt, leading a goat (or a sheep) and, therefore, perhaps on their way to sacrifice. If this is the case, the tokens could present a rare illustration of the rites at the sanctuary, and the active involvement of the *municipium*’s youth in the proceedings.\(^{607}\)

For the last pieces of evidence for the religious organization of Lanuvium, we go back to Cicero, Asconius and their comments on Milo and the town of Lanuvium. It is because of Milo, and especially because of his deadly feud with Clodius, that we know somewhat more about yet another magistrate who was active in Lanuvium: the *dictator*. When Milo met with Clodius on the Via Appia, near Bovillae on January 18, 52 BC, he was on his way to Lanuvium, ‘from which town he came and where he was then *dictator*,’ Asconius explains.\(^{608}\) Cicero makes it very clear that this particular journey could not be avoided: Milo was on his way to appoint a *flamen* and to make the sacrifices required of him.\(^{609}\) The fact that he was heavily packed and travelled with his wife and a large staff, has led modern interpreters to assume that Milo planned to stay until February first, the presumed holiday for Juno Sospita.\(^{610}\) While the reconstruction of the fatal events of that day is of less concern to us here, the position of the senator in his hometown Lanuvium is very interesting, especially when confronted with the epigraphic material for the dictatorship as a municipal magistracy.

From these sources, we know of at least five magistrates who carried the title of *dictator*, and of one *allectus inter dictatores*.\(^{611}\) The oldest reference is from a dedication to Hercules, dated to the late second or early first century BC. A certain Publius Fourius calls himself *dic(tator)* *tertium* and thus was dictator for the third time.\(^{612}\) The honorary inscription for Marcus Valerius, discussed twice before, labels him a dictator as well, and this time the title can be more firmly connected to

---

\(^{606}\) Unfortunately, the sources do not provide us with much information about the exact use of these *tesserae*. Roman authors used the term occasionally in the context of a money transaction, and there is some minor evidence that the lead tokens were used as entry tickets for a wild beast show or another spectacle. In the case of the *iuvenes* of Lanuvium, both uses may be considered plausible. Most of these *tesserae* are from the early Empire, when there was a known shortage of small change; after the reign of Nero, who started minting smaller denominations in great quantities again, the tradition of issuing the *tesserae* stops. See: Crawford (1970) 40-48. At the same time, the epigraphic evidence shows that the Lanuvian *iuvenes* were involved in theatrical performances and in the organization of public banquets, for which the use of *tesserae* may also have been convenient. For an overview of the evidence for Roman *tesserae*, the corresponding modern debate and comparisons with the use of ‘peasant money’ in later European contexts see: Thornton (1980) 335-355.

\(^{607}\) Rostowtzeff and Prou (1900) 81-82, nos. 7 and 8. Unfortunately, the catalogue offers no drawings of these *tesserae*.

\(^{608}\) Asconius, *In Milon*. 31.4: [*... ex quo erat municipio et ubi tum dictator.*

\(^{609}\) Cic. *pro Mil*. 10, 27


\(^{611}\) *Dictatores*: CIL I 1428; XIV 2097; 2110; 2121. *Allectus inter dictatores*: CIL XIV 4178.

\(^{612}\) CIL I² 1428: *P(ublius) Fourius [3] / dic(tator) tertium / Hercoli ea dat /*. The same stone was later re-used, for one of the dedications that the *vigiles* made to Hercules (see note 572).
the cult of Juno Sospita, as one of Valerius’ accomplishments was the organisation of *ludi* and gladiatorial fights in honour the goddess.\[^{613}\] We encounter the dictatorship again on a plaque from the time of Claudius, set up around 42 or 43 AD by the Senate and the people of Lanuvium for the emperor. It is dated with reference to local magistracies, of which the first one to be mentioned is the dictatorship of Gaius Caecius Pulcher.\[^{614}\] Another honorary plaque, very fragmentary, mentions the dictatorship as part of list of municipal and military offices, and has been dated to the late first century AD.\[^{615}\] The last of our *dictatores* appears in an honorary inscription on a statue base, which was found near the amphitheatre in Capua and dates from the first or early second century AD. The Lanuvian dictatorship is the first magistracy mentioned, but this man, a certain Gaius Lartius Gabinius Fortuitus stands out because the rest of his administrative career was focused on Capua, where he – as a *duumvir* – paved a part of the *Via Diana*\[^{616}\].

From this short list of officeholders, it is clear that the dictatorship was a prestigious post in the municipal *cursus honorum* of Lanuvium. The case of Milo and the inscription of Marcus Valerius show that the *dictatores* had a number of religious duties, which probably included making sacrifices at established days in the year and – according to Cicero’s remarks in *Pro Milone*, appointing *flamines*. But, as Adrian Sherwin-White has argued, this does not mean that the dictator was essentially a priest. The office is listed in the *lex Acilia* as a Latin magistracy, together with the *aedile* and the *praetor*.\[^{617}\] As mentioned in chapter II, other Latin towns had *dictatores* too and it could be postulated that these positions developed from older, Latin magistracies with the same name but with much more authority.\[^{618}\] Stripped of their official power as chief town executives after the Roman takeover, the *dictatores* took up more ceremonial responsibilities, making their position less influential but still highly esteemed. Tim Cornell has argued that the position of these officials in Latium may have had a longer history than the dictatorship in Rome, which developed after the

\[^{613}\] CIL XIV 2121. See note 566.
\[^{614}\] CIL XIV 2097: Senatus p(opulus)q(ue) Lan(i)vinus ex p(ecunia) p(ublica) / Ti(berio) Claudio Caesari Aug(usti) Germanico pont(ifici) max(imo) tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) II / C(aio) Caecio Pulchro dictatore P(ublio) Autronio Celso L(uicio) Laberio Maximo aedil(is)bus.
\[^{615}\] CIL XIV 2110: praefecto vehiculor[um] / [donis] donati bello Br[itannico] / [aedili municipi(i?)] Lanivini et dictatores / [sua p(ecunia) refer(ere) cit 3] / [bus et mulierem(um) (?)
\[^{616}\] CIL X, 3913: G(aiot) Lartio / Gabinio P(ubli) f(ilio) / Palatina) Fortuito / dictatori Lan(uvii) / Ilirio(?) Capuae / quod viam Dian(ae) / a porta Volturn(ensi) / ad vicum usque sue / pecunia(a) silice straver(it) / ob munificentiam eius / decr(eto) dec(urionum). For the trajectory of the road, which probably led up to the temple of Diana on the *mons Tifata*, see: Quilici Gigli (2000) 29-50; for the inscription 29-30 with notes 1-3. Unfortunately, the current location of the statue base is unknown.
\[^{617}\] Sherwin-White (1973) 58-71. Lex Acilia (CIL I² 583) line 78: que eorum in sua quisque civitate dictator praetor aedilis non fuerint.
regal period and only emerged in times of emergency.\textsuperscript{619} This opposes the earlier idea, put forward by Mommsen, that the Latin towns – much like the rest of Italy, later on – imitated Rome’s socio-political structures, such as magistracies, institutions and priesthoods.\textsuperscript{620} The development may well have been the other way around: Rome, as a newly founded Republic that had just abolished the kingship, may have adapted some of the municipal structures and magistracies from neighbouring Latin communities.

Nonetheless, studying the history of Rome as separate from the history of the rest of Latium can be considered a false binary to begin with. As Cornell acknowledged, an integrated approach may prove more effective, describing the region of Latium Vetus – or, in fact, entire Tyrrenian Italy – as a cultural \textit{koiné}, in which a common material culture was inevitably accompanied by parallel developments in the socio-political organisation of cities.\textsuperscript{621} The remnants of these early organisational structures, like the office of the \textit{dictator}, could be found all over ancient Latium and were cherished, but in the end we cannot distinguish a dominant role for Rome nor for one of the Latin cities in this process. In the case of Lanuvium, participating in and perhaps leading the ancient rites for Juno Sospita, would be among the most obvious tasks for such a time-old magistracy, whether the person fulfilling it was a Lanuvian inhabitant or a senator living in Rome. But, yet again: the continuity in Lanuvium is far from straightforward and the dictatorship could also be a new and rather late introduction to the cult, as a reaction to the same offices arising – or being reinvented – in the \textit{municipia} near Lanuvium.

In any case, the epigraphic material shows how interwoven the civic life of Lanuvium was with the cult of Juno Sospita. As a focal point for municipal identity, the goddess was honoured by an order of \textit{sacerdotes} that came to Lanuvium from all over Italy and beyond, by local \textit{iuvenes} and also by the magistrates of the \textit{municipium}, who emphasized the relationship between the town, the goddess and the sanctuary. In this worship, a number of ancient – supposedly Latin and pre-Roman – elements were consciously remembered, re-used or perhaps reinvented, and the ‘survival’ of

\textsuperscript{619} Cornell (1995) 227ff, Cornell (2000) 221-223. The idea was first put forward by Rosenberg (1913), who investigated the indigenous constitutions of pre-Roman communities on the Italian peninsula and concluded that Rome’s Republican institutions developed from Italian predecessors, the prime magistracies being the dictatorship and the collegiate praetorship. This position has been challenged later on the basis of oversimplification, but is still highly influential in the current debate, for example because it was one of the foundations of Mazzarino’s idea of a cultural \textit{koiné} in Tyrrenian Italy.

\textsuperscript{620} Mommsen (1887) 133-164. The argument was further developed by Rudolph (1935), who took it one step further by claiming that Rome eradicated all earlier institutions when they conquered the Italian cities. For a critique of Rudolph’s analysis, especially with regard to the Latin \textit{dictatores}, see Sherwin-White (1973) 62-65.

\textsuperscript{621} Cornell (1995) 163-172, 294-295. The linguistic term \textit{koiné} was first used by by Santo Mazzarino in a 1945 book on the cultural transformation of Rome from the regal period to the Republic. See for its later use and the way the idea has changed the debate on the Romanization of Italy the introduction of the book’s latest reprint: Mazzarino (2001) v-xxvii. For some brief remarks on the common development of material culture in Latium, see the introduction, pages 34-35.
ancient offices – such as the dictatorship – attached to the cult is a prime illustration of that. In this respect, a last example adds to the complexity of this system. Gaius Agilleius Mundus, whom we have already seen as a dedicator of one of the I.S.M.R. inscriptions, labels himself rex sacr(orum), in a plaque from the first century AD that also mentions him being a flamen dialis. The priesthoods are attested only rarely outside of the city of Rome, and may be relics from the religious history Rome shared with its Latin neighbours, as the dictator position described above.

The reference to the sacrificial kingship finds a parallel in a small statue base, found at the sanctuary grounds but now unfortunately lost, which was dedicated by a certain Florianus rex. Little to nothing is known about this person, apart from the fact that he seems to have been of a much more humble background than Agileius Mundus. The office of rex sacrorum is mainly known from the city of Rome; the priest king seems to have performed some of the sacral functions that once belonged to the king, although it is a matter of debate if the office was a direct – depoliticised – remainder of the regal period or if it was instituted later, in the early years of the Republic. We will see this sacrificial kingship again in the next chapter, in the discussion of the celebrations on the Alban Mount, which involved a rex sacrorum from Bovillae. For now, the position of these kings in Lanuvium does is not clear, nor can we comprehend how their office related to that of the dictator. What seems evident, however, is that Lanuvium’s reappraisal, reinterpretation or perhaps reinvention of these time-old offices constituted another case of what we have earlier labelled ‘constructive archaism’; they show the important role of the remembered past in the daily performance of Juno Sospita’s cult.

3.10 Conclusions
Juno Sospita was, first and foremost, a Lanuvian goddess. As was clear from the many sources investigated in this chapter, her appearance and the discourse around her cult practice remained firmly attached to the Colle San Lorenzo in Lanuvium, even though she eventually received a temple

622 CIL XIV 2089. See note 567.
623 The flamen dialis was one of the flamines maiores associated with the earliest history of Rome. He was in function all year round and had to sacrifice every day, bound by a large number of restrictions and individual obligations. After the position had been vacant for almost a century during the civil wars, it was reestablished by Augustus. See: Cornell (1995) 227-240, Beard, North and Price (1998) 28-29, 323.
624 ILS 4016: Si deo si deai(!) / Florianus rex(!).
625 Garofalo (2011) 544 suggests that the man was a slave – because of the single name – and hypothesizes another function for him: as a slave, he could have been one of the reges Nemorenses, perhaps performing in the theatre of Lanuvium instead of that at lake Nemi. This, to me, seems highly unlikely, not only because of the meagre evidence for the Lanuvian context, but also because of fact that there is no proof for the actual involvement of slaves in the cult of Diana Nemorensis, as I have argued in Chapter II (pages 72-73).
626 For an introduction to the debate on the rex sacrorum, which is extensive and is interwoven with the fierce academic disputes over on the history of the kingship itself, see Cornell (1995) 232-235 with notes, Forsythe (2005) 135-137, Smith (2011) 21-42.
627 CIL XIV 2413. See pages 189-190 of chapter IV.
in Rome as well. On Lanuvium’s highest hill, religious practice can be traced back as far as (at least) the sixth century BC, and with the last restoration of the sanctuary being attested in the second century AD, the site shows a remarkable continuity of worship. In this chapter, I have argued that, for the cult officials, magistrates and worshippers visiting the cult in Roman times, this Latin past was an important part of the religious present. It was not a static relic that presented itself as a fixed framework of reference for every visitor, but could change shape and meaning according to the context it was perceived and presented in. As such, I have not only questioned the presumed direct relation between the early cult practice and the later representations of the goddess, but I have also observed apparent inconsistencies in the sources, which prove that different – and to modern eyes conflicting – images of Juno Sospita could exist alongside each other.

The most obvious example of such an apparent inconsistency in the sources is formed by the rite narrated by Propertius and later authors, who claim that Lanuvium was the location of an ancient agricultural rite, which involved young virgins feeding a serpent to ensure a prosperous harvest. The curious and potentially violent ceremony seems an ill match with the ancient rites for Juno Sospita and has all the characteristics of a fictional literary *topos*; besides, the participation of the goddess is not reported anywhere. Through the analysis of several parallels in Greek and Latin literature, I have analysed how the narrative of sacred serpents being tended to near cult sites, can indeed be identified as a literary *topos*, well known over the entire Mediterranean. For the Roman reader, the religious landscape around Lanuvium could thus look very different from the landscape experienced by the Roman worshipper: meeting a god in book was not the same as meeting a god in a temple. And yet, I maintain, it would be incorrect to study these diverse spheres of interaction as mutually exclusive. Representations of Juno Sospita on Republican coins – issued by Lanuvian *monetarii* – show that the goddess may not have participated in the snake ritual, but was certainly associated with it. On the coins (dated earlier than the poem of Propertius) Juno Sospita is accompanied by a snake, while the offering girl is represented as well. The images prove that it makes no sense to isolate the literary domain from a material sphere that was somehow more 'real' or believable, as the stories apparently influenced the material representations of the goddess (and vice-versa). Furthermore, the recent discovery of the Pantanaccio votive deposit adds an extra layer to our understanding of the ritual landscape of Lanuvium. In the fourth and third centuries BC, there seems to have been a fully functioning religious *lucus* on the Colle San Lorenzo, only a short distance from the temple of Juno Sospita. Among large quantities of votives excavated there, the discovery of a scaled round sculpture was especially exciting: an early cult statue of a serpent? As stated above, this identification seems premature at the present state of research. If it can be substantiated through further research though, the snake statue would provide an interesting
insight into the process of memory making that connected the site to the myth, and the myth to the
goddess.

The Lanuvian *tresviri monetales* were not the only ones to refer to their *origo* in Lanuvium by
using the image of Juno Sospita. The characteristic iconography of the goddess wearing a goatskin,
as mentioned by Cicero, can be identified on the lead *tesserae* issued by local Lanuvian *juvenes* in the
early principate, as well as in at least one of the large cult statues of the goddess. My research
suggests that the image could stand for the community of Lanuvium as a whole and that it was, as
such, connected with the wider history of that community. The iconography of Juno Sospita not
only shows clear signs of archaism – such as the clothing, shield and upturned shoes – but also
remains very stable over time. When the Lanuvian emperors Antoninus Pius and Commodus used it
on their coins, they labelled the goddess Juno Sispita to give her an even more archaizing appeal. I
use the label archaizing rather than archaic, because the relation to the earlier images that have
been identified as Juno Sospita is – in my view – far from clear: we may certainly identify a visual
correspondence with the Etruscan imagery and the Latial antefixes from the fifth and sixth
centuries BC, but none of the images before the second century BC can be securely connected to the
cult practice in Lanuvium. Instead of tracing the elements of Cicero’s characterization back in time,
we may use the description for what it is: a confirmation of the fame the appearance of Juno Sospita
and her sanctuary held in the late Republic, as well as the way that fame was specifically connected
with the town of Lanuvium and its inhabitants.

The iconography of Juno Sospita reveals another important characteristic of the goddess:
with her armour, spear and raised shield, and sometimes striding forward in a battle pose, she
appears to be a protective deity, more than anything else. Livy’s first mention of the cult puts it in
this perspective as well, as he narrates that in the aftermath of the Latin war a special stipulation
was made to include the Romans in the organization of the cult, which up until then had been a
Lanuvian affair. The involvement of the local community in the worship for Juno Sospita seems to
have had a lasting influence on the cult practice. The most visible aspect of this is perhaps in the
construction of the sanctuary itself. In the large scale monumentalization in the first century BC we
can recognize the hand of local officer Licinius Murena, who used the wealth gained from his
participation in the Mithridatic wars to show his commitment to his hometown deity and to
advertise his own position. It is in the epigraphic evidence, however, that the extent to which the
cult practice was interwoven with the civic life of Lanuvium becomes most clear. We have identified
several groups that were especially connected to the cult, such as the local *juvenes*, who likely
organized sacrifices and games for Juno Sospita. Whereas the *sacerdotes Lanuvini* seem to have been
outsiders, who were perhaps awarded the priesthood as a sign of appreciation or honour, there are
several inscriptions (and literary sources) that testify to the involvement of local women, a number of *flamines*, several *dictatores* and even a *rex sacrorum*. I have argued that, just as the sanctuary on the Colle San Lorenzo dominated the landscape around Lanuvium, the intricate organization of the cult practice was a dominant factor in the civic life of the community: many of Lanuvium’s were involved in the rites elites at some point in their career. As such, the cult practice remained a focal point of local identity throughout the Republic and also into the imperial period, when we – for example – can trace the involvement of the Antonine emperors who had a villa nearby.

This local identity presented itself not in opposition to a Roman identity, but as a constitutive element of it. As we have seen from the long list of *prodigia* that were reported in Lanuvium (and the reaction of the Roman Senate to these occurrences), divine warnings there concerned the Roman state as well. This shared religious interest was underlined by the yearly visit of the Roman consuls. On a personal level, the emphasis on a local Lanuvian identity seems to have gained prominence in the context of a growing Roman empire. The aristocrats who affiliated themselves with Juno Sospita – and, for example, put her image on their coins – did so in the competitive society of the Roman Republic, where an *origo* in one of the ancient communities of Latium Vetus was an important asset. For the *dictatores*, the local elites that – at the top of the *cursus honorum* – had a leading role in the rites, this dual relationship between their local and larger Roman and Latin identity was even more evident. Their ostensibly ancient titles connected them to the traditions of their hometown, but also to the shared religious and socio-political history of Latium, of which the offices – however reconstructed or reinvented – were a living memory.
CHAPTER IV: Jupiter Latiaris and the *feriae Latinae*: celebrating and defining *Latinitas*

The region of the Alban hills, as we have seen in previous chapters, has been interpreted by both modern and ancient authors as a deeply religious landscape, in which mythical demigods and large protective deities resided next to and in relation to each other. Within this dense cultic landscape, the *mons Albanus* – monte Cavo in modern times – was an obvious focal point: the volcanic peak was, then as it is now, clearly visible from the city of Rome and from the entire Latin countryside. It towered high above lake Nemi and its sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis and was also visible from Lanuvium and the sanctuary of Juno Sospita. The centrality was not only geographical but also religious in nature: the hill was the location of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, a Latin deity par excellence who was venerated in the annual *feriae Latinae*. In this festival, the ancient links between the Romans and Latins were celebrated, in a ceremony that brought many of Rome’s magistrates to the hilltop, as well as delegates from the ancient Latin towns surrounding Rome. Led by the consuls, they shared a meal and made ritual sacrifices, thus remembering and revoking the ancient truce that connected them.

In the last chapter of this thesis, I will study the cult of Jupiter Latiaris and the *feriae Latinae*, by investigating how the Latin status of the cult was articulated in the sources, how it was integrated into the Roman religious landscape and if and how the origins of the worship played a part in the later ritual proceedings, during the Republic and Empire. Although ancient authors agree that the worship on the Alban mount had deep historical roots, there are diverse and often conflicting narratives about when the cult started and who initiated it. The literary sources referring to these earliest beginnings will be studied in the first part of the chapter, in which I will focus on a question that was raised in antiquity as well: who were these Latin peoples the Romans remembered they had united with? Next, the analysis will focus on Rome’s *metropolis*, the mythical town of Alba Longa. The myths surrounding this town are evoked by the name of the mountain on which the ceremonies were celebrated, the *mons Albanus*, but did Rome’s origin story play a part in the cult practice as well? While it will quickly become clear that the different accounts do not add up to a complete and coherent sequence of events, the ancient authors who describe the cult of Jupiter Latiaris clearly put much emphasis on its history, which served to explain and justify the rituals offered to the god.

---

Horden and Purcell (2000) 59-65. For the peak as an obvious focal point in the landscape, see Simón (2011) 127-128 and page 188 (with notes) of this chapter.
After an overview of the different historical traditions and myths that surrounded the earliest phases of the cult, attention will turn to the position of the festival in the Roman religious and administrative calendar of the Republic and Empire. What happened during the *feriae Latinae* and how was its presiding deity addressed? I will discuss the organization of the worship and the involvement of the consuls and other magistrates, which was regulated by a set of rules and traditions. Because of the involvement of so many of Rome’s elite citizens, the festival was of considerable military and political importance and, as the analysis will show, the implications of incorrect or untimely executed rituals could be severe. For the organization of the festivities on the Alban mount, the investigation of the archaeological record is of course of crucial importance. In earlier chapters, the material remains have provided insight into the age, size and layout of the sanctuary buildings, as well as in some cases into the identity and expectations of the visiting worshippers. When we bring the same approach to the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, the analysis will prove more difficult. This is to some extent the result of the scarce archaeological research on the hill and the complicated circumstances at the moment – the site is closed off and occupied by a large centre for telecommunication – but even apart from these research difficulties, the apparent lack of material evidence is striking. In the discussion of the archaeological record, this relative scarcity will be further examined, as will the implications for the interpretation of the sanctuary and the type of worship that took place there. Did Jupiter Latiaris have a temple on the Alban Mount and, if so, what did it look like? Information from the archival sources will be highlighted, both for the alternative insights they offer, as well as to redress their long neglect in previous research.

A subsequent category of sources that is important for our understanding of the cult on the mons Albanus is the epigraphic material. Evidence of votive inscriptions is unfortunately scarce, but honorary and funerary inscriptions mention a range of priesthoods that relate to the cult as well as to the hill: *salii Albani*, *Vestales Albanae* and *sacerdotes Cabenses* (‘priests of Cabum’) to name only a few. What was the status and function of these priesthoods and can we be certain that they were connected with the organization of the *feriae Latinae*? Were the priestly titles claimed by or awarded to citizens from a specific locality in the Alban hills? The limitations of the evidence will prevent definitive answers on most of these questions, but the titles seem to preserve – as we have seen in earlier chapters – a real or imagined link with the distant past. By investigating these ancient priesthoods and their holders, we are investigating the appeal of this past, which connected Rome with its Latin neighbours. In the final paragraphs of this chapter, I will further study the religious bonds between Rome and Latium by looking into the symbolic significance of the *feriae Latinae* in the

---

629 Cabum is referred to in the sources as a disappeared village on the slopes of the Alban mount, see pages 180ff.  

144
context of Roman expansion. In doing so, I will draw attention to some suggestive parallels between the cult of Jupiter Latiaris and its Roman counterpart, the cult of Jupiter on the Capitoline hill. Eventually, the analysis of this remembered past brings us to the intersection of politics, religion and identity that we have studied before in this thesis, and to a complicated yet important question: how did Roman citizens - as individuals and as a community – conceive of, relate to and engage with the Latin past in the Roman present?

Jupiter Latiaris will be the subject of the last chapter of this thesis, but, as will become clear early on, the evidence for his cult looks quite different from the sources discussed in the context of the cults of Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita. While there is ample literary evidence for the feriae Latinae and the festival certainly played an important part in the Roman religious calendar from the Republic well into the Empire, the archaeological sources for the rites are surprisingly sparse, both in terms of architectural remains as well as in terms of votive material. In the following pages, the discrepancy between the different kinds of source material will be even more prominent than in earlier chapters. Does this have implications for the reconstruction of the cult practice surrounding Jupiter Latiaris practice as well?

While it will prove difficult to reconstruct a – public or private – image of Jupiter Latiaris as a deity the evidence provides some encouraging leads, something that was mostly missing in earlier chapters: a description of the rituals performed on the site and a reflection on the way they came into being. Thus, this chapter will confront the complex material situation with the written sources that abundantly comment on the feriae Latinae. Ancient authors describe these rites as a direct relic from the past, connecting them both with the foundation legends of Rome and with the battles and alliances that characterized Rome’s early relations with the Latins. The organization of the proceedings, although hard to trace on the hill itself, has left an imprint in the epigraphic record, and shows the direct involvement of many of Rome’s elites over a long period of time.

### 4.1 Tarquinius’ unification attempts

There are a number of possible beginnings to the story of Jupiter Latiaris and the feriae Latinae, and Roman authors seem to have been well aware of that. A number of sources comment on the origins of the festival of the feriae Latinae and present various explanations, which differ not only in detail but also – as we will see in the course of this chapter – in elementary names and dates. The most elaborate account is that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who attributes the festival to Tarquinius Superbus, traditionally the seventh and last king of Rome. After winning the Latins over during a meeting at the lucus Ferentinae and persuading them to accept an agreement that acknowledged the dominance of Rome, the king instituted a festival to celebrate the peace:
And as a means of providing that the treaties made with those cities might endure forever, Tarquinius resolved to designate a sanctuary for the joint use of the Romans, the Latins, the Hernicans and such of the Volscians as had entered into the alliance, in order that, coming together each year at the appointed place, they might celebrate a general festival, feast together and share in common sacrifices. This proposal being cheerfully accepted by all of them, he appointed for their place of assembly a high mountain situated almost at the centre of these nations and commanding the city of the Albans; and he made a law that upon this mountain an annual festival should be celebrated, during which they should all abstain from acts of hostility against any of the others and should perform common sacrifices to Jupiter Latiaris, as he is called, and feast together, and he appointed the share each city was to contribute towards these sacrifices and the portion each of them was to receive. The cities that shared in this festival and sacrifice were forty-seven. These festivals and sacrifices the Romans celebrate to this day, calling them the ‘Latin Festivals’; and some of the cities that take part in them bring lambs, some cheeses, others a certain measure of milk, and others something of like nature. And one bull is sacrificed in common by all of them, each city receiving its appointed share of the meat. The sacrifices they offer are on behalf of all and the Romans have the superintendence of them.630

The passage offers a lot of information on the festival: it originated in a military context and apparently an annual truce was necessary to perpetuate the treaty; the celebrations included a feast in which different cities brought different items; it ended with the common sacrifice of a bull of which the meat was divided over the participating cities and, significantly, the ceremony was superintended by the Romans. Thus, in this narrative, it was the Roman dominance over Latium that initiated the communal cult of Jupiter Latiaris, and according to Dionysius the festival established by Tarquinius was still celebrated by the Latins in his day.

630Dion. Hal. 4.49: τοῦ δὲ μὲν εἰς ἃ πάντα χρόνον τὰ συγκείμενα ταῖς πόλεις πρόνοιαν ὁ Ταρκώνιος λαμβάνων ιερὸν ἔγινο κοινὸν ἀποδείξει Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Λατίνων καὶ Ἑρνίκων καὶ Υδαλοῦσκων τῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων εἰς τὴν συμμαχίαν, ἦν συνερχόμενοι καθ’ ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν εἰς τὸν ἀποδείξειν τόπον πανηγυρίωσι καὶ συνεστιώνται καὶ κοινῶν ἱερῶν μεταλαμβάνωσιν. ἀγαπητῶς δὲ πάντων τὸ πράγμα δεξιὸμενόν τόπον μὲν ἀπεδείχθη ἔνθα ποιήρονται τὴν σύνοδον εἰς μέσω μάλιστα τῶν ἐθνῶν κείμενον ὅρος υψηλόν, ὁ τῆς Ἀλβανίων ὑπέρεκται πόλεως, ἐν ὡς πανηγύριος τ’ ἀνὰ πάν ἐτος ἀγεσθαι καὶ ἐκεχείριας εἶναι πᾶσι πρὸς πάντας ἐσεξενομοθέτησε θυσίας τε συντελεῖσθαι κοινάς τῷ καλουμένῳ Λατιαρῷ Δίῳ καὶ συνεστιώσεις, τάξιν ἤ δεὶ παρέχειν ἐκάστην πόλιν εἰς τὰ ἱερά, καὶ μοίραν ἣν ἐκάστην δεῖχει λαμβάνειν. αἱ δὲ μετασχοῦσας τῆς ἐορτῆς τε καὶ τῆς θυσίας πόλεις τριών δέουσαι πεντήκοντα ἐγένοντο. ταῦτας τὰς ἐορτὰς τε καὶ τὰς θυσίας μέχρι τῶν καθ’ ἡμῶν χρόνων ἐπιτελοῦσι Ῥωμαίωι Λατίναις καλούντες, καὶ φέρουσιν εἰς αὐτὰς αἱ μετέχουσαι τῶν ἱερῶν πόλεις αἱ μὲν ἄρας, αἱ δὲ τυροῦς, αἱ δὲ γάλακτος τι μέτρον, αἱ δὲ ὑμίνῳ τι τούτοις πελάνου γένος ἐνὸς δὲ ταύτου κοινοῦ ὑπὸ παόν δυομένου μέρος ἐκάστη τὸ τεταγμένον λαμβάνει. θύσου δ’ ὑπέρ ἀπάντων καὶ τὴν ἕγεμονίαν τῶν ιερῶν ἔχουσι Ῥωμαίοι.
Livy does not comment on the establishment of the festival, but he does mention episodes of its later history. We shall come back to some of these later, but what is important now is that Livy describes the same kind of hierarchy as Dionysius does: Romans and Latins celebrate collective rites for a communal deity, but the Romans take the lead in the proceedings and decide which city gets what part of the sacrificial meat. Livy describes this process with the phrase *carnem dari*: the Romans distributed the sacrificial meat and the Latin cities had to accept their share.\(^{631}\) Pliny the Elder uses the phrase *carnem accipere* and in other passages, the role of the Latins in the rituals is described as *carnem petere* – asking for the meat.\(^{632}\) The formulations of allocating and accepting meat do not imply an equal ritual relationship, but a ceremony under the direction of the Romans.\(^{633}\) What this discourse thus seems to explain, is that the religious bond of the Latins worshipping Jupiter Latiaris was not only initiated by Rome, but also clearly expressed a sense of Roman authority. For modern readers, this foundation story represents clear signs of anachronism. While it is certainly imaginable that Tarquinius established some control over the region during his reign, it seems hard to imagine that this Roman authority over the cult continued unproblematically, as the political and military relations with the Latins were troubled for many years after Tarquinius’ supposed reign.

This discourse about the origins of the *feriae Latinae* was however far from generally accepted, neither by modern interpreters, nor by other ancient writers that sought to explain the rites. The history of the cult is interwoven with a dense and complex set of historiographic traditions about the relations of early Rome with its neighbours – and with the complicated histories of the kingship in Rome, for that matter. As we have seen in the discussion of the *lucus* of Diana at lake Nemi, alternating episodes of war and peace are very hard to reconstruct, as are the alliances in support of and against Rome.\(^{634}\) Especially in the period before the *foedus Cassianum* (supposedly in 493 BC), it is safe to say that Roman hegemony was far from established in the region.\(^{635}\) Many of the earlier alliances between Latin states, such as the league that met at the *lucus* of Diana, may well have had the purpose of opposing the expanding power of Rome. Although political bonds did not necessarily correspond with religious bonds, it seems unlikely that Tarquinius’ power in the sixth century BC extended to uniting the Latins (and even some of the surrounding tribes) in a cult that stressed Roman dominance. As several authors have noted, the

\(^{631}\) Liv. 32.1.1-9; 37.3.4.


\(^{634}\) See chapter II, pages 50ff.

\(^{635}\) The *foedus Cassianum* was a peace treaty between the Roman Republic and the Latin states, after the battle of lake Regillus. It established military cooperation (mutual defence and shared exploits) and the exchange of private rights (marriage and commercial) between Roman and Latin citizens. Cic. *Bob.* 53; Dion. Hal. 6.95; Liv. 2.33.9). See Cornell (1995) 299-301 and cf. chapter II (pages 41ff) and page 151 of this chapter.
circumstances in which Dionysius of Halicarnassus situates the establishment of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris and the agreement at the *lucus Ferentinae* that preceded it are actually far more plausible evidence for the – somewhat better documented – settlement of the *foedus Cassianum*, and the entire discourse may thus be viewed as a fairly obvious projection of later history back into the regal period.636

Before we turn to the alternative narratives explaining the establishment of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, we must first go a bit further into these semi-historical alliances in Latium. Who actually were these Latin tribes that the Romans remembered they had united with? As we saw in chapter two, Livy attributes the very first attempts at religious unification to king Servius Tullius, who inaugurated a temple to Diana on the Aventine where all Latins could meet and worship, under the supervision of Rome.637 In this tradition, there is no specification of cities or peoples involved. In the case of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, the historical tradition has preserved more details, but they are notoriously difficult to interpret. Pliny the Elder links the cult to a community that he identifies as the *populi Albenses*, in his ethnographic overview of the towns and peoples that were once found in Latium but had by his time disappeared:

The first region formerly included the following celebrated towns of Latium besides those mentioned: Satricum, Pometia, Scaptia, Politorium, Tellena, Tifata, Caenina, Ficana, Crustumerium, Ameriola, Medullum, Corniculum, Saturnia on the site of the present Rome, Antipolis, which to-day is Janiculum and a part of Rome, Antennae, Camerium, Collatia, Amitinum, Norbe, Sulmo; and together with these the Alban peoples who were accustomed to ‘receive flesh’ on the Alban Hill, namely the Albani, Aesolani, Accienses, Abolani, Bubetani, Bolani, Cusuetani, Coriolani, Fidenates, Foreti, Hortenses, Latinenses, Longulani, Manates, Macrales, Munienses, Numinienses, Olliculani, Octulan, Pedani, Polluscini, Querquetulan, Sicani, Sisolenses, Tolerienses, Tutienses, Vimitellari, Velienses, Venetulan, Vitellenses. Thus 53 peoples of Old Latium have perished without leaving a trace.638


637 See pages 52-54.

It is a curious list, in which Pliny suggests that it were the populi Albenses, long lost in history, who had assembled and received the sacrificial meat on the Alban hill. This religious unity would thus be very different from the league that met at the lucus of Diana, described by Cato and preserved in Priscian: the Latin communities that are listed in that context still existed in historical times and assembled in what appears to have been an attempt to resist and rival Rome. Finally, another list of Latin peoples appears in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who – when he narrates the build-up to the battle of lake Regillus – describes a meeting at the lucus Ferentinae and mentions the Latini involved in opposition to Rome, which were delegations of: Ardea, Aricia, Bovillae, Bubentum, Cora, Carpentum, Circeii, Corioli, Corbio, Gabii, Laurentum, Lanuvium, Labici, Nomentum, Norba, Praeneste, Pedum, Querquetula, Satricum, Scaptia, Setia, Tibur, Tusculum, Tolerium, Tellenae, Velitrae.

Dionysius’ list is much longer than that of Cato and has its own interpretation problems, but it represents a similar historiographic phenomenon: a discourse that preserved the names and the efforts of the Latin communities that opposed Rome in its very earliest attempts of conquering the region of Latium Vetus. Religious assemblies at luci, which in peaceful times were locations of communal feasts for the entire region, became increasingly associated – at least in historiography – with political struggle, and with Latins uniting and fighting against Romans. Were the origins of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris connected with this phenomenon, or was it an isolated and predominantly Roman affair, in which not the neighbouring Latins, but only a separate and perhaps more geographically confined group of populi Albenses were involved? The ancients seem to have been confused about it as well, as becomes most clear from a scholiast on Cicero’s pro Plancio. He comments on a passage where the orator mentions the feriae Latinae, for which some towns in his time apparently could not find appropriate envoys.

For most authors disagree over by whom the Latin festival was instituted. Some think it was by Tarquininius Priscus, king of the Romans, but others think it was by the prisci Latini.

---


642 Cic. Planc. 9.23. Cicero is accusing Laterensus of relying too much on his family name and having no support from the people of Tusculum, where he came from, and from the neighbouring villages of Gabii, Bovillae and Labicum. See for Bovillae, pages 188-190 and 198 of this chapter.
[ancient Latins]. And even amongst those, the reason for the sacrifice is not agreed. For some say it was founded on the instruction of Faunus, and some think it was after the death of King Latinus and Aeneas, because they never appeared again. And on those days they instituted the custom of swinging, when they are moved by swinging devices; since their body was not found on earth, like souls they were sought in the air. This custom was observed in relation to the sacrifice at the feriae Latinae, that the adjacent cities would receive portions of meat of the sacrificial victim, on the Alban mount, according to ancient superstition. It shows how small the number of men in these cities was that there were even lacking men to accept the meat according to this solemn custom.  

So, apart from mentioning king Tarquinius as a potential creator of the feriae, the scholiast also mentions the possibility that the rites were instigated by the prisci Latini, without specifying when this took place or which tribes and cities were considered to be part of the 'old Latins'. His further explanation of the last option raises even more questions, to which we shall come back in a moment. For now, we must acknowledge that even though it is plausible that the tradition preserved an early communal celebration on the Alban mount, the initiative or precise circumstances under which this originated cannot be reconstructed.

What does become clear is that the discourse surrounding the feriae Latinae took the shape of an affirmative projection, an attempt to explain the relationship between Rome and its neighbours and to trace it back to a bond with and amongst Latins. What shape this unity took, and the name under which it operated, seems to have been not very well defined. In some of the writings of Roman grammarians, we see attempts to define the prisci Latini more precisely: they record these oldest Latins as the inhabitants of the colonies of Alba Longa, which occupied the area of Latium Vetus before the foundation of Rome and the subsequent war of Rome against Alba.

---

643 Schol. Bob. in Cic. Planc. 9.23 (ed. Hildebrandt 128-129): Nam Latinae feriae a quo fuerint instituta, dissentient plerique auctores. Alii ab L. Tarquinio Prisco, rege Romanorum, existimant, ali vero a Latinis priscis. Atque inter hos ipsos causa sacrificii non convenit. Nam quidam id initum ex imperato Fauni contendunt, nonnulli post obitum Latinis regis [et] Aeneae, quod ii nusquam comparuerant. Itaque ipsis diebus ideo oscillare instituerunt, ut pendulis machinis agitarentur: quoniam eorum corpus in terris non esset repertum, ut animae velut in aere quaererentur. Feriarum Latinarum sacrificio solet hoc observari, ut ... hostia civitates adiacentes portiunculas carnis acciperent ex Albano monte secundum veterem superstitionem. Verum tam exiguam in illis civitatibus numerum hominum significat, ut desint etiam, qui carnem petitum de sollemni more mittantur. The scholiast, whose work has been dated by Hildebrandt (1971) xxiii-xxiv to the late third or early fourth century AD, describes the rituals as a form of superstition. The only parallel for this is in Arn. 2,68, where the author denounces the rites in a Christian fashion. The connotation of this passage is not so negative and the Bobbio scholiasat does not seem hostile to Roman religion in general. For evidence concerning the worship on the Alban mount in the late Empire, see page 190.

644 In Servius' Ad Aenied (5.598) the prisci Latini are labeled as those who 'occupied the areas where Alba Longa was founded' (Priscos Latinos ita dicti sunt quia tenuerant loca ubi Alba est condita); Festus 253L claims that the old
Although specific names are missing, this idea is similar to Pliny’s list of populi Albenses. However, when Pliny uses the term prisci Latini himself, he refers to the Latin war of 338 BC and the involved communities.\footnote{In Plin. NH 34.20: ... sicuti C. Maenio, qui devicerat priscos Latinos ('For example [the statue in honour of] Gaius Maenius who had vanquished the Old Latins'). Pliny refers to one of the consuls, who had been the first to receive statues on columns at the expense of the city.} So, although there are some attempts at categorization in Roman literature, the picture that emerges is highly inconsistent, confusing and complex. Modern scholars have tried to bring some chronological and geographical order to the various groups of Latini, prisci Latini and Latinenses that appear in the sources.\footnote{See especially: Liou-Gille (1997) 731-743, Grandazzi (2008) 555ff.} This results in a dense web of etymological as well as mythological correlations, but what the references have in common is that the first Latins were perceived as a relatively small group of cities, of which the common name eventually expanded to include the peoples and cities in a wider area around Rome (although the exact dimensions of both the early and later area are unclear). While the prisci Latini certainly had forefathers and origin legends in common - we shall discuss them shortly - in historical times the appellation Latini referred to a geographical location more than to a distinct ethnic union. In the historical sources (Livy being the best example) a city or population is generally labelled Latin when it is located within the Latium of their own days.\footnote{Liou-Gille (1997) 731-734. Eventually, of course, the appellation referred to the communities obtaining the ius Latii.}

The religious and political alliances between Latins that we find in the sources certainly do not reflect a homogenous or static group. The composition of the Latin league probably changed over time and different circumstances required different coalitions. In this process, as we have seen earlier in this thesis, the deities of Latium gradually gained more importance and attracted larger crowds.\footnote{See chapter II, pages 50-53 and chapter III, pages 138-139.} We may trace the first phases of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris back to this process as well, and although the exact circumstances cannot be reconstructed, it is safe to say that the leading role of Rome and king Tarquinius in the literary tradition shows signs of anachronism that reflect the later dominion of Rome over the region and over the rites. Thus, in the late Republican and Imperial context in which our sources were written, the contemporary reality of the celebration of the feriae Latinae was provided with an historical explanation and justification. This reflection was not just an intellectual effort: it was an intrinsic part of the religious celebration itself, which was all about the relation between Rome and the larger world around it.
4.2 Latinus as forefather and Alba Longa as metropolis

Before we turn to the rites that actualised the historical links between Rome and its neighbours, we must first discuss another part of the distant (mythical) past that was evoked by the feriae Latinae: the foundation history of Rome. The scholiast on Cicero concerned with the origins of the rites, briefly mentioned before, offers a curious account on the possible involvement of Rome’s founding fathers. His reference to the mythical king Faunus as the establisher of the cult is otherwise unattested, but the story on the death of king Latinus and Aeneas finds a parallel in a fragment of the second century grammarian Festus, who explores the meaning of the word oscillantes and connects it with a rite in celebration of Jupiter Latiaris:

Cornificius says that the oscillantes (‘swingers’) are so called from the fact that people who enjoyed this kind of game used to cover their face with masks out of modesty. The cause of this display is given as follows. King Latinus, who in the battle he had with Mezentius king of Caere, disappeared, was adjudged to have become Jupiter Latiaris. And so on that day freedmen and slaves seek him not on earth but in a way by which it seems that they can reach the sky through swinging, which is also an image of human life, in which the highest moments become the depths and the depths are carried to the heights. And it is believed to recall the beginning of life through the motions of the cot and the nourishment of milk, because on those festive days people use swings and drink milk. And there are those who think the Italians followed the example of the Greeks, for they too, when Icarus was killed by injury, and his daughter – impelled by grief – had died by hanging herself, by simulation...\(^{649}\)

Whereas the scholiast on Cicero mentions both Aeneas and Latinus, Festus claims that it was the disappearance of Latinus and his transformation into Jupiter Latiaris that was the origin of the rite on the Alban mount.\(^{650}\) Both accounts relate the cult to the custom of oscillare, or ‘swinging’. In an

\(^{649}\) Fest. 212L: oscillantes, ait Cornificius, ab eo, quod os celare soliti personis propter verecundiam, qui eo genere lusus utebantur. Causa autem eius idactiosis proditut Latinus rex, qui proemio quo ad[e]te sunt adversus Mezentium, Caeritum regem, nusquam apparuerit, indicatque sit Iuppiter factus Latiaris. Itaque ?sit eius dies feriaros, liberos servosque require eum non solum in terris, sed etiam qua vide[n]tur coelum posse adiri per oscillationem, velut imaginem quandam vitae humanae, in qua altissima ad infernum interdum <ad infima>, infima ad summum effereruntur. Atque ideo memoriam quoque redintegrari initio acceptae vitae per motus cunarum lactisque alimentum, qua per eos dies feriarum et oscillis moveantur, et lactata potione utantur. Nec desunt qui exemplum Graecorum securus putent Ita[][c]os, quod illi quoque, interitio interfecit Icaro, <cum> Erigone filia eius dolore suspensio perisset, per stimulationem ... (Text is lost from here). The translation is adapted from Smith (2012) 283.

\(^{650}\) The Greek parallel that is missing here, is that of the daughter of Icarius (and not Icarus, as is noted in Festus), who — after her father got killed — killed herself and triggered an epidemic of Athenian girls hanging themselves. At the advice of Delphi, the Athenians stopped this by instituting the festival of Aiora (‘swinging’) in which girls were supposed to swing in chairs hanging from trees. The aition is represented on vase paintings as well. See: Johnston (2013) 219-222.
attempt to search for the soul of Latinus (and Aeneas), the participants in the rite apparently swung in the air, with some sort of mask covering their faces. The description of the ritual remembrance of these Latin forefathers seems to have something to do with human life and afterlife as well, but very little is known about the context in which this rite should have taken place. In other instances in Roman literature, oscilla are referred to as swinging votives, for example in the celebration of the feriae Sementivae.\(^{651}\) If and how this relates to the masks or people that were swinging during the feriae Latinae is not clear from the written sources, nor is the relation of this custom to the much better defined and described ritual division of the sacrificial meat.

There have been attempts to further our understanding of this rite through archaeological sources. We know of several depictions of swinging devices in religious scenes on relief panels and wall paintings from the first and second century AD, which have been recognized as oscilla (figure 4.1).\(^{652}\) Furthermore, Giovanni Colonna has identified about a hundred ‘ciottoli’ (pebbles) in a votive deposit under the comitium in Rome as oscilla, suggesting that they were gifts for Dis Pater.\(^{653}\) In a re-examination of the evidence found on the mons Albanus, Claudia Cecamore has identified an egg-shaped stone as an oscillum too, suggesting that there was a ritual connection between the Comitium, where – according to some traditions – Romulus disappeared into thin air, and the mons Albanus, where his forefathers Latinus and Aeneas met the same fate (figure 4.2).\(^{654}\) Captivating though this may be, Grandazzi rightfully points out that the evidence seems overly stretched here, and there is no indication that the practice of using oscilla in other cults had anything to do with the commemorative celebrations for Latinus and Aeneas practiced on the Alban mount.\(^{655}\)

Of course, the connection between the feriae Latinae and the earliest history of Rome was also established through the village that was connected with the festival through its supposed location and that had a special significance in the Roman mind: Alba Longa. As we have seen, the mythical mother city of Rome was mentioned in the context of the beginnings of the feriae Latinae. According to some authors, like Pliny, the earliest festivities on mons Albanus centred on the populi Albenses, who apparently could be distinguished from peoples of other Latin towns that had also

---


\(^{652}\) The example in figure 4.1 is a stucco decoration in Pompeii. See Taylor (2005) 83-105 for other pictures and an analysis of the possible religious or apotropaic meanings.

\(^{653}\) Colonna (1981) 75 (the votive wells were excavated by Boni The reference to Dis Pater is derived from Macrobius, who states (1.7.31; 1.11.48) that the god used to receive human sacrifices, until Hercules changed the ritual and oscilla in the shapes of humans were sacrificed instead. For Romulus’ disappearance and subsequent worship on the Comitium as Quirinus: Plut. Num. 2.1-3; Rom. 27-28.

\(^{654}\) Cecamore (1996) 60.

\(^{655}\) Grandazzi (2008) 560, 600.
disappeared. Diodorus Siculus, in a passage preserved in Eusebius, appears to relate to the same tradition when he provides a list of colonies founded by the Alban king Aeneas Silvius, but instead of mentioning populations, as Pliny does, Diodorus mentions towns. Adding further confusion, Diodorus’ list of eighteen towns contains places that still existed in historical times, whereas Pliny claims the communities sharing the sacrificial meat on the Alban mount had disappeared by his time. Notwithstanding these discrepancies in the surviving literary record, at least some authors (quoted by the scholiast on Cicero), seem to trace the roots of the feriae Latinae back to pre-Roman times, when the forefathers of Romulus, the kings of Alba Longa, dominated the region and supervised the execution of the rites. The name of the hill itself would be reminiscent of this earliest history, thus connecting it – according to modern as well as ancient interpreters – to the religious landscape of the later Roman Republic and Empire.

Obviously, this continuity is far from straightforward. The complex nature of Rome’s mythical genealogy has often been recognized as an amalgam of competing stories, in which the part centred around the kings of Alba Longa is perhaps the most obvious invention: it evidently serves to cover the chronological gap between the end of the Trojan war and Aeneas’ arrival in Italy (calculated back to the twelfth century BC by Greek historians), and Romulus’ foundation of Rome (traced back to 753 BC by Roman authors). Even in its fully developed Augustan version in Livy and Vergil, the list of Alban kings – starting from the reign of Aeneas’ son Ascanius – has many inconsistencies and anachronisms. The fifteen versions we have of the Alban royal line differ to a considerable degree, but most agree that there were some fifteen generations between Aeneas and Romulus. The names of the kings are quite obviously fabricated and demonstrably based on toponyms of locations in and around Rome, on traveling heroes from Greek legends and on the

---

656 See pages 148ff.
657 Diod. Sic. 7.5.9 (Eus. Chron. 288): ‘He was a vigorous ruler both in internal administration and in war, laying waste the neighbouring territory and founding the eighteen ancient cities which were formerly known as the ‘Latin cities’: Tibur, Praeneste, Gabii, Tusculum, Cora, Pometia, Lanuvium, Labici, Scaptia, Satricum, Aricia, Telleneae, Crustumerium, Caenina, Fregellae, Cameria, Medullia, and Boilum, which some men also write Bola’. (Hie in rebus gerendis et in bello validus repertus finitimam regionem evertit atque urbes antiquas, quae antea Latinorum vocabantur, XVIII condidit: Tiburam, Praenestum, Kabios, Tiskalum, Koram, Kometiam, Lanuvium, Labikam, Skaptiam, Satrikum, Arkiam, Telenam, Okostomeriam, Kaeninum, Phlegenam, Komerium, Mediplium, Boilum, quam nonnulli Bolam vocant). Most of the Greek text of Eusebius’ Chronicon is missing; this translation is adapted from a Latin translation of the Armenian translation of the Greek original, in the Schoene-Petermann edition.
658 Some earlier version (Naevius, Ennius) even claimed that Romulus was a direct grandson of Aeneas, posing even greater chronological difficulties. The canonical date of the sack of Troy was calculated by the Greek mathematician Eratostenes of Alexandria; it was probably Varro who established Rome’s foundation date. Cf: Laroche (1982) 112-120, Cornell (1995) 70 and note 78, Grandazzi (2008) 791-792, 887-888.
659 An insightful table was made by: Triebert (1894) 123-124. Laroche (1982) 112-120 argues that there was a process of numerical rationalization behind the establishment of the reigns of the Alban kings, in which each generation ruled for about thirty years, with the exception of the first and last kings, who ruled for 43 years. Similar numerical generalizations appear in the list of Roman kings. Cf: Forsythe (2005) 98-99.
famous gentes of the Roman Republic and their claims to a mythical lineage.\endnote{Toponyms include the kings named Tiberinus, Aventinus and Palatinus; kings like Capys and Atys refer to Greek traditions, and connections with influential families are clearly recognizable in the cases of Amulius (forefather of the Aemulii) and Agrippa. See for a full overview of this tradition and its many variations: Grandazzi (2008) 731-890 (figure 22 for the fifteen versions of the list of kings). For Republican gentes tracing their ancestry back to Trojan roots see: Farney (2007) 53-60, Wiseman (1974) 153-164. The most well-known example is of course that of the gens Iulia, who claimed descent from Aeneas and thus Venus through their forefather Iulius (also known as Ascanius) and celebrated this link in the town of Bovillae. See for the connection between the Iulii, Bovillae and the mons Albanus, pages 198-199.} Although it was long thought to be located at the foot of the mons Albanus, the town itself has never been found, nor can its alleged destruction – described by Livy as a total war between Rome and Alba Longa resulting in the total demolition of Alba and the deportation of its population to Rome – be traced anywhere in the archaeological landscape around monte Cavo (or anywhere else).\endnote{Livy (1.22-28) claims that it was king Tullius Hostilius who waged war on Alba Longa and eventually ordered it to be destroyed to the ground, with its entire population transferred to Rome. For the academic tradition that identifies Alba Longa at the foot of the monte Cavo: Grandazzi (2008) 445-514, where he also discussed theories that identified the mythical village with present day Albano Laziale and Castel Gandolfo. In the ancient literary sources, there is little coherence or specificity: authors place Alba Longa on a (fortified) hill on or near mons Albanus, at the shores of the lake or in the valley towards Aricia.} However, concluding at this point that there simply never was an Alba Longa is too easy, as the mythical place held such an important position in the Roman mythical landscape that it became associated with the physical landscape as well. As we will see further ahead, the communities that in historical times occupied the Alban hills began to identify with the traditions surrounding Alba Longa, and religious functionaries – perhaps in some way involved in the celebrations of the feriae Latinae – received titles that also alluded to the mythical origins.\endnote{See section 4.7, ‘Cult officials on the mons Albanus’, from page 179 onwards.} The legendary history of Rome’s mother city has generated lengthy debates amongst classicists and archaeologists, and it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore these arguments in full detail. What concerns us here is that the feriae Latinae may have contained elements that referred to Alba Longa and Rome’s legendary genealogy, such as the tradition of the populi Albenses and the mysterious custom of oscillare, but that the festivities certainly did not revolve solely around these elements. As Alexandre Grandazzi states in his monumental work on the subject, the name of the hill itself – mons Albanus - may be the most important link between the origin myths, the landscape and the cult practice. In the many references to the yearly celebrations, ancient authors mention the cult site frequently and there can be no doubt that the feriae Latinae took place on a peak that the Romans identified and described as the mons Albanus.\endnote{Grandazzi (2008) 572 counts 18 examples of the expression in monte (or montem) Albano (or Albanum), 14 instances of in Albano (or Albanum) monte and one fragment in which the location of the festivities is labeled as Albano in monte. Examples include, but are not limited to passages in Varro (Ling. 6.25), Cicero (Div. 1.11.18; Att. 1.3) and Livy (1.31.1-4; 5.17.2; 7.28.6-7). For further examples and analysis, see the following section on the ritual proceedings during the feriae Latinae.} How and when the hilltop acquired this name is uncertain, but Grandazzi...
suggests that this was at a rather late stage of the developing legendary tradition in Rome, when the festivities of the feriae Latinae had long been established. In fact, as Cornell suggested earlier, the prominence of the cult on monte Cavo may have been the reason that the origin myth landed there in the first place.

Where does this leave us? What the overview of literary sources has shown so far, is that the origins of the festivities on the mons Albanus were explained by a variety of literary traditions, which differ greatly and in many instances clearly contradict each other. One could hypothesise that the different narratives can be harmonized by assuming that there was a pre-existing festival on the hilltop, at which Latin communities worshipped collectively and perhaps reinforced their political relations; this religio-political status quo was broken by the expansionism of the Romans, after which the history of the festival was rewritten to account for the dominant position of Rome in the region and connect it to the mythical town of Alba Longa. It must be emphasized however, that there is no way to substantiate this hypothesis. More importantly, as was underlined before in this thesis: smoothing out discrepancies between these foundation stories may not be a valid approach to begin with, as it responds to a modern ‘drive toward coherence’ and an anxiety of multiplicity that is not necessarily shared by the ancient authors under discussion. Besides, the chronology of the feriae Latinae becomes even more confusing when the archaeological material is taken into consideration, as we will see below. What we can however deduce from the surviving narratives is that the deep historical roots of the feriae Latinae were explicitly connected with Rome’s position in Latium and with its role and function in the larger world. The festivities were a reflection upon the region’s earliest history, but at the same time the ceremonies shaped the form and significance of this history, making them a ritual performance of both memory and identity (politics). To study this process further, this chapter will continue with an analysis of the ritual proceedings on the Alban mount during the feriae Latinae and the way they are described and explained by ancient authors.

4.3 Carrem petere: a celebration of community and hierarchy

As mentioned earlier, the evidence for the cult of Jupiter Latiaris is quite different from the material discussed in the chapters on Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita. Whereas many of the sources on Diana and Juno consider the nature and appearance of the goddesses, it is very difficult to establish the exact identity of the deity that was worshipped on the Alba mount. In the surviving sources,

---

666 See the introduction, pages 14-16.
there is no description of the deeds, needs or appearance of the god, and he appears only in the context of the feriae Latinae. The sources on the feriae Latinae do provide us with a description of the rites performed during the festival and the rules surrounding them. In relation to this, there is another notable difference: the cults of Juno Sospita and Diana Nemorensis had a connection with Roman state religion, but there were many signs of private worship as well. In the case of Jupiter Latiaris, the picture is different: here, there are few indications of individual worship and the feriae Latinae, which were so obviously related to the affairs of the Roman state, seem to be the main occasion in which Jupiter Latiaris became manifest as a god. This brings up a number of questions, of which many may have more to do with the deplorable state of the (archaeological) evidence than with the character of the god under discussion. We will come back to these issues later, but for now it is important to acknowledge the importance of the descriptions of the feriae Latinae for our understanding of the god and the cult, and to study them in further detail.668

Although there are quite a number of sources on the proceedings during the Latin festival, there are major uncertainties as well, some of which have already been discussed. It is unclear, for example, what the relation of the mysterious rite of oscillatio – the swinging of people or votives – to the other celebrations was.669 In a poem on his consulship of 63 BC (preserved in de Divinatione) Cicero mentions the festival and raises another issue: he labels the ceremony a lastratio (a purification ritual) and says that the area of the sacrifice was sprinkled with milk, instead of the more usual libation of wine or water.670 Modern observers have interpreted this as a sign of the archaic, pastoral roots of the rites and have related it to the promotion of fertility, but since there are no other indications for this, the suggestion that the feriae Latinae originally were an agricultural festival seems all too speculative.671 Also interesting, but without further context, is Lucan’s remark about a ‘bonfire which marks the end of the Latin festival’.672 In Lucan’s account, the fire splits into two flames as one of the many prodigia surrounding the march of Caesar on Rome, and thus forecasted dissonance and civil war. We may assume that a huge fire on top of a hill that could be seen in the entire region was an appropriate ending for a festival that celebrated Latin unity, but again, we have no other references to this, and that silence in the sources could be telling.

668 See for the discussion of the archaeological remains: pages 164ff.
669 See pages 152-153.
670 Cic. De Div. 1.11.18: [...] lastrati et laeto mactasti lacte Latinas. See note 693.
671 See, for example: Grandazzi (2008) 516, Pasqualini (1996) 221, note 17, Alföldi (1963) 20ff. Libations with milk were made during the Parilia, the festival of shepherds and herds directed at the ancient god Pales. Rumina and Cunina, tutelary goddesses of childbirth, breast milk and the cradle, were honoured with libations of milk as well.
672 Luc. 1.549-525: Vestali raptus ab ara / ignis et ostendens confectas flamma Latinas / scinditur in partis giminique cacumine surgit / Thebanos imitata rogos. (‘From Vesta’s altar the fire vanished suddenly; and the bonfire which marks the end of the Latin Festival split into two and rose, like the pyre of the Thebans, with double crest’).
With so many insecurities and fragmentary passages, what do we know about the festival? Dionysius’ account of the way Tarquinius Suberbus established the *feriae* as a celebration of Roman and Latin bonds provides a rather extensive narrative of the sacrifice that took place, as he claims, ‘to his day’. As we have seen, his version of the origins of the festival is much disputed, but does this also go for his description of the offerings? Dionysius relates that the Latin cities each brought a part of the sacrificial meal to the hilltop, where a communal festival was celebrated in honour of Jupiter Latialis, which ended with the sacrifice of a bull. Next, under the supervision of the Romans, each of the 47 Latin cities received an appointed share of the meat. If Dionysius’ description can be trusted, this means that the sacrifices during the *feriae Latinae* were as much a celebration of the relations between Rome and Latium, as they were a confirmation of the Roman superiority over the area.

But what did it mean to perform a sacrifice under the superintendence of the Romans? A fragment of Livy provides more details, as it mentions a problem that occurred in 176 BC, when the magistrates from Lanuvium had apparently made a mistake that had dramatic consequences:

The Latin festival was held on the third day before the Nones of May, and a religious scruple arose because at the sacrifice of one victim the magistrate of Lanuvium had not prayed for the Roman people, the Quirites. When this was reported to the Senate and the Senate had referred the question to the college of pontiffs, the decree of the pontiffs was that the Latin festival should be repeated, since it had not been correctly performed, and that the people of Lanuvium, to whom was due the necessity of the repetition, should furnish the victims. Their religious fear was increased by the fact that Gnaeus Cornelius the consul fell on his return from the Alban Mount, and, paralyzed in some of his limbs, set out for Aquae Cumananae and, his illness growing more severe, died at Cumae. [...] The consul Quintus Petilius, as soon as the auspices permitted, was ordered to hold an election to choose his colleague and to proclaim the Latin festival; the election he declared for the third day before the Nones of August, the festival for the third day before the Ides of August. [...] While the two consuls were delayed first by religious observances, then one consul by the death of the other and the election and the repetition of the Latin festival.

---

673 See pages 145-146 of this chapter.
674 Liv. 41.16.1-7: *Latiae feriae fuere ante diem tertium nonas Maias, in quibus, quia in una hostia magistratus Lanuvinus precatus non erat populo Romano Quiritium, religioni fuit. Id cum ad senatum relatum esset senatusque ad pontificum collegium refereisset, pontificibus, quia non recte factae Latinae essent, instaurari Latinas placuit, Lanuvinos, quorum opera instaurandae essent, hostias praebere. Accesserat ad religionem, quod Cn. Cornelius consul ex monte Albano rediens concidit et, parte membrorum captus, ad Aquas Cumananas profectus ingrauescente morbo Cumis descessit. [...]
From this incidence, we learn a number of things about the festival. Firstly, it was apparently customary for the officials from the other towns to pray for the Roman people, *pro populo Romano Quiritium*. When this was neglected, the entire sacrifice was invalid and had to be performed again. This must have been an impractical and quite expensive affair, for which on this occasion the town of Lanuvium had to pay. When, however, one of the cities felt treated unfairly and had not received its fair share, the consequences were the same: in 199 BC the festivities were repeated because the representatives from Ardea complained about their part of the meat; in 190 BC the same thing happened because of the Laurentes.

It turns out that these unsuccessful and therefore repeated *feriae Latinae* were no isolated cases. From the *Fasti feriarum Latinarum*, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, we learn that there are several years for which multiple festivals are recorded, both in the Republic and in the Empire. Political upheaval – like the death of the consul in 176 BC – appears to have contributed to the required reprises, as for example becomes clear from the first entry in the *Fasti*. In the year 449 BC, when the Republic was restored after the Decemvirate, the festival was apparently held three times. Livy records a severe winter storm that put an end to the proceedings in 179 BC, so that religious scruple led the pontiffs to announce a repetition. Finally, there is a remarkable report of an Etruscan *haruspex* who was very helpful in the long war preceding the capture of Veii. After an unusual rise of the Alban lake in the middle of August, causing great anxiety in Rome, he advised that the gods would only allow the Romans to take Veii if they dug a drainage from the lake to the sea. Connected with this prodigy, the soothsayer discovered that the gods were unhappy because the *feriae Latinae* had been announced for the wrong date. Only in 396...

---

*Consult* Q. Petilius, cum primum per auspiciam posset, collegae subrogando comitia habere iussus et Latinas edicere, comitia in ante diem tertium nonas Sextiles, Latinas in ante diem tertium idus Sextiles edixit. [...] Dum consules primum religiones, deinde alterum alterius mors et comitia et Latinarum instauratio impediant.

675 See Grandazzi (2008) 521-522 for some explorations on the ritual function of the prayer, which the author assumes was delivered by the magistrates of the Latin towns one after another, after which the Roman delegation offered prayers to the god on behalf of all of them.

676 Ardea: Liv. 32.1.9; Laurentum: Liv. 37.3.4

677 See pages 175-178 for the discussion of the inscription.

678 See page 176.

679 Liv. 40.45.2: *Itaque Latinas nox subito coorta et intolerabilis tempestas in monte turbavit instaurataeque sunt ex decreto pontificum*. The fact that the weather had such large influence on the festival, may be seen as support for Lugli’s theory that it was in fact not conducted in a sanctuary building, but in the open air. See: Lugli (1930) 166-167 and pages 174-175 of this chapter for further discussion.

680 Liv. 5.15.4-11. Apart from the sudden rise of the lake, five *prodigia* are reported around *mons Albanus*: the sky was seen on fire in 113 BC (Obs. 38; Plin. *NH* 2.100; rains of stones hit the mountain in 212 BC (Liv. 25.7.7-9); the canal of the Alban lake turned blood-red in 209 BC (Liv. 27.11.2); a statue of Jupiter and a tree near the temple were struck by lightning in the same year (Liv. 27.11.1) and finally, a small temple of Juno mysteriously turned northward overnight in 56 BC (Cas. Dio 39.20.1).
BC, when the canal was finished and the date of the festival had been reset, could Veii be conquered. 681

From Livy’s description cited above, it is also clear that it was the duty of the consuls to establish a date for the feriae. This was done by means of a senatus consultum, as we learn from a letter from Marcus Caelius Rufus to Cicero in Cilicia, in which he mocks the consuls of the year 51 BC who had not succeeded in passing a single decree through the Senate other than that about the feriae Latinae. 682 This means that the festival on the Alban mount was not only repeatable but also moveable, and thus it is labelled by Varro as one of the feriae conceptivae (‘festivals without a fixed date’) along with the Compitalia, the Ambarvalia and others. 683 It is the only festival in this category that was decided upon by the consuls instead of the priests, and, as such, it seems to have been one of the moments that highlighted consular power and initiated the political and military imperium. 684

The authority of the consuls was strengthened further by the fact that every magistrate in Rome was required— at least by the time of the late Republic— to travel to the mons Albanus and attend the rites. Even the tribunes of the plebs, who were usually not allowed to leave the city, participated in the festival. 685 Because of the collective absence, a special praefectus urbi feriarum Latinarum was appointed, who was responsible for the administrative duties in the city while all of its magistrates were away. 686

The feriae Latinae, consequently, constituted a significant moment in the ritual year, and many if not all of Rome’s elite were involved in it. Adding to this importance, was the fact that Roman magistrates with imperium were only allowed to go on a military campaign after the rites of the Latin festival had been conducted. Gaius Flaminius, the designated consul of 217 BC, learned that ignoring this custom could have severe consequences. According to Livy, he feared that his enemies would manipulate the auspicia for the date of the feriae Latinae to delay his departure to the troops

681 Liv. 5.17.1-6; 5.19.1. See further, on this case as an example of the value attributed to individual wisdom of soothsayers: Beard, North and Price (1998) 168-169. Cf: Grandazzi (2008) 37-41, who believes that the sudden rise of the lake was an historical event, as a similar volcanic phenomenon recently (in the 1980’s) occurred in West Africa.

682 Cic. Ad Fam. 8.6.3: Consules autem habemus summa diligentia; adhuc s.c. nisi de feriis Latinis nullum facere potuerunt. (‘Our Consuls are paragons of conscientiousness—to date they have not succeeded in getting a single decree through the Senate except about the Latin festival’).

683 Var. Ling. Lat. 6.25: De statutis diebus dixi; de annalibus nec die statutis dicam [...] Similiter Latinae feriae dies conceptivus, dictus a Latinis populis, quibus in Alboano monte ex sacris carmen petere fuit ius cum Romanis, a quibus Latinis Latinae dictae. (‘The fixed days are those of which I have spoken; now I shall speak of the annual festivals which are not fixed on a special day [...] Likewise the Latinae feriae ‘Latin Holiday’ is an appointed day, named from the peoples of Latium, who had equal right with the Romans to get a share of the meat at the sacrifices on the Alban Mount: from these Latin peoples it was called the Latin Holiday.’) On the feriae Conceptivae in general, see: Rüpke (1995a) 488-490.


685 Dion. Hal. 8.87.6; Liv. 22.1.6; Strab. 5.3.2. Cf: Alföldi (1963) 32, Simón (2011) 117.

686 Gell. NA 14.8. See, also for the games that were probably held during the feriae Latinae in the city of Rome, pages 191ff.
stationed in Ariminium, so he fled the city before he had performed his religious duties.\footnote{And thus, he left the city not as a consul but as a \textit{privatus}. Liv. 21.63.5; \textit{[..] privatus clam in provinciam abit.}} This of course roused the Senate, which questioned his authority as a consul and called him back to Rome. Flamininus refused and set out to meet Hannibal at Lake Trasimene, where the disastrous battle ended his life and brought Rome to a state of panic.\footnote{Liv. 22.1.6: the Senate is angry with Flamininus and repudiates his right to the \textit{auspicia}; in caput 22.6 he eventually loses the epic battle against Hannibal.} Although Cicero and Valerius Maximus mention the religious negligence of the consul, they do not comment on the \textit{feriae Latinae} specifically, and Flamininus’ incident mainly seems to function as a negative \textit{exemplum} in Livy’s narrative.\footnote{Cic. \textit{De Inv.} 2.17; Val. Max. 5.4.5. See, for Flamininus as a negative \textit{exemplum} in Roman prose: Lushkov (2015) 32-38.} Even so, there are several fragments that confirm the religious obligation of staying – ‘being detained’ – in Rome until the sacrifices on the Alban Mount were performed correctly, especially in dangerous circumstances like the Hannibalic war.\footnote{Liv. 25.12.1: \textit{Romae consules praetoresque usque ad ante diem quintum kal. Maias Latinae tenuerunt. Eo die perpetrato sacro in monte in suas quisque provincias proficiscuntur.} (‘At Rome the consuls and praetors were detained by the Latin festival until the 26th of April. After performing the rites on that day on the Mount, each set out for his assignment’).} From the perspective of the ancient sources, the violation of this rule was considered a serious break of the \textit{pax deorum}. Cassius Dio even suggests a direct relation between the negligence of the consuls in 43 BC and the battles and murders of the Civil Wars:

\[\ldots\] Furthermore, the consuls took their departure just before the \textit{feriae Latinae}, and there is no instance that has happened and the Romans have fared well. At any rate, on this occasion also, a vast multitude of the people, including the two consuls, perished, some immediately and some later, and also many of the knights and senators, including the most prominent. For in the first place the battles, and in the second place the murders at home which occurred again as in the Sullan regime, destroyed all the flower of the citizens except those who perpetrated the murders.\footnote{Cass. Dio 46.33.4: \textit{[..] καὶ προσέτι καὶ το τοὺς ἑπάτους τὴν ἔξοδον πρὸ τῶν Λατίνων ἀνοχῶν ποιήσασθαι: οὔ γάρ ἔστιν ὅπλον τούτους γενόμενον καλῶς ἀπῆλλαξαν. ἀμέλει καὶ τότε οἱ ὑπατοὶ ἀμφότεροι καὶ έκ τοῦ ὀμίλου πάμπολο πλήθος, τὸ μὲν ἐν τῷ παρόντι τὸ δὲ καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, τῶν τε ἔπεμψαν καὶ τῶν βουλευτῶν πολλοί, καὶ οἱ μάλιστα ἀνὰ πρῶτους ὄντες, ἀπόλοντο. τούτῳ μὲν γὰρ οἱ μάχαι, τούτῳ δὲ καὶ οἱ οἰκιοί σφαγι τὸν Σύλλειον τρόπον ἀδύνα τε εὐνόμεναι πάν τι περ ἴν ἄνθος αὐτῶν, ἔξω τῶν δρώντων σφάς, ἐφέσπεραν.}}

Considering the military issues at stake, the length of the festival, the prohibition for consuls and praetors to leave the city beforehand and the possibility of a reprisal if the proceedings were executed wrongly, one would assume that it was in everybody’s interest to celebrate the \textit{feriae Latinae} as early as possible. Livy specifically mentions the festival in relation to (hasty) war
preparations a number of times.\textsuperscript{692} In the poem on his consulship in 63 BC, already mentioned, Cicero describes the \textit{mons Albanus} as being covered in snow, suggesting that he presided over the rites very early in the year.\textsuperscript{693} At the same time, there are references to celebrations later in the year and the \textit{Fasti} show that most of the festivals – as far as we can reconstruct the dates – took place in May, with celebrations up to August in some years and only a few entries in winter. Does this mean that the magistrates with imperium waited that long, did they perhaps return to Rome for the celebrations or were not all of them present during the rites?

Unfortunately, we are not that well informed, even on some of these basic features of the event. Cassius Dio, in a description of the \textit{prodigia} that occurred when Agrippa died in 12 BC, says that the house in which the consuls stayed on the Alban Mount was hit by lightning. This suggests that some arrangements had been made to house the magistrates there during the \textit{feriae Latinae} – perhaps for a number of days.\textsuperscript{694} But other clues in the literature are lacking and the archaeological evidence, as we will see further ahead, is not very helpful. So was it even necessary to provide accommodation on the mountain itself? With regards to the duration of the festival, Dionysius of Halicarnassus seems to suggest it was. He explains that a third day was added in 493 BC, to celebrate the \textit{foedus Cassianum} and the end of the troubles with the plebs. Originally, he says, Tarquinius established a one-day festival, and a second day was added when the kings were expelled from the city.\textsuperscript{695} Plutarch even states that a fourth day was added to the \textit{feriae} by Camillus in 367 BC.\textsuperscript{696} There is reason to doubt this evidence on the length of the festivities. Dionysius claims that the supervision of the \textit{feriae Latinae} was in the hands of the aediles from 493 onwards and that it were both rites and games that took place on the \textit{mons Albanus}. As Smith and others have observed, the leading role of the aediles is highly unlikely, since it conflicts with the many sources that give this position to the consuls.\textsuperscript{697} Furthermore, there is no indication that games were part of the celebrations on the hilltop – although they were perhaps held in the city of Rome on the same days, as we will see shortly.\textsuperscript{698} The aediles are better known for their management of the \textit{ludi} in Rome, and indeed in his discussion on the events of 367, Livy adds extra days to the \textit{ludi Magni}.\textsuperscript{699} We cannot be sure of the exact relation between the narratives, but there seems to be a kind of confusion between

\begin{footnotes}
\item[692] Liv. 44.49.4; 44.22.16.
\item[693] Cic. de Div. 1.11.18: \textit{[... cum tumulos Albano in monte nivalis / lustrasti et laeto mactasti lacte Latinas.}
\item[694] Cass. Dio 54.29.7. Cf: Simón (2011) 125, who hypothesizes that the consuls spent the night there on the eve of the sacrifice, the rites being performed in the morning after the auspices.
\item[695] Dion. Hal. \textit{Ant. Rom} 6.95.1-3.
\item[696] Plut. Cam. 42.
\item[698] See pages 191ff.
\item[699] Liv. 6.42.2.
\end{footnotes}
different festivals and, as Smith argues, the duration of the *feriae Latinae* may well have remained the same – just one day – throughout its history.

As we assemble the literary evidence, a confusing picture emerges. Many of the basic characteristics of the *feriae Latinae* – such as the duration of the festival, the exact ritual proceedings and the number of Roman officials and Latin allies involved – remain contested, and it is hard (if not impossible) to reconstruct a coherent image of what exactly happened on the Alban mount. At the same time, our sources leave little doubt that the *feriae Latinae* were considered an important part of the religious calendar in Rome, and a many of the sources we have on the festival examines its religious and historical significance. In the descriptions of the rites, the earliest expansionist history of Rome is symbolically evoked and connected to contemporary political and religious reality. Once a year, Romans and Latins celebrated their shared identity on *mons Albanus*, but the joint ceremony was clearly rooted in the Rome’s hegemony over both the physical and the religious landscape. The participation of so many of Rome’s magistrates confirmed this political prominence, and the *feriae Latinae* seem to have been one of the defining moments of consular authority. Only after the sacrifices to Jupiter Latiaris had been performed, were the magistrates with *imperium* allowed to leave for their provinces. Consequently, the conquests of the Roman Republic and early Empire were always preceded by a celebration and revocation of the distant Latin past. In the context of the growing Roman realm, the celebration of Latinity stood for the celebration of unity under Roman rule. As we will see further ahead in this chapter, the cult may have continued to flourish because of the evolving significance of this metaphorical model. Celebrating Latinity and the Latin past meant, in many ways, celebrating being Roman: a union that was also reflected in the close relation between Latin Jupiter and Roman Jupiter, as the final part of this chapter will show.

Before we expand on these issues, we must return to one of the issues this chapter started with: the sphere of influence and appearance of the god worshipped on the *mons Albanus*. In the literary sources discussed so far, the character of Jupiter Latiaris was hardly addressed. Considering his connection with Roman war efforts and the political arena, we may assume that he was perceived as a protective or guardian deity, but there are no passages that specify this and we know nothing of the expectations and wishes of worshippers that visited the cult site at the Alban Mount. In fact, apart from the Roman magistrates and their Latin allies, the literary sources reveal nothing about the identity of individual worshippers. As in previous chapters, the archaeological remains and votive gifts discovered on the hill, and epigraphic testimonies of the cult, may shed some light on on the organisation of the cult site, the diversity of the worshippers, and their communication

---

700 For the emphasis on consular authority, see especially Simón (2011) 116-132.
701 See pages 191ff. The paradigmatic status of the Latin past can also be observed in the prayers of the *ludi Saeculares*, where Latium is portrayed as the birthplace of Roman imperial ambition. See Cooley (2006) 334-336.
with its presiding deity. The following sections of this chapter will show that it is very difficult to align these different categories of source material and, just like in the chapters on Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita, it is worth emphasizing that the analysis cannot and should not result in a coherent, all-encompassing image of Jupiter Latiaris. Perhaps even more so than in previous chapters, however, the material evidence invites us to think about the contextual nature of the sources we have on the religious landscape of the Alban hills. The literary discourse suggests that the *feriae Latinae* created a close connection between the mythical and semi-historical past, contemporary cult practice and political authority, but is this reflected in the material relics of the cult as well?

### 4.4 Archaeological remains – or the lack thereof

While the sanctuary of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban Mount was one of the most famous – if not the most famous - sanctuaries of Latium Vetus, it is also one of the least investigated cults in the region.\(^{702}\) As will be immediately clear for the modern visitor to the hill, this is partly due to the terrible state of conservation of the sanctuary and the inaccessibility of the site, which was a former German and Italian air force base and is now an important centre of telecommunication, with many large antennas dominating the landscape (figure 4.3). Since the 1930’s, no serious archaeological investigations have been undertaken and the results of earlier campaigns in the late 19\(^{th}\) century were published irregularly and unscientifically. Apart from this lack of up-to-date archaeological data, the research into the cult of Jupiter Latiaris is also complicated by the fact that the data that are available are very hard to interpret and almost impossible to align with the literary evidence. While the latter category of source material – as we have seen earlier in this chapter – suggests that the cult on the Alban mount was important, well-known and well-visited, the material evidence found thus far does not correspond with that image. On the contrary, the sanctuary, to our current state of knowledge, hardly left any traces in the archaeological landscape.\(^{703}\)

This apparent scarcity of material evidence is surprising, but is it also indicative of the status of the sanctuary? Of course, any analysis of this problem must take into account the poor circumstances of conservation and the lack of proper research into the remains of the *mons Albanus*. In a strict sense, the evidence does not allow us to formulate any definitive conclusion as to the nature of the worship on the hill until further excavations or geophysical examinations have been conducted. At the same time, even with these methodological issues taken into consideration, the sharp contrast with the other monumental sanctuaries in Latium is remarkable. This may invite us

---

\(^{702}\) For an extensive overview of the archaeological research conducted on the hill and further bibliography, see Cecamore (1993) 19, notes 1-2.

\(^{703}\) Cecamore (1996) 49.
to reflect on the organization, form and character of the cult on the Alban mount and the deity that
was at the centre of it. Whereas we have seen that the monumental layout of the sanctuaries of
Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita was closely connected with euergetism and the expression of a
specific local identity, the worship of Jupiter Latiaris does not seem to have generated this
phenomenon (to the same degree). As Christopher Smith has suggested, an explanation may be
found in the communal character of the cult, which celebrated unity between the Latins and was
perhaps not the right location to promote local pride.\footnote{Smith (2012) 275.}

While that may certainly be of importance, it does not fully explain the scarcity of signs of private worship on the hill. I would, therefore, tentatively argue that the lack of physical remains for this cult is also related to the fact that this was not a year-round functioning cult site like the other sanctuaries of Latium Vetus, but that the worship of Jupiter Latiaris was mainly confined to the day(s) that were assigned to him in the Roman religious calendar, the \textit{feriae Latinae}. It was during these very public and political festivities that the deity showed his concern for the Roman state, in a symbolic celebration of \textit{Latinitas} that survived and evolved over the centuries but that did not find much reflection in the private sphere.

Was there a temple for Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban mount? Even for such a basic question, there has been an extensive academic debate.\footnote{For the academic debate on the existence of a temple see: Finocchi (1980) 156-158, Grandazzi (2008) 118-122. In a general sense, one can observe that in earlier academic literature it was taken for granted that the cult of Jupiter Latiaris had to be in a temple, and the earliest excavators were mainly trying to find that structure. Later observers, most notably Lugli (1930) 162-168, have suggested that the cult could have been performed outside, in an open air sanctuary that lacked many of the monumental characteristics of the other Latin sanctuaries. In recent work, however, the possibility of a more traditional temple was brought forward again, mainly because of data collected from archival sources, most notably that of the order of the Passionisti that had a convent on the hill. For the latter, see pages 171ff of this chapter and Cecamore (1993) 19-44, Cecamore (1996) 49-66.}

In the literary sources there are very few comments that refer to actual buildings or other structures on the hill. As we have seen, Dionysius of Halicarnassus refers to the establishment of a common sanctuary (ἱερὸν κοινὸ) but this expression is too vague to derive any idea on the actual shape of the cult site.\footnote{See pages 145-146 of this chapter.}

Perhaps the most illustrative reference to the physical surroundings of the site comes from Livy, who – as part of the many prodigies that surrounded the arrival of Hannibal in Italy – claims that ‘on the Alban Mount a statue of Jupiter and a tree near the temple had been struck by lightning’.\footnote{Liv. 27.11.1: […] In Albano monte tacta de caelo erant signum lovis arborque templo propinqua. Cf: footnote 680.}

The terminology of Roman cult sites is notoriously difficult to interpret, but here \textit{templum} seems to refer to a built structure (instead of an open-air sacred space).\footnote{\textit{Templum} was used to describe sacred spaces of varying nature, of which the sanctuary building was just one. For a useful introduction to these differences in terminology, see: Dubourdieu and Scheid (2000) 59-80.} This is a single occurrence however, and it is perhaps significant that the word \textit{aedes}, which was most often used to label temple buildings in Roman
literature, does not appear in the sources on the *feriae Latinae* at all.\(^{709}\) Two references to the built environment of the *mons Albanus* in Cassius Dio’s Roman history provide information as well, but these descriptions of prodigies are not very illuminating. The author declares that in 56 BC, while Rome suffered from bribery and corruption, ‘the statue of Jupiter erected on the Alban Mount’ was struck by a thunderbolt.\(^{710}\) This, consequently, seems to confirm Livy’s claim that the cult site was adorned with at least one statue. Furthermore, in a passage that we have already cited in another context, Cassius Dio mentions a house that accommodated the consuls during the *feriae Latinae* being hit by lightning after the death of Agrippa.\(^{711}\) All in all, apart from the statue(s) that were apparently placed on the cult site, the literary material is not very helpful for our reconstruction of the material surroundings for the cult of Jupiter Latiaris. It would be methodologically unsound to draw conclusions from this silence in the sources, but it is nevertheless remarkable that, considering the weight and importance that is attributed to the *feriae Latinae* in the ancient literature, there is so little attention given to the physical surrounding of the rites.\(^{712}\)

Notwithstanding this lack of literary leads, or perhaps precisely because of this lack, it is useful to look at the archaeological investigations that have been conducted at the Alban mount. As mentioned before, the state of research and conservation is quite discouraging, but thanks to earlier publications and the archival documents investigated by Claudia Cecamore, some tentative observations may be made.\(^{713}\) The appearance of the hill is nowadays dominated by a large number of television antennas, which are scattered around a now largely abandoned building that was employed as a military base by the Germans in the Second World War and afterwards by the Italian air force.\(^{714}\) In the early 20th century, the building was used as a hotel; before that it was in the possession of the Colonna family, who acquired it after an earthquake in 1806 and installed an astronomic observatory in it in 1873.\(^{715}\) Before that, however, the edifice was built as a convent, inhabited from 1723 by monks of the Trinitarian order and later (from 1757 onwards) occupied by the order of the Passionists. The latter executed a large-scale renovation including the construction of a new church in 1783, which was payed for by Henry Benedict Stuart, who was the cardinal duke

---

\(^{709}\) Grandazzi (2008) 120.

\(^{710}\) Cass. Dio 39.15: τὸ δὲ θείον κεραυνὸν κατ’ ἄρχας εὐθὺς τοῦ ἐχόμενος ἔτους τὸ ἀγαλμα τοῦ Δίὸς τοῦ ἐν τῷ Ἀλβανῷ ἱδρυμένου βάλων τὸν κάθοδον τοῦ Πτολεμαίου χρόνον τινὰ ἐπέσχε. (‘Heaven at the very beginning of the next year struck with a thunderbolt the statue of Jupiter erected on the Alban Mount, and so delayed the return of Ptolemy for some time’).

\(^{711}\) Cass. Dio 54.29.7.

\(^{712}\) This is in contrast to the literary sources in our previous casestudies, where for example the shape and size of the temple of Diana was extensively discussed (chapter II, pages 61ff) and where the prodigies in Lanuvium unambiguously referred to Juno Sospita’s temple (chapter III, pages 86ff).


\(^{714}\) Several antennas were placed illegally and juridical attempts to remove them and make the site more accessible to visitors have thus far had little success.

\(^{715}\) See, for the stages of modern building activity on the hill: Grandazzi (2008) 120-122.
of York and last in line of the famous British crown pretenders. It is evident that especially the last reconstruction severely affected the archaeological record on the Alban mount, and an early commentator has remarked that it was easier for Henry to 'knock down an ancient temple than to revive an ancient throne'.

But in fact – as Cecamore, Grandazzi and others have remarked before – the transformation of the area had begun long before 1783. Pius II, who wrote about his visit to the Alban Mount in 1453, mentions a circular wall and some large stones, as well as a hermitage, which was apparently already built on top of the ruins of an old church. If this is correct, it means that before the two successive convent buildings, at least two earlier structures occupied the area. These interventions will have profoundly changed the landscape and, considering the lack of proper archaeological research, it is unclear to what extent the builders used or removed the ancient ruins. In any case, in the 16th century, a traveler claims to have seen a large quantity of monumental remains. Much later, in 1672, Piranesi made an etching of the Alban lake with several architectural remains that he claims came from the sanctuary of Jupiter Latiaris, such as Doric columns and ‘tegole di terracotta’ (figure 4.4). Obviously, Piranesi’s drawing should be studied with extreme caution, as he is well-known for his creative interpretations and exaggerations of ancient monuments. The remarks of some of his travelling contemporaries however, who mention large blocks and column fragments in the surroundings of monte Cavo as well, suggest that there may be at least a germ of truth in the fanciful drawing of the artist. All in all, the travel diaries that were written before the renovation of the convent by the Passionists provide perhaps little solid information on the archaeological area of the Alban mount, but they remind us that monumental remains that are completely vanished now may well have been partly visible in previous centuries.

For our understanding of the situation on top of the hill as it is today, we are largely dependent on the excavations of De Rossi from 1869 onwards, some scarcely published

---

716 The statement is that of the French historian Jean-Jacques Ampère (Histoire Romaine, 1862-1864) and is quoted by Grandazzi (2008) 121.
717 Pie II Commentarii, éd. Van Heck, 2, 709: Hunc (collem) pontifex ascendit. In cacumine planitiam reperit stadium aut amplius paulo in circuitu complexam. Antiqui per ambitum muri fundamenta extant et saxa ingentia ferro expolita et sacratum in medio dirutum, super cuius ruinis Dalmata quidam heremitorium sibi construxit congestis sine calce lapidibus. (‘The Pope climbed this hill, and on the summit found a plateau of about a stade, or a little more, within a perimeter. The foundations of ancient walls are preserved in their entire course, as well as huge stones smoothed by iron tools, and in the centre a ruined chapel, on whose ruins a man from Dalmatia had built a hermitage for himself by piling together the stones’). Text and translation adapted from: Hutchinson (1988) 91.
719 Piranesi, Descrizione e disegno dell’Emissario (1762).
720 Grandazzi (2008) 125 cites the works of Jerôme Lalande (Voyage en Italie, 1786) and Antonio Riccy (Memorie Storiche dell’antichissima Città di Alba Longa e dell’Albano moderno, 1787).
investigations by Giovannoni and Ricci in the years 1912-1914 and a more scientific but small-scale archaeological campaign by Lugli in the 1920’s.\textsuperscript{721} The results of these excavations were of course influenced by the limitations presented by the buildings of the convent, but even so may be considered poor. With regards to the structural remains, only a few fragments of Roman walls have been identified. De Rossi notes part of a wall in laterizio (brick), which was apparently removed immediately after it was found, but of which he claims that it was part of a large structure that had been the northern enclosure of the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{722} Lugli, through reviewing Giovannoni’s notes and through a series of trial trenches, discovered that underneath the 18\textsuperscript{th} century convent wall, there was a corresponding stretch of wall from the second century BC, consisting of a single course of ashlar of uncertain date.\textsuperscript{723} At least at the southwestern end of the hilltop, and possibly for the entire stretch, the antique enclosure wall thus seems to correspond with the modern enclosure. This is consistent with the 15\textsuperscript{th} century description provided by pope Pius II, who identified a circular wall as well during his visit to the hill.\textsuperscript{724} De Rossi’s piece of wall was much bigger and does not align with this; consequently it probably belonged to a different structure, which cannot be identified at the moment.\textsuperscript{725} The same is true for some of the other remains of walls that were discovered by De Rossi, but were not properly described nor situated.

Lugli notes that most of the garden of the convent, its surroundings and the southern slope of the hill were systematically researched by Giovannoni, but his trenches revealed only virgin soil (volcanic rock). Within the surroundings of the convent walls, the results were a bit more promising: two wells, a small cistern, some wall fragments and a part of the road leading up the hill were discovered.\textsuperscript{726} Lugli himself, taking up from this research, discovered a piece of Republican wall that was probably part of a small colonnade but had disappeared by the second century AD, when it was used as a foundation for a structure in brick that has now largely disappeared under the modern convent building.\textsuperscript{727} The biggest building discovered so far is from the second century BC as well, and with its several rooms it has the appearance of a house. A few water canals leading up to a well have been discovered, as well as some rough patches of white mosaic floor. All in all, the structure is hard to relate to the other fragmentary remains of the area, and even harder to the supposed sacred character of the hill. Lugli assembled the scattered findings and tried to establish a map of the area

\textsuperscript{722} De Rossi (1876) 319, Cecamore (1993) 20.
\textsuperscript{723} Lugli (1930) 166.
\textsuperscript{724} See previous page and note 717.
\textsuperscript{725} Cecamore (1993) 20.
\textsuperscript{726} Giovannoni (1912) 382.
\textsuperscript{727} Lugli (1930) 162-168.
within the convent enclosure (which was reworked by Cecamore, see figure 4.5), but many of the finds are highly uncertain and certainly do not add up to a coherent image.\textsuperscript{728}

On the basis of these architectural remains it is impossible to define the area as a sacred space, let alone to identify a temple. The other finds from the peak, which were mainly excavated during the campaigns of De Rossi and during earlier digs by the monks of the Passionist order, provide a little more clarity on this. Perhaps most significant are eight fragments of an inscribed calendar found on top of the hill during the excavations of De Rossi, known as the \textit{Festi feriarum Latinarum}.\textsuperscript{729} The calendar dates from the first century BC and contains the names of the consuls in charge of the \textit{feriae Latinae}, together with the dates on which the rites were conducted. The list, although only very fragmentarily preserved, gives us an interesting insight in the organization of the cult and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. What is important here, is that the inscription shows that the top of the hill that is now known as the monte Cavo was in antiquity known as the \textit{mons Albanus} and was in all likelihood the location of the \textit{feriae Latinae}. In other words, the inscription strongly connects the narratives about the festival to the physical landscape of the Alban hills and it definitively designates the summit of the mountain as a sacred space. With so many insecurities in both the literary and the material sources, it is an important piece of evidence.

Also quite revealing, is De Rossi’s discovery of a small lead pipe with the inscription \textit{cur(ator) aed(is) s(acrae)} on it – dated to the late first century BC or the early first century AD – which proves that there was at least one sacred edifice to be maintained on the hill.\textsuperscript{730} Of course, the cult of Jupiter Latiaris immediately springs to mind but in theory, the inscription could also refer to the \textit{aedes} of (Juno) Moneta, which according to Livy was dedicated on the \textit{mons Albanus} by Caius Cicereius in 167 BC.\textsuperscript{731} In any case, these finds help us establish with reasonable certainty that the area was used as a religious space during the Republic and early Empire, but they do not allow us to say much about the context of the rites, nor about the deity to which they were directed. The same conclusion can be drawn from the other materials found during the excavations of De Rossi, for which we have to rely on a written list because the material itself was lost not long after it had been excavated.\textsuperscript{732}

\textsuperscript{728} Part of this outline is a relatively large structure on the eastern side of the hilltop, which seems to have several chambers and a different orientation from the rest of the walls. According to De Rossi, the structure was built in \textit{opus reticulatum}. Like the other remains on the former convent grounds, it is unfortunately not accessible for further study at the moment.

\textsuperscript{729} CIL I 55; Cecamore (1996) 65-66, plate 4. See, for a discussion of the text, pages 175ff.

\textsuperscript{730} CIL XIV 2233: \textit{cur(ator) aed(is) s(acrae)}. De Rossi (1876) 330 reconstructs the inscription in the plural

\textsuperscript{731} Liv. 45.15.10: \textit{Eodem anno C. Cicereius aedem Monetae in monte Albano dedicavit quinquennio post quam vovit.}

\textsuperscript{732} The finds were in the possession of the Sforza Cesarini family in Genzano, but were given back to the Italian authorities and subsequently disappeared. Cf: Cecamore (1993) 22.
Rossi’s inventory they have been catalogued and analysed by Cecamore.733 The picture that emerges from this is not very remarkable: a relatively small number of votive gifts, including (fragments of) small statuettes, animals, (fragments of) anatomical votives, pottery, fibulae, small bronze objects and some coins, of which only the pieces of aes rude have been preserved. The finds date from the 4th to the 2nd centuries BC and were probably discovered in the same votive deposit, resembling many other small votive deposits in the region.734 Of interest is the appearance of a considerable quantity of early archaic or even proto-urban pottery on De Rossi’s list, which – if we can trust the scholar’s description – may derive from an older votive deposit and may thus be related to the oldest phases of the cult practice.735 The inventory is concluded by a number of undocumented and now lost inscriptions, amongst which was possibly another fragment of the Fasti feriarum Latinarum.736

A final important clue regarding the use of the hill is the ancient road leading up to it. In its preserved condition, the basalt road circles up to the summit for about 5 kilometres and it has an average width of 2.8 metres (figure 4.6).737 Although restorations since the Middle Ages may have affected the appearance of the road in some places, it is still one of the best preserved examples in its kind. The basalt paving stones date to the Early Empire and large parts of the edge-stones have been preserved as well; some slabs even show protective phalli on the surface. Other stones in the upper part of the route have letters inscribed: V and N. They are on separate slabs, but almost always adjacent to each other. Older literature has suggested that the inscriptions refer to the guardian numen of the road (Numinis Via).738 After a visit, Mommsen proposed a different reading and suggested that the letters are signs of a restoration of which the – now unidentifiable – benefactor perhaps wanted to remind the visitors: V[etus] et N[ova] (via).739 The interpretation was accepted by Lugli and by later scholars, although further evidence is lacking.740 We may have doubts about this argument, especially considering the fact that there are no other signs of elite sponsorship along the route or on the peak of the hill, but unfortunately the evidence does not

733 Cecamore (1993) 23ff. The catalogue contains a relatively extensive descriptions and pictures of the finds. For further analysis, see: Bouma (1996b) 55-58.
735 Bouma (1996b) 57 assumes that the – now lost – miniature pottery imitation bucchero vases (noted by De Rossi in 1876) must date to the 8th or 7th century BC. Cf: Grandazzi (2008) 130-132.
737 Discussion in: Lugli (1923) 269-270, Grandazzi (2008) 277. The road is fully accessible and starts close to the church of Madonna del Tufo in Rocca di Papa, near the Alban lake.
738 See, for example: Riccy (1787) 70 and, for further references, Grandazzi (2008) 277 and notes 415-418.
739 Mommsen suggested this to Christian Hülßen, who published the suggestion in a short article on the Fasti feriarum Latinarum: Hülßen (1890) 70.
provide clues for a different reading. In any case, the construction and maintenance of the road show that comfortable access to the hill was considered important, whether it was for religious purposes or because the road was used in the *ovationes* – minor triumphal processions that were awarded to generals that weren’t allowed a *triumphus* in Rome – that also took place on *mons Albanus*.

Although this overview clearly shows that the summit of the Alban Mount was visited by worshippers and the access route was well taken care of, the amount of material is limited and does not seem to reflect a great deal of religious activity on the hill. Of course, we must take into consideration that the first excavators were not primarily interested in finding walls or small signs of private worship (nor were, for that matter, the earlier plunderers), and their selections may well have severely blurred our understanding of the cult practice. Nevertheless, it is clear that the cult of Jupiter Latialis, seen from a material perspective, did not attract the same crowds as the cults of Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita. Not only is there fewer evidence for the involvement of ‘common’ worshippers, but forms of elite sponsorship, which were so important in the development of the sanctuaries that we have seen in earlier chapters, are suspiciously absent. Therefore, Christopher Smith has assumed that – in contrast to the monumental sanctuaries at lake Nemi and Lanuvium – ‘places of communal activity may not always be the right places for competitive architectural display’.

### 4.5 Excavation and destruction in the archival sources

While Smith’s comment may be a valid observation, it does not fully explain the sharp contrast with the other Latin sites, which also served as (early) meeting places for large groups of Latins but nevertheless show clear signs of sponsoring from local elites. Before we turn to other possible reasons for the differences, we must look into a category of evidence that has thus far been ignored and that sheds a different light on the discrepancies in the evidence: the archival sources. Thanks to the efforts of Claudia Cecamore, we can now get a clearer picture of the digging activity by the Passionist order on the hill before the first archaeological campaign of De Rossi. Previously, the only

---

741 Further down the hill, in the vicinity of present-day Campi d’Annibale (a neighbourhood of Rocca di Papa), some remains of a hut and possible necropolis from the late Bronze or early Iron Age have been identified through ground penetrating radar: Di Gennaro, Guidi and Pacciarelli (1978) 84-86. A connection with the sanctuary – of which the earliest remains are of a much later date – seems implausible, but Grandazzi (2008) 278-279 speculates that the vestiges may confirm the literary traditions of the earliest Latin tribes living on the slopes of monte Cavo, most notably that of the *Cabenses*. For further evidence on the inhabitants of ancient Cabum and their possible later descendants, see pages 180ff.

742 For the *ovationes* on the Alban Mount see pages 195ff.

piece of evidence relating to this earlier period was an imprecise ‘map’ found in a 17th century notebook of anonymous origin. The drawing, described as ‘vestigia templi atque arae Iovis Latialis’, depicts a rectangular and elevated platform, with stairs leading up to it (figure 4.7). Within this area, the artist has drawn and described several religious structures, such as a votive well, an altar base and the groundplan (*ichnographia*) of an apsidal enclosure that he assumes to have been the temple of Jupiter Latiaris. The reading of the document is notoriously difficult, as there is no indication of the scale and orientation of the map and since it is undated and unsigned. Although De Rossi tried to use it as such, later authors have quickly realized that it is impossible to use the document as a scaled plan of the area, if only because the results of the excavations did not match the drawing. The circular piece of enclosure wall discovered by Lugli, for example, does not resemble the elevated rectangular platform at all. Although Cecamore does acknowledge that the similarities with the archaeological record – such as the wells and wall fragments - could give the drawing some credibility, it seems clear that it cannot be considered a conclusive testimony of the existence of a temple on Monte Cavo.

The archives of the Passionist order (the monks that inhabited the hill from 1758 onwards) offer a little more insight, even if they reveal mainly the destruction and removal of ancient material. Especially the chronicle from the years 1774-1779, where a large restoration and expansion of the monastery buildings is described, provide interesting details of the earlier layout of the hill. From these reports, it is obvious that the monks were well aware of the ancient remains and also identified the sanctuary as that of Jupiter Latiaris, but were at the same time completely indifferent to its conservation. Claudia Cecamore has researched the document and has published some of its passages in full. The first remarkable entry is an account from the year 1770 or 1771, in which the monks mention two statues that had been found on their premises, one of which was sent to pope Clement XIV and one that was reported earlier in 1714 but could not be traced anymore. They also describe large quantities of marble and other *quantita di pietra* (quantities of stone) that have disappeared beneath the foundation of the new buildings and the enclosure or have been used to build the church. Apart from that, they mention a round mosaic of

---

744 *Barb. Lat.* 1871, fol. 38. The notebook is part of the Barberino Vaticano collection of the Vatican Library.
745 De Rossi (1876) figure Q. See further: Lugli (1930) 162-168.
746 Although the platform indicated on the picture may have been much smaller than the surrounding wall discovered by De Rossi – making it in theory possible that the platform was located within the circular wall. Because of the missing scale of the drawing however, it is impossible to align it with the archaeological remains in a convincing way. See page 168-169.
748 The document, *Platea del ritiro de Rocca di Papa*, is preserved (under number B.II-IV, 1-4) in the archives of the order of Passionists, at the convent of SS. Giovanni e Paulo in Rome.
750 At the moment, the location of both statues is unknown.
fine quality with another, ‘more ordinary’ one underneath. Of a temple, the monks claim not to remember how it looked like, although on the basis of the pavement they suppose it could have resembled the ‘tempio del Sole’ (now identified as the round temple on the forum Boarium in Rome). 751

It is hard to make sense of these reports. The statues cannot be traced anymore, nor can the remains that supposedly disappeared beneath the convent buildings. The comment about the shape of the temple is probably of little significance: the pavements of the round temple at the forum Boarium are mediaeval and can certainly not function as a comparison for an ancient temple on monte Cavo. 752 In a later account, the finds are even more suggestive but equally hard to analyze. During the enlargement of the church, the monks state they have again found quantities of marble, together with *idoli di metallo* (images of metal) of a fine quality, which show attributes of Jupiter (Fulgur), such as lightning bolts and wings. After that, the list of finds continues: male and female statuettes (of a crude quality), many medallions, architectonic ornaments, a ‘more than gigantic’ finger of bronze and a pedestal with two marble feet resting on it. 753 The finds, some of which have reportedly been given away and cannot be traced anymore, seem to refer to some sort of votive deposit and – if we can trust the observations of the monks – lend the site a clearly religious function. Furthermore, the identification of the figurines would link the sanctuary to the cult of Jupiter, although the already uncertain references are further complicated by the fact that the monks knew that their hill was once dedicated to Jupiter Latiaris and this may have influenced their interpretation.

In any case, this knowledge did nothing to protect the area from further damage, as is clear from a more recent correspondence between the Passionists and the cardinal Camerlengo, dated to 1825. At that point, the monks apparently wanted to perform a dig on their grounds and use some of the stones for building a new clock tower. 754 The Camerlengo is apprehensive and prohibits any action on the convent grounds, insisting that the ancient wall consisting of rectangular blocks, which according to the Camerlengo still had antique letters (an old inscription?), should not be touched. 755 He asks the governor of Albano to watch over his decision. A final document in the

---

751 Cecamore (1996) 53: [...] Quello che riguardi il tempio, non abbiamo memoria alcuna della sua figura. Sembra però che poteva rassomigliare al Tempio del Sole che tutt’ora si vede nella piazza della Bocca della Verità, e ciò si racava dai pavimenti. The tempio del Sole refers to the St. Maria del Sole, the church that was housed in the round temple until the 19th century.
753 Cecamore (1996) 50-52, note 3, referring to page 11 of the chronicle.
754 The letter is now lost from the correspondence records.
755 This and the other letters about the order of the Passionists are all preserved in the same folder, filed under: ASR, Camerlengato, IV. II B147, fasc. 43: Il recinto di Monte Cavi, ove V.P. [...] desiderrebbe praticare uno scavo per togliere alcuni macigni da servire per la fabbricazione del nuovo campanile, è il famoso recinto del tempio di Giove
dossier however, dated to August 1836, suggests that the monks went ahead anyway. In a response to a – now lost – letter from the Camerlengo that apparently asked about thievery on the hill, the governor admits that it is no longer possible to restore the site to its original state and that his office in the years before has failed to supervise and register the proceedings on the hill. He promises to watch after the affairs closely in the future, but the damage seems to have been already done.756

Although it is still noteworthy that the excavations have revealed so little archaeological evidence for the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, this overview of possibly destroyed, removed or stolen remains reminds us that we should not apply any archaeological *argumentum ex silentio* too easily. The fact that no evidence of a temple has been found does not mean that there never was one. To the small amount of votive material discovered by De Rossi, some significant but now lost votives must probably be added. Also, the reference to statues could indicate that the sanctuary was more richly adorned than can be discerned from the current state of the ruins. Despite the numerous issues of interpretation, the archival sources confirm the religious identification of the site and add to its ritual significance. In my opinion, however, the finds still do not add up to anything that is comparable to the situation at Lanuvium or Lake Nemi, and it is hard to imagine a traditional temple building on Monte Cavo. Evidence for architectural and roof decoration, for example, is almost completely absent. The most feasible reconstruction would perhaps be to imagine the site as an enclosed open air sanctuary, adorned with an altar, several (cult) statues, and possibly a display of votive and honorary inscriptions.757 The relatively limited amount of votive material would support the hypothesis that the sanctuary was not visited as frequently as other Latin sanctuaries in the area, and was mainly known for its yearly celebration of the *feriae Latinae*. It is important to emphasize, especially regarding these specific rites, that not all ritual activity leaves an imprint in the material record. The sacrifice itself, the taking of the auspices and the ritual prayer for example, are elements of the descriptions in the literary sources that require no special architectural facilities and many of the proceedings may have taken place in the open air, or in a temporary wooden

---

756 Cecamore (1996) 54–55: sarebbe già inutile il voler riandare la ordinanza che...
757 The solution of an open air sanctuary was first proposed by Lugli (1930) 162–168, who disputed the earlier idea – expressed for example by De Rossi (1876) 314–333 – that the scattered remains on Monte Cavo should point to a temple building. Since then, the question has not been addressed straightforwardly often, although it may be revealing that the sanctuary is not included in the monumental study of Coarelli (1987). Also, in his half page on the Monte Cavo, Gierow (1964) 281, only devotes a footnote to the issue, opting for the same possibility of an open *temenos*. Grandazzi (2008) 267, 369, who has most recently discussed the matter, considers the debate to be open and emphasizes the difficult weather conditions on the mountain, but eventually concludes that the proposal of the open air sanctuary is for now the most probable explanation for the lack of archaeological remains.
structure. Consequently, the scarcity of material remains does not necessarily reflect a lack of ritual activity.

In this respect, it is fortunate that we can gain a little more insight in the organization of the feriae Latinae because of the epigraphic material, which provides information on the participants and some of the possible priesthods that were involved. Here, the archaic past of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris – which featured so prominently in the literary discourse but seems largely absent in the archaeological record – appears to have had a distinct appeal: the inscriptions reveal the reappraisal, or perhaps reinvention, of ancient offices and traditions.

4.6 Epigraphic testimonies of the feriae Latinae

Perhaps most significant for our understanding of the organization of the feriae Latinae is the very fragmentarily preserved inscribed chronicle known as the Fasti feriarum Latinarum. This document contains a list of yearly festival dates, along with the names of the magistrates who were in charge of the festivities. As mentioned before in this chapter, fragments of the document were found on the hill itself, during the excavations of De Rossi in the 1870’s. Unfortunately, the circumstances under which they appeared are poorly described, as they were probably scattered over the entire hill. In total, eight fragments were found, and perhaps a ninth can be recovered from the archival sources. The largest three were documented, but are now unfortunately lost; others are preserved in different museums. According to a reconstruction by Degrassi, the inscription must have been up to four metres in height and was attached to a wall of some sort. Each plaque featured two columns with 36 years, and the available fragments of the chronicle show entries from the year 451 BC to at least the middle of the second century AD. Although it is impossible to reconstruct further details concerning the location of the inscription and its relation to the other structures on the hill, the calendar provides – as remarked before – an important and secure link between the mons Albanus and the rites of the feriae Latinae.

In their current form, the plaques of the Fasti can be dated to the late first century BC, which makes them – just like the Fasti Consulares, Fasti Triumphales and the many local calendars of the period – part of the Augustan promotion of the Julian calendar, which was closely related to his program of religious reforms. Just like the other chronicles, we can assume that the list was partly

---

759 De Rossi (1876) 314-333. Cecamore (1993) 20 and (1996) 55 reconstructs that the Fasti were attached to a large rectangular wall discovered by De Rossi (see page 156), but in fact – as Grandazzi (2008) 123, footnote 293 rightfully points out, De Rossi (1876) 119 himself states that the fragments were found all over the hilltop.
761 Degrassi (1963) 143-158.
based on Republican consular lists, but the reliability of especially the entries of the first centuries of the Republic is highly questionable.\textsuperscript{762} For the \textit{Fasti feriarum Latinarum}, the first entries record the Decemvirate, with one entry in 451 BC, \textit{xviri legibus scribendis / L(atinae) f(uerunt)} and one in 450 BC, when the festival was not held.\textsuperscript{763} In 449 BC, three celebrations of the festival are recorded, which may have had something to do with festivities after the decemviri were forced to lay down their function and the consular order was restored.\textsuperscript{764} These first celebrations of the \textit{feriae Latinae} are interesting, since they show that the inscription preserves a different tradition from the one narrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Whereas the latter claims that it was Tarquinius Superbus who started the \textit{feriae Latinae}, the \textit{Fasti} do not start with the king, or with the first consuls of the Republic.\textsuperscript{765} This does not make the fifth century BC a more reliable starting date for the festival than the late sixth century BC. Just like the other contemporary \textit{Fasti}, the chronicle is not a direct survival of the festival’s roots, but rather the result of antiquarian efforts in the late Republic and early Empire, as well as a reflection of the religio-political concerns of the early Principate.\textsuperscript{766} In this way, the \textit{Fasti} originate from the same annalistic traditions as the literary sources discussed earlier. While the calendar does not provide definitive answers to the questions about the starting date of the festival or the start of the Roman involvement, it does show how efforts were made to conserve the memory of the \textit{feriae} and how this memory was interwoven with the political history of the Roman state.

Notwithstanding the uncertainties regarding these earliest beginnings, the inscription provides a great deal of information on the celebration of the rites. Firstly, it confirms that the consuls were formally in charge of the procedures on the hill. Each entry consists of their names, followed by the formula \textit{L(atinae) f(uerunt)} and the date of the festival. In his frequent mentions of the \textit{feriae Latinae}, Livy also uses the phrase \textit{Latinae fuerunt} to indicate the celebration of the Latin festival.\textsuperscript{767} Also recorded are the years in which Rome was governed by a dictator, for example in 396

\textsuperscript{763} CIL VI 2011: \textit{xviri legibus scribendis / L(atinae) non f(uerunt)}.
\textsuperscript{764} CIL VI 2011: \textit{M(arco) Horatio M(ari) fil(io) P(ubli) n(epote) / Barbat[o] / Barba} / \textit{L(ucio) V(allio) P(ubli) f(ilio) P(ubli) n(epote) P(atito) co(n)s(ulibus) / L(atinae) f(uerunt)} IIII Eid(us) Ian(uarias) / \textit{ite / ierum / L(atinae) f(uerunt)} III Non(as) Febr(uarias) / \textit{[tertium] L(atinae) f(uerunt) K(alendis) Mai(is)}. Mommsen (1871) 381-382 suggests that the abdication of the \textit{decemviri}, along with the installation of the consuls and the strengthening of the position of the tribunes of the plebs were reasons for multiple celebrations.
\textsuperscript{765} Alföldi (1963) 31 sees the Decemvirate as the moment the Romans took over the superintendence of the festival, and claims that the \textit{Fasti} deliberately hid the fact that it had pre-Roman origins. This is in line with his general idea about the Roman historiographical and annalistic tradition, which according to Alföldi exaggerated the early Roman dominance and disregarded the Latin traditions as a general rule. For a critique of this notion, with regards to the Latin festival: Grandazzi (2008) 531.
\textsuperscript{767} Liv. 38.44.7-8; 42.35.3; 44.22.16.
BC when Camillus headed the sacrifice. Even in this fragmented state, we can recognize that the tradition continued into the Principate, when we see the appearance of Caesar (49 BC), Agrippa (27 BC) and Augustus (23 BC). Based on the fragmentarily preserved names of the consuls, the last entry can be dated to the reign of Antoninus Pius, more precisely the year 140 or 141 AD. In this way, even in its fragmented state the chronicle preserves almost 6 centuries of religious history on the Alban hill and we may assume that the list continued well into the third and fourth century AD.

Furthermore, the inscription supports the claim of the literary sources that, in some years, the festival was repeated, probably because something went wrong in the execution of the rites or because of some political upheaval. Apart from the year after the Decemvirate (449 BC), the Fasti preserve occurrences of this phenomenon in October 396 BC and November 23 BC. 396 BC was the year of the dictatorship of Camillus and the repetition was recorded by Livy as well, who – as we have seen before – connected the repeated *feriae Latinae* to the final victory over Veii. In 23 BC, the renewal of the festival may be connected to the fact that Augustus, who became seriously ill during that year, abdicated his consulship: after he miraculously recovered, the Senate bestowed the *tribunicia potestas* on him, which may have been reason for a replication. In the years of the reign of Augustus that have been preserved on the inscription, the recorded information is unusually extensive, since these are the only years in which the presence or absence of the princeps is specifically mentioned. The commitment of the princeps to the ancient ritual was thus not only publicized through the erection of the calendar, but also in its individual entries.

Although most of the dates are in May, the Fasti show that the *feriae Latinae* could take place very early in the consular year, as well as very late. The examples in October and November quoted above concern a repetition of the rites, but there are also a few instances in which the odd date cannot be explained so easily, like the first two celebrations in mid-winter 449 BC (for which the chronicle records January 10th and February 3rd), the celebration in 395 BC (in September) and the first entry in 23 BC (July). While the inscription confirms the irregular yearly pattern, it does not

---

768 See note 770 for the celebration and instauratio of 396 BC.
769 As established by Eck (2013) 248-250, who uses information on a military diploma that was found in Britain to reconstruct the pair of (suffect) consuls that were in charge of the *feriae Latinae* as Q. Antonius Isauricus and L. Aurelius Flaccus.
771 See pages 159-160 and notes 680-681.
772 As suggested by Mommse (1871) 384.
reveal details as to why the *feriae* were brought forward or postponed. As mentioned before, religious devotion may go hand in hand with political manoeuvring here, but considering this list, it seems even more unlikely that the rule of the commanders staying in Rome until the end of the Latin festival was enforced as strictly as is claimed by sources like Livy. At the same time – and it remains important to emphasize this – the traditions in the literary texts and those reflected in the *Fasti* stem from the same annalistic tradition and may very well have mutually influenced each other, which could explain the frequent use of the formula *Latinae fuerent*. This should – again – warn us not to read the calendar as a straightforward account of past celebrations.

A different formula is used in an honorary inscription for Marcus Consius Cerinthus, who was an *accensus velatus* during the reign of Claudius and Nero. In this function, of which the exact nature is still debated, he probably had to assist both emperors – in their roles as consuls – in religious matters of the Roman state. Cerinthus, who according to a different inscription was a freedman and had paid for some work on the roads of Ficulea, assisted the emperors in the *feriae Latinae* at least three times. The choice of words in the text is remarkable, since the emperors are described as founders of the rites, with the expression *Latinas condere*. In the same inscription, this form is also used to refer to the *lustrum*, the purifying rites surrounding the census. Grandazzi labels the use of *condere* as a sign of the archaic and even pastoral origins of the festival, which – as we have seen before – would also be clear from the libations of milk during the festival and from the fact that it was described by Cicero as a *lustratio*. Because the testimony of the *accensus velatus* is the only epigraphic evidence for the use of *condere* in the context of the *feriae Latinae*, the assumption seems a little far-fetched; instead of seeing the expression as an archaic relic of long forgotten times, we may also consider it a deliberate attempt at archaization.

So far the epigraphic testimonies give us an idea about the organization and yearly pattern of the *feriae Latinae*, but the deity that is supposed to be at the centre of the cult is notably absent. In fact, we know of only one secure votive inscription to Jupiter Latiaris, recovered in the excavation campaign of De Rossi in 1869. It is a (now lost) fragment of a statue base or altar, with large letters that reveal a *votum* to the god by Lucius Rubellius Geminus, consul of 29 AD. A second and very early

---


775 In the Republic, *accensi velati* were auxiliary soldiers trained to replace Roman soldiers, but over time they lost their military function and became assistants in rites of the Roman state. See, especially, Di Stefano Manzella (1994) 261-279.


fragment of a votive inscription (now in Rome), dated on the basis of the lettering to the late fourth or early third century BC and reads divei / Ardea / tes could have been set up for Jupiter as well.\footnote{CIL XIV 2231: divei / Ardea / tes. In an earlier edition (CIL VI 2020; cf. CIL XIV 2231), the text was transcribed as restuerunt / ardeates. The inscription is carved on a small statue base or votive cippus, with –tes on the lateral side. For further background, see the analysis of D. Nonnis in Friggeri (2012) 178, who reconstructs the votum as for divei lovi.} While they are very few in number, these inscriptions do provide some insight into the cult practice. The latter shows the early presence of the inhabitants of Ardea on the hill, also noted by Livy, and provides support for the assumption that the worship on the hill was organized as a communal cult of Latin villages.\footnote{For the inhabitants of Ardea and their attendance at the feriae Latinae, see page 159, note 676.} None of the architectural remains found so far are dated as early as this small fragment, which reminds us that much of the earliest worship may have taken place in the open air and that the possible lack of a temple does not necessarily reflect a lack of ritual activity. The votum of Rubellius Geminus on the other hand, illustrates that the ritual practice was perhaps particularly connected with the authority of the Roman consuls – even when the Principate was well in place.

### 4.7 Cult officials on the mons Albanus

With so little evidence, it is hard to reconstruct anything of the votive practice on the hill. Like in our discussion of the other material remains, it is not so much the nature of the data as the scarcity of data that is noteworthy. Signs of private devotion to Jupiter Latiaris are almost completely absent, setting the sanctuary apart from other sanctuaries in the region like that of Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita. Can we use this observation as an argumentum ex silentio, and argue that the cult of Jupiter Latiaris was not widely visited or appreciated by individual worshippers in the Alban hills? A final category of epigraphic material allows us to think in a different direction. Inscriptions reveal the existence of a number of priesthoods that can be linked to the mons Albanus and to the ritual activity that took place there. Although not all of the priesthoods can be decisively connected to the administration of the feriae Latinae and Jupiter Latiaris – nor can the holders of the priesthoods – they reflect the appeal of priestly positions associated with the worship on the Alban mount and especially with the historical and mythical traditions surrounding that worship. Similar to the offices of dictator and rex sacrorum, which we have seen at Aricia and Lanuvium, these offices seem to stem from a distant Latin past, but they may also reveal a reappraisal or perhaps even reinvention of that past, for which religious celebrations were an especially appropriate occasion.

As regards the worship on the mons Albanus, we know of a number of priestly titles that appear to refer to the mountain and to the celebration of the feriae Latinae: four sacerdotes Cabenses feriarum Latinarum montis Albani, two pontifices Albani, two dictatores Albani, two salii Albani and three
Virgines Vestalae Albanae. We can recognize some of the ostensibly archaic offices that we have seen before in the cults of Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita, such as the dictatores and the salii, but the relation between the Alban officials and the Latin festival is far from straightforward. The titles may also refer to cultic traditions surrounding the town of Alba Longa, in which case neither the location nor the intended god is identifiable. As we have seen earlier in this chapter, there is little connection between the *feriae Latinae* and Rome’s mythical metropolis except for the name of the hill the festivities took place on, but in the few inscriptions that reveal Alban priesthoods, it is hard to distinguish whether they refer to Alba Longa or the *mons Albanus*. In other words, it is easy to recognize the appeal of archaizing titles in the area of the Alban hills, but it is uncertain if this archaism was directed at the cult of Jupiter Latiaris.

For the first category of priests under consideration however, the *sacerdotes Cabenses Feriarum Latinarum montis Albani*, there is little doubt that this was the case. It was Mommsen who first suggested that the name of the Cabenses that appears on these inscriptions in relation to the *mons Albanus*, had to be derived from Cabum - one of the villages mentioned in Dionysius’ list of Latin towns. Elsewhere – in his list of still existing Latin communities – Pliny mentions the *Cabienses in monte Albano*, probably referring to the same people. Although – like many of the other supposed Latin villages – no trace of Cabum has ever been found and it appears in no other Roman source, it seems that the titles of the priests somehow alluded to the name of this village. Does this mean that the name was (quite literally) inscribed into Roman memory through religious practices, or was it a late invention, deriving from the same archaistic traditions that ended up in the works of Pliny and Dionysius? As we have seen when discussing the *reges*, *dictatores* and *sacerdotes* earlier in this thesis, there is no definitive answer to this question. Nonetheless, the name of the *sacerdotes Cabenses* may be considered another example of the importance of the remembered, perceived or even reinvented past in the cult practice in the Alban hills, which in the case of the *feriae Latinae*, was fully integrated into Roman state religion.

---

782 Plin. *NH* 3.64. In some earlier editions of the *NH*, *Cabiensis* is transcribed as *Fabiensis*, but the form chosen here derives from a later edition, that of Mayhoff (1963). For different definitions of the *prisci Latini* and the villages that according to Pliny had disappeared, see pages 146-150 of this chapter.
783 Granino Cecere (1996) 276-284, Grandazzi (2008) 489-490. Interestingly enough, it was probably Cabum and the *Cabienses* that gave its name to the mountain as it is named today. Earlier – for example in Lugli (1923) 269-270 – this was explained by the stone quarries (*cavi*) that were dug in the mountain, but some form of *Cabiensi / Cabi / Gabi* probably survived, as the *Liber Pontificalis* (probably dating to the sixth century AD) speaks of a *monte Gabum* that could be reached by using the Via Latina. See: Coarelli (1986) 37, Grandazzi (2008) 489 and footnote 175.
The most clear-cut illustration of the fact that *sacerdotes Cabenses* had a function in the execution of the *feriae Latinae* is presented by a fragment of what was once a relatively large statue base, found by De Rossi on top of the mons Albanus during the excavation of 1869. It was dedicated by the *sacerdotes Cabenses* to an emperor whose name is largely lost, but who has most convincingly been identified as Decius. If the dedication is indeed from his reign, the middle of the third century AD, it is a rather late testimony of the *feriae Latinae*. In fact, Maria Granino Cecere connects it with Decius’ attempts to restore old Roman religious practices and infers that the emperor revived a cult that was increasingly becoming less popular. Considering the general scarcity of material from all periods, this assumption is hard to prove and the size of the statue base could just as well be considered an indication that the priests had considerable sums at hand – not exactly a sign of decline.

In the dedication, the priests identify themselves as *Caben[ses] [s]acerdot[es] [feria]rum Latinar[um] mon[tis] Albani*. So, the inscription connects the group to the rites of the Latin festival as well as to the location and – together with the *Fasti feriarum Latinarum* and the votive inscription to Jupiter Latiaris that were found in the same excavation campaign – it offers an important clue regarding the cultic activity on *mons Albanus*, in which the priests apparently participated. Granino Cecere suggests that they may have had a permanent residence there and that they were responsible for the inscription of the *Fasti*. Although this cannot be substantiated, the *Cabenses* are the only priests who are actually attested on the hill itself. But can we trace these cult officials before the third century AD as well? And can we say anything about the origins and status of the men that held the priesthood?

We know of three individual *sacerdotes Cabenses* from different funerary inscriptions in Rome, each of which have significant interpretation problems. The epitaph that seems to record the oldest reference is now lost and only preserved in a nineteenth century notebook. It was put up for C. Antistius by his father, also called C. Antistius, and has been dated – rather speculatively – to

---

785 On the basis of the lettering the text can dated to the third century AD and the available space on the inscription suggest Tr(aianus), the name that Decius took up after his coronation: Granino Cecere (1996) 277-278, Granino Cecere (2012) 494-495.
787 Preserved in the Vatican archives: Cod. Vat. Lat. 9758 f. 28v: C. Antistio \([\ldots]\) / sacerdo[ti] Cabe(n)sis montis [Albani qui] / vixit ann(is) X[\(\ldots\)] / C. Antist[ius \([\ldots]\)] pater [\(\ldots\)] / fe [cit \(\ldots\)].
the first or early second century AD. Antistius’ function of sacerdos Cabensis appears here without the reference to the feriae Latinae and as his only recorded title. Granino Cecere has interpreted this as an indication of the humble status of the deceased and his father, of whom we have no other trace, and thus suggested that the priesthood itself was of relatively humble status. This reasoning seems stretched, however, because Antistius may have deliberately chosen to mention just this one title on his son’s epitaph. Or the boy died too early to acquire further titles, and held the priesthood as a (very) young man.

That it was possible to do so, is clear from a funerary altar for Caius Nonius Ursus, who was only two years, 11 months and 13 days old when he died. Not only was he sacerdos Cabe(n)sis montis Albani by then, but he is even identified as curio, which probably makes him a member of the equestrian class. Considering the style of the altar – which has partly preserved the portrait bust of the deceased – it can probably be dated to the Trajanic period, perhaps the first decade of the second century AD. While it may seem strange that someone at this young age was expected to oversee the rituals, his function must have been a purely ceremonial one, which only involved him being present at the site. A further explanation is provided by the dedicator of the altar, C. Nonius Iustinus, who calls the boy alumnus dulcissimus and thus probably took him in as a foster child. In a different funerary altar, again unfortunately lost now but seen and transcribed by Mommsen, this man Iustinus is identified as a Cabe(n)sis mont[is Albani] as well. This allows the possibility that the priesthood was passed on from father to (adopted) son, a procedure that we know from other

---

788 As suggested by Granino Cecere (1996) 280, on the basis of the simple formulation and the fact that there is no reference to the di manes, which are often addressed in epitaphs of the second and third century AD (but not always).

789 CIL VI 2174: Dis Man(ibus) / C(ai) Noni C(ai) f(ili) Ursi / sacerdotis Cab(e)n(is) / montis Albani / curionis / C(aius) Nonius Iustinus / alumno dulcissimo / vix(it) ann(is) II m(ensibus) XI d(iebus) XIII. The funerary altar is barely legible and in the CIL editions, the age of the deceased is transcribed as LI. I follow the the later interpretation by Granino Cecere (1996) 281, Rüpke (2005) 1174, Haack (2006) 89. The argument for the young age is based on an early drawing of the altar (Cod. Neap. XIII B 8, 158r), which clearly indicates II and the appellation dulcissimo, which was often used for children.

790 Curiones appear in our sources as priests who were responsible for holding banquets and making sacrifices on behalf of the Roman citizens of one of Rome’s curiae. In the Republic, the priesthood was reserved for men of senatorial rank that were at least 50 years of age, but – as epigraphic evidence attests – these requirements seem to have been gone by the Imperial age. Nonetheless, the men that held the position seem to have been at least of equestrian rank. See further: Scheid and Granino Cecere (1999) 97-99.

791 Kleiner (1987) 276-277, Boschung (1987) 88, no. 360, Haack (2006) 89. This is also supported by the lettering.

792 Although it was a less formal procedure than adoption, Roman families often took in orphans or poor children if they had no (living) offspring. The exact legal status of alumni is still debated, see: Rawson (2003) 250-263.

793 CIL VI 2175: D(is) M(anibus) / C(ai) Noni [- f(ili) ] / Iustin[i ] / haruspicis [- ] / patris et Q[- ] / cippum Cab(e)n(is) / mont(is Albani) / qui vixit ann(is) [- ] / C(aius) Nonius L(uci) f(ilius) [- ] / Augusta / r / m ... As seen by: Mommsen. The text has many problems and Granino Cecere (1996) 281-283 points out several details that indicate an incomplete and/or wrong transcription. Most notably, the appearance of cippum in line 6 (usually used to designate the sepulcrum itself or the space occupied by it), before the priesthood, is hard to explain.
priesthoods in Rome. Unfortunately, because of the fragmented state of the inscription and the poor transcription, we know little else about Nonius Iustinus, apart from the fact that he was a *haruspex*. This supports the idea that he too was an *eques*.

From the limited evidence of these *sacerdotes*, we can establish only a few things about their role. Although none of the individual *Cabenses* is explicitly linked to the *feriae Latinae*, we may assume from their collective dedication to the emperor that the reference to their title implied as much. As we have seen with the *sacerdotes Lanuvini*, the priesthood is defined by a time old community in Latium, which in this case emerges in our literary sources only from the second century AD onwards and had probably long dissolved by the time it appears on inscriptions. Hence, even though it is not clear if it was a relic or a reinvention of earlier times, the title of the *Cabenses* forms an illustration of how the cult practice on the *mons Albanus* was connected to the remembered past of the area. With regard to the responsibilities of the priests many questions remain: it is uncertain what they actually did on the mountain and if their activities were restricted to the celebration of the *feriae Latinae*. Like similar priesthoods in Latium, there is a connection to the equestrian class, for which these functions seem to have had a distinct appeal. In this particular situation though, the evidence does not allow for more conclusions on the social standing of the *Cabenses*, since they do not appear in any additional administrative or financial context – which is in contrast, for example, with the extensive careers that were publicized by or for some of the *sacerdotes Lanuvini*.

For the second category of priests, the *pontifices Albani*, the situation seems different: as specified before, we cannot be sure that they were in fact active on the *mons Albanus*, although some of them do appear to originate from the area of the Alban hills. This was probably the case for the most illustrious – and also the earliest – example of a *pontifex Albanus*. It concerns a large marble plaque with a funerary inscription for L. Memmius, who was of senatorial rank and whose activities can be placed in the last decades of the first century BC. Apart from being an Alban priest, he held the office of *frumenti curator* (responsible for the grain distribution) and had a function in the

---

794 Such as for example the *flamen dialis* and the *flamen martialis*, which were sometimes passed on through generations. Val. Max. 1.1.9 provides an example of a *Salii* and his father. For further examination: Mitchell (1990) 150ff, North (1990) 527-543.

795 Haack (2006) 88. For the evidence regarding *equites* as imperial haruspices see: Scheid and Granino Cecere (1999) 94-96, Torelli (2011) 137-159. Although *equites* very often were members of the imperial augural colleges, the poor transcription does not allow for a final identification in this case.

796 See note 802 below.

797 CIL VI 1460: L(ucius) Memmius C(ai) f(ilius) G(aleria) q(uaestor) tr(ibunus) pl(ebis) [pr(aetor)] / frumenti curator ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) / praefectus leg(ionis) XXVI et VII / Lucae ad agros dividandos / pontifex Albanus / Memmia filia testamento suo fieri iussit. The inscription is dated on the basis of the formula *frumenti curator* – which after the Augustan age was replaced by *praefectus frumenti dandi ex s.c.* – and on the tribus Galeria, with which this branch of the *gens* can be distinguished. Cf: Granino Cecere (1996) 285-290, Rüpke (2005) 1148, Farney (2007) 273-274.
division of land for veterans of Octavian, in the area of Luca.\footnote{Legio VII, which is mentioned in the inscription, was part of the troops that entered Rome with Octavian in 43 BC. As a result of their services, they received land in the area of Luca shortly after. See: Keppie (1983) 64, 174.} His service to the princeps probably made him an influential man and it is notable that his title of pontifex Albanus is placed at the end of his cursus honorem and is also inscribed with larger letters. This may indicate the prestige of the function at his time. Granino Cecere suggests that it was no coincidence that a member of the gens Memmia received and proudly presented the title: the Iulii and Memmii prided themselves on having Trojan ancestry, which made a priesthood connected with the mythical city of Alba Longa extra significant.\footnote{Granino Cecere (1996) 289-290. See for the Trojan ancestry of Augustus and the possible effect on the worship on the Alban mount, pages 196ff.} What is not clear, however, is if the office was in any way connected to the celebration of the feriae Latinae, which is an issue we shall come back to later.

Other examples of pontifices Albani appear only much later, from the second half of the second century onwards. In contrast to L. Memmius, they all seem to have been members of the equestrian class. In the example of Cn. Iulius Domatius Priscus, of whom we have an epitaph from the second century AD, this is expressed by the formula ex(ornatus) equo public(o).\footnote{CIL VI 2168: D(is) M(anibus) / Cn(aei) Iuli Cn(aei) fil(iii) / Domati Prisci / ex(ornati) equo public(o) / adiutoris / haruspicum / Imperatoris / pontificis / Albani. The text was inscribed on a funerary monument, now missing, and is preserved through the fifteenth century sketchbook of Giovannantonio Dosio. See, also for the dating: Eck (1986) 286 and further: Granino Cecere (1996) 290-291, Rüpke (2005) 1066, Haack (2006) 67-68.} Domatius Priscus fulfilled no administrative offices, but he is also labelled as an assistant to the imperial haruspices. The prominence of the Alban priesthood is suggested by its position at the end of his cursus honorem, as was the case for the prefect of the vigiles (whose name is lost) that fulfilled the post in the late third or even early fourth century AD.\footnote{CIL IX 1595: praef(ecto) vig(itum) e(gregiae) m(emoriae) v(ir) / pontifici Alba/ni m(ino) r(i). Again, the original inscription is now lost, but it was seen and transcribed by Mommsen. The late date is based on the lettering and the use of the title e(gregiae) v(ir). The fact that the priesthood is labelled minor had nothing to do with the hierarchy within the order, but with the rank of the deceased. From the Antonine period onwards, senatorial priesthoods were often accompanied by maior, whereas equestrian priests were labelled minor. Granino Cecere (1996) 80-96, Beard, North and Price (1998) 260-261.} Although the evidence is far from conclusive, the impression we get from these later pontifices Albani is comparable to that of the sacerdotes Cabenses: they were equites who had relatively modest public careers, of which the Alban priesthood was an important part. L. Memmius – the senator in the first example – is the obvious exception, but this may explained by the fact that he held the position much earlier. As we have seen before, the Augustan reform in priesthoods – which made the oldest priestly colleges in the city of Rome exclusively available to patricians – may have made the Latin priesthoods especially attractive for members of the equestrian class.\footnote{This was explained by Wissowa (1912) 519-521 as a reaction to the fact that priesthoods in the city of Rome (such as the Salii and the Arval brothers) had increasingly become the domain of men of senatorial rank since...}
Within this order of pontifices, there seems to have been a certain hierarchy, as is illustrated by two officials in our corpus that carried the title pontifex (et) dictator Albanus. On a votive inscription for the ordo haruspicum LX found in Rome, L. Fonteius Flavianus identifies himself as such.\(^3\) The Alban priesthood was part of his priestly career, which appears to be rather extensive: he was also a haruspex Augustorum and magister publicus of the haruspices. The document can be dated to the Severan age and shows how then the Alban priesthood had become a way for equites to distinguish themselves in the religious domain. Fonteius probably originated from Clusium and in Rome he became – like some of the priests we have discussed earlier – a member of the imperial augural college. He also held a leading post within the ordo LX, the order of 60 haruspices in the city of Rome that was formed in the early Empire to preserve the Etrusca disciplina and increasingly became the domain of equites as well.\(^4\) This time, the Alban priesthood and dictatorship are not positioned as the conclusion of the cursus honorem, but it certainly adds significance to it.

Like we have seen in Lanuvium and Aricia, the dictatorship of the Latin priestly order does not appear to have been an exclusively local affair. The second personage that we see as a dictator et pontifex Albanus, P. Flavius Priscus, is a fairly distinguished figure that we know from four different inscriptions in Ostia (although he may not have originated from there). In 249 AD, he is honoured for the fact that he was made dictator Albanus when he was only 28 years old, and he was probably the first to which this happened at such an early age.\(^5\) By the time the inscription was put up however, he was probably older: he was the patronus of Ostia and of a number of associations and

---

3 CIL VI 2161: L(ucius) Fonteius Flavianus / haruspex Augustorum CC / pontifex dictator / Albanus(us) mag(ister) publicus / haruspicum ordini / haruspicum LX d(onum) d(edit). Granino Cecere (1996) 293-296, Haack (2006) 52-53, Rüpke (2005) 1001. The Severan date can be deduced from the lettering, but also from the title of ducentarius: From Severus Alexander the augurs were promoted (H.A. Alex 44.4) and given salaria (`salaries') and auditoria (`lecture halls').

4 There has been considerable debate on the position and development of this order. Torelli (1975) 115ff argued that the individual haruspices began to organize themselves from the middle Republic onwards, but later authors have argued that the ordo of 60 members was a later creation, perhaps by Augustus, and was further strengthened after an intervention by the emperor Claudius (Tac. Ann. 11.15). In any case, the epigraphic evidence for the ordo LX is all from imperial times and although the members were often recruited among equites as well, their functions should be distinguished from the haruspices active in the imperial colleges. For the latter, who grew in number and became increasingly important after the second century AD, see: Torelli (2011) 137-159. Fonteius Flavianus was from Clusium and thus could boast Etruscan roots, but probably this was no longer necessary from the second century AD onwards. Cf: Rawson (1978) 132-152, MacBain (1982) 59-50, Scheid and Granino Cecere (1999) 94-96, Haack (2006) 110-112.

5 CIL XIV 4452: P(ublio) Flavio Flavio P(ubli) fil(io) Pal(latina) / Prisco (gregio) v(iro) / equestris ordinis / religiosa disciplina / ad centena prorecto / pontifici et dictatori / Albano primo annos / viginti octo agenti / (aquin)a(uennali) c(ensoria) p(otestate) patr(ono) colon(iae) Ost(iensis) / sacerd(oti) Gen(i)i colon(iae) / patr(ono) corpor(is) pistorum / corp(oris) mensorum / frum(entariorum) Ost(iensis) patron(o) // Dedicata Kale/nidis Marti(i)js / Aemiliano iie/rum et Aquilin/o con(n)s(ulibus). For the same personage, see: CIL XIV 5335; CIL XIV 5340; AE 1955, 175. Although he carries the same cognomen, this person is not related to Iulius Domatius Priscus, the pontifex mentioned earlier. Granino Cecere (1996) 295-301, Rüpke (2005) 994-995, Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli and Zevi (2010) 237-238.
had advanced on the equestrian ladder to the rank of centenarius through religiosa disciplina ('religious discipline'). The exact meaning of the latter formula is unclear, but it has been suggested that Flavianus was a haruspec, just like Fonteius Flavianus, possibly in the service of the imperial family. In any case, he remained an important figure in the city of Ostia and within the ranks of the equites, as he is also honourably mentioned in an inscription by his son in law. In his career, the Alban dictatorship seems to have been the only post outside the city of Ostia.

So, the evidence points to a pattern that to a degree looks similar to the situation we have seen in Aricia and Lanuvium. There is little doubt that the religious dictatorship was an important function: while there may have been more pontifices Albani active at the same time, there was probably only one dictator. The title was awarded to men of a certain standing, who had extensive equestrian careers, including very often a post within the augural colleges. Unlike Lanuvium, we find no connection between the dictatores Albani and municipal career paths in one of the villages in the area of the Alban hills. Both our dictatores appear to be outsiders, as was for example the emperor Trajan in the case of Aricia. This brings back issues that we have discussed earlier about the position of the office and its relation to the Latin past. Did the Alban dictatorship retain any of its ancient associations and was it – by the time of the third century AD – a primarily religious or mostly honorific function? Did the dictator oversee the activities of the pontifices as a political magistrate or was he a chief priest? And, more importantly perhaps, to what Latin past did the post of dictator Albanus refer and where exactly did he perform his duties?

As mentioned before, we should place the origins of the dictatorship in the early history of Latium, in which similar socio-political traditions developed in different communities, alongside a shared development in material culture. From what time onwards Rome was dominant in this process is unclear, but we can assume that after the city took control in the region – from about the fourth century BC onwards – the administrative functions radically changed shape and meaning. The dictatorship may have survived as an honorary position, which was mainly (if not solely) exercised in the religious domain. In the case of the dictator Albanus, this could mean that he had a leading position in the celebration of the feriae Latinae, although this is hard to align with the descriptions of the consuls being in charge of the procedures. Did the dictator perhaps represent the long lost people of Alba Longa during the rites? In fact – according to Roman historical tradition –

---

806 His devotion to the imperial family is also clear from the dedication to Salona, wife of Gallienus: CIL XIV 5335 (dated to 253-268 AD). See, for Flavius Priscus as imperial augur: Scheid and Granino Cecere (1999) 139, Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Caldelli and Zevi (2010) 238. Note however that this is only a suggestion, since we have no other attestation of the formula ‘religiosa disciplina’.

807 CIL XIV 5340: […] genero / Fl(avi) Prisci p(erfectissimi) v(iri) p(atroni) c(oloniae) […].

808 See chapter II, pages 77-79 and chapter III, pages 136-139.

the institution itself had a special link to Alba Longa, as the town was allegedly ruled by annual *dictatores*, who had taken over the government from the kings long before the Romans destroyed the town.\textsuperscript{810} It is impossible to determine if there is any causal relation between this tradition and the continued or revived existence of the office of *dictator Albanus*, but in the course of history – as we will see further ahead – the narratives surrounding the *feriae Latinae* and the town of Alba Longa increasingly became interwoven.\textsuperscript{811} In this process, the age-old and at the same time constantly renewed office of *dictator* could have played an important part.

In this respect, two other priesthoods that we know from inscriptions are of importance. First, there is the *salius Albanus*, of which we have two examples in the epigraphic record. The Salii are known as an ancient order of Roman priests that danced in armour in honour of Mars and Quirinus, and although again we can only speculate about their cultic roles in this case, ritual dances may have been involved here as well.\textsuperscript{812} Our first example comes from a funerary monument from the early Augustan period found in Rome, where an Antistius Sarculo is commemorated as a *salius Albanus* and the *magister* of this college.\textsuperscript{813} We know nothing about his status or his family and Granino Cecere has suggested that the fact he married his former slave reveals a non-elite background - although the fine quality of his portrait and that of his wife suggests he did have money to spend (figure 4.8).\textsuperscript{814} We have no indication that the *salius* and *magister Albanus* was of equestrian rank and, just like the other early example in our corpus (the senator L. Memmius), this may prove that the *equites* became dominant in the Latin priesthoods in the period after the Augustan reform of Roman priesthoods. The second example of a priest with this title is datable to the late second century AD, and it is more like the Alban priesthoods we have seen before. On an honorary inscription on a large statue base found in the *ager Praenestinus*, the *eques* P. Aelius Tiro is identified as *salius arcis Albanae*.\textsuperscript{815} His military career started under the patronage of Commodus

\textsuperscript{810} Dion. Hal. 5.74.4; Liv. 1.23.4.
\textsuperscript{811} See below, pages 188ff.
\textsuperscript{813} This personage is known from two inscriptions, which are probably from the same funerary monument: CIL VI 2170: L(ucius) Antistius Cn(aei) f(ilius) Hor(atia) Sarculo / salius Albanus dem(um) mag(ister) saliorum // [... and CIL VI 2171: L(ucius) Antestius Cn(aei) f(ilius) Hor(atia) / Sarculo salius Albanus [...] Granino Cecere (1996) 204-206, Rüpke (2005) 640.
\textsuperscript{814} Kockel (1993) 178 - 179, Granino Cecere (1996) 206. Antistius Sarculo was married to one of his *libertae* and two other *liberti* raised this monument for him.
(whose name is erased) when he was only fourteen years of age.\textsuperscript{816} Since his priesthood is the first title to be mentioned on the inscription, it may have been awarded to him as a young man, or it may have carried the greatest prestige. Here, in any case, a religious career is again combined with a typical equestrian career in military service, probably in close connection with the imperial administration.

The latter inscription provides an interesting clue as to where the priest performed his function. His title refers to the \textit{arx Albana}, a location which has variously been interpreted as an archaistic invention (referring to Alba Longa) or perhaps the villa of Domitian at present day Castel Gandolfo.\textsuperscript{817} Recently however, Grandazzi has plausibly argued that the word \textit{arx} may have had an archaistic ring to it, but also referred to a physical location, namely the summit of the \textit{mons Albanus}.\textsuperscript{818} He supports this theory by referring to a number of literary sources, which mainly referred to Caesar's ascent of the hill during the \textit{feriae Latinae} and his return to Rome in the form of an \textit{ovatio}. We will return to Caesar and his interest in the \textit{feriae Latinae} in the final section of this chapter, but for now it is important to acknowledge that the adjective \textit{Albanus} or \textit{Albana} in the title could refer to the physical location of the peak and not just to the mythical or even fictional place of Alba Longa.\textsuperscript{819} This supports the idea that the cult officials we have discussed earlier were active on the \textit{mons Albanus} itself. At the same time, the involvement of Caesar also illustrates how the Latin history of the \textit{feriae Latinae} came to be associated with the Roman (if not Julian) history of Alba Longa and how it may not always be possible – or helpful – to separate the narratives.

The last category of cult personnel discussed here, the \textit{virgines Vestales Albanae}, demonstrate this process well. Of course, the most obvious example of an Alban Vestal virgin is Rhea Sylvia, the mother of Romulus and Remus from Alba Longa. There is evidence however, that Alba Longa's mythical office was somehow appropriated and reinterpreted by the inhabitants of Bovillae, who had a special claim to the religious heritage of Rome's metropolis. We first hear about Vestal virgins that are distinctively different from the Roman ones and defined as \textit{Albanae} in the commentary of

\textsuperscript{816} The use of the title \textit{felix} for Commodus, dates the statue base to 185-192 AD. It was his father Blandus who recorded the fact that Aelius Tiro gained imperial favour at a young age and paid for the monument, \textit{pro amore civitatis}.

\textsuperscript{817} The \textit{arx Albana} as an archaistic invention, with no relation to a specific place: Granino Cecere (1996) 307 and 312. For the \textit{arx Albana} as description of the imperial villa at Castel Gandolfo: Castagnoli (1993) 402ff.

\textsuperscript{818} Grandazzi (2006) 197-212, Grandazzi (2008) 542-545. Grandazzi (2008) 610ff takes this argument one step further, however, and argues that the \textit{arx} on \textit{mons Albanus} – throughout the year – was mainly used as an augural \textit{templum}. He supports this by referring to the analogy of the \textit{arx} on the Capitoline in Rome and the assumption that the \textit{feriae Latinae} required augural \textit{spectio} in the morning. The argument seems rather thin – as pointed out by Ziolkowski (2011) 7-8 – and is not followed here.

\textsuperscript{819} See pages 196ff below.
Asconius on Cicero’s *pro Milone*, who mentions the women among the inhabitants of Bovillae.\footnote{Ascon. Mil. 40.15-18 (on Milo’s process and the witnesses produced): *Multi ex iis qui Bovillis habitabant testimonium dixerunt de eis quae ibi facta erant: coponem occisum, tabernam expugnatam, corpus Clodi in publicum extractum esse. Virgines quoque Albanae dixerunt mulierem ignotam venisse ad se quae Milonis mandato votum solveret, quod Clodius occissus esset. (‘Many of those who lived at Bovillae bore testimony on what happened there — the innkeeper killed, the inn taken by storm, Clodius’ body dragged into the open. The Virgins of Alba also alleged that an anonymous woman had come to them to discharge a vow at Milo’s bidding, for the killing of Clodius’).} In the epigraphic record, the Vestals appear from the mid second century AD onward – not only in Bovillae but also in Tibur and Lavinium – and it is unclear if their position was similar to that of their namesakes in Rome.\footnote{Concerning the Alban Vestals, we find a first example in an honorary inscription found near the eleventh mile of the Via Appia (the supposed location of Bovillae), which is datable to 158 AD. The badly damaged text records the public career of an individual who can be reconstructed as L. Manlius Severus.\footnote{Vestal virgins are attested in Lavinium (CIL XIV 2077) and Tibur (CIL XIV 3677) as well. See Granino Cecere (2003) 67-80 for an overview. She has suggested that their position was largely the same as that of the Vestal Virgins in Rome, but the scarce (and late) evidence does not allow for any definitive conclusions on their ritual roles and organization. Cf: Hemelrijk (2015) 64-65.} His merits included a gift to the local *decuriones* and *Augustales*, because they allowed the creation of a portrait shield of his deceased sister, who is identified as Man[lia] Severina, *virgo Alban maxima*. This not only indicates the presence of the Vestals, but also that there was some form of hierarchy in the order, in which Manlia Severina apparently had a leading position – although it is unclear what this entailed. In the funerary inscription for Manlius Severus himself, he carries the title of *rex sacrorum*, the time-old office that we have earlier discussed as another relic or reinvention of an ancient office that survived into the later religious domain.\footnote{In Bovillae, where the brother and sister came from, the references to ancient priesthoods in inscriptions is particularly significant, as it can be associated with the claim of the town to the religious history of Alba Longa. This is expressed in some literary sources, but mainly in the formula *Albani Longani Bovillenses*, with which the inhabitants of the town are designated in several imperial inscriptions.\footnote{As we will see further ahead, this association between Bovillae and Alba Longa was further strengthened – or, if we choose a more cynical approach, was...} As we will see further ahead, this association between Bovillae and Alba Longa was further strengthened – or, if we choose a more cynical approach, was...}
invented – by the Julio-Claudians, who celebrated and promoted their *origo* in Bovillae with an ancestral cult for the *gens Julia*.825

As far as the Vestal virgins are concerned, we may return to the question we asked before: are there signs that they were actually active on the *mons Albanus*? If we follow Grandazzi’s view, there are good reasons to assume they were. The proof of this is in a second honorary inscription, found in Rome and datable to the third or perhaps even the fourth century AD.826 Here, a lady whose name is unfortunately lost is described as *virgo Vestalis maxima arcis Albanae*. Just like the *salius* discussed before, the reference to the *arx Albanae* in the title may be understood as a sign that her function was performed on the *mons Albanus*. It is also a late testimony of the religious activities there, even though it is – just like in the example of Manlia Severina – uncertain if the Vestal’s position was in some way related to the celebration of the *feriae Latinae*. The cult of Vesta is not otherwise attested on the Alban mount, but considering the political significance of the rituals of the *feriae Latinae* and considering the coinciding traditions of Alba Longa and the festival, it would not stretch the evidence too far to assume that priestesses of Vesta were participants in the ceremonies.

If that was the case for this *virgo Vestalis*, we may however question how important her position still was in the changing religious landscape of the late Empire. Suggestive of the continuity of the office but also of its decline, is the last testimony of a Vestal virgin from Alba, provided by two letters of Symmachus that are dated to about 382 AD.827 Symmachus was a member of the *collegium pontificale* and tried to persuade the urban prefect to punish an Alban Vestal named Primigenia for incest. His attempts apparently failed, and his somewhat desperate tone seems to show the diminished interest of the officials in the regularity of the Alban rites – a prelude to the anti-pagan measures of Gratian that came shortly after and were especially directed against the privileges of the Vestals.828 This is a sign that the worship on the *mons Albanus* – which had probably been fading for a while and had possibly lost its yearly pattern by then – probably found a definitive end at the close of the fourth century AD. In the centuries before, however, we can observe a long continuity of

---

825 See pages 196-199 below.
ritual activity that remained firmly connected to the religious and mythical past of the area. As we can tell from the relatively late date of most of our inscriptions, the priesthoods seem to have gained appeal in the 2nd and 3rd century AD, possibly as a vehicle for non-senatorial elites to establish authority in the religious domain and connect themselves with long established and respected traditions of the Roman state. Although their ritual activities were performed outside of the city boundaries, these priests were connected to the heart of Roman religious tradition. The cult practice preserved a part of the Latin past through the conscious and constructive revival of old, half-forgotten offices, but at the same time it also continuously changed the shape and meaning of that past.

4.8 Roman Jupiter and Latin Jupiter: creating religious and political unity?

Throughout this chapter, we have seen how the cult practice and its history on the Alban mount were connected with the religious and political history of Rome. While we can speculate that the feriae Latinae had its origins in the pre-Roman history of Latium it appears in our literary sources in strict connection with the discourse of Roman dominance over the area. In the material record, the lack of private involvement is striking and, as argued before, Jupiter Latiaris appears to have been manifest as a god only (or mainly) in the context of the feriae Latinae. Although at the current, fragmented state of research it is impossible to draw any final conclusions, it seems that the metaphorical and political significance of the rites during the feriae Latinae contributed considerably to the celebrity of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris. The celebration of Latinitas, of being part of a Latin community, remained an important moment in the Roman ritual calendar, as it connected the religious history of the region with the contemporary reality of an expanding Roman Empire. In the last part of this chapter, I will explore this link between the Latin and Roman history of the feriae Latinae further by looking into the possibility of corresponding festivities in Rome during the festival. Also, I will examine if and how the cult on the mons Albanus became associated – if not partly equated – with the other important Jupiter cult in the region, that of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline hill in Rome.

For the proceedings in the urbs in the days surrounding and during the feriae Latinae, very few sources are available. There is no indication of the preparations for the festival, nor do we know which route the magistrates took to the mons Albanus and back. What we know, is that because of

---

829 There is no material evidence to support this theory on the decline of the cult, but the general decree with which Theodosius prohibited pagan cults in 392 AD seems a definitive terminus post quem non. See further: Grandazzi (2008) 492-493. The scholarship on the diminishing importance of the pagan cults in Rome in the third and fourth centuries AD is extensive, but see the monumental work of Cameron (2010) 33-92 for an overview of the developments between the reign of Constantine and Theodosius and for further bibliography.
the absence of all of Rome’s magistrates, a special urban prefect was appointed: the *praefectus urbi feriarum Latinarum causa*. According to Strabo, a ‘young noble’ was appointed ‘in charge of the city as governor for the time of the sacrifice’.\(^{830}\) The office was typically held at the beginning of an administrative career – as is amply attested by honorary inscriptions – and the young prefects were not expected to conduct political business during their short term of office.\(^{831}\) In fact, as suggested by a passage in Cicero, the *feriae Latinae* were probably accompanied by a number of free days in the Roman calendar. In one of his letters to his brother, Cicero mentions that he needs to take care of Tulia’s engagement to Crassipes, ‘but it is the two days after the Latin Festival (now ended), which are holy days, and he is just leaving town’\(^{832}\). Elsewhere, in *De Republica*, he has Scipio Africanus spending the days surrounding the *feriae Latinae* in his country house, suggesting that there was ample time for leisure during this period.\(^{833}\)

So, while there is no certainty about the duration of the rites on the Alban Mount – it was tentatively argued earlier that it remained just one day throughout its history – we may assume that the festival was accompanied by some free days in the calendar, in which Rome was devoid of most of its leading magistrates. Some modern interpreters have maintained, however, that the festivities of the *feriae Latinae* did not just entail a short holiday out of town, but were also – perhaps simultaneously – celebrated in Rome itself.\(^{834}\) Pliny mentions a chariot race on the Capitoline hill, after which the winner was rewarded with *absinthium*.\(^{835}\) As a sole reference, this claim is hard to believe, if only because the supposed location does not exactly allow for chariot racing. The Christian apologists – such as Tertullian and Minucius Felix – who describe the ritual much later (from the third century AD onwards), provide a rather grim image of the festivities for Jupiter Latiaris, which they claim took place in Rome.\(^{836}\) The details in their descriptions vary, but the authors agree that the rites involved a form of human sacrifice: the statue of the god was sprinkled with the blood of a *bestiarius*, an animal fighter who was – in the interpretation of Tertullian – a

---

\(^{830}\) Strab. 5.3.2.: τῇ πόλει δ’ ἐφιστήσαν ἄρχοντα πρὸς τὸν τῆς θυσίας χρόνον τῶν γνωρίμων τινά νέων.

\(^{831}\) In the epigraphic sources, the office appears in its full form, but also as the abridged *praefectus feriarum Latinarum*: CIL VI 1343; 1421; 1358; 1422; 31632; 31819; 37079; 41076; 41138; 41144; 41162; 41214; 41229; 41233; 41239; 41240; CIL IX 3667; CIL XI 1432; CIL XIV 3609; AE 1916, 118; AE 1973, 200. That these *praefecti* were not supposed to behave as politicians, can be deduced from: Tac. Ann. 4.36; Suet. Nero 7; Gell. 14.8.

\(^{832}\) Cic. Quint.fr. 2.4.4: [...] sed dies erant duo qui post Latinas habentur religiosi (ceterum confectum erat Latiar), et erat exiturus.


\(^{835}\) Plin. NH 27.28.45: [...] siquidem Latinarum feriis quadrigae certant in Capitolio victorque absinthium bibit, credo, sanitatem praemio dari honorificis arbitratis maioribus. (‘[...] since that at the Latin festival there is a race for four-horse chariots on the Capitoline Hill, the winner of which takes a draught of wormwood, our ancestors thinking, I believe, that health was a very grand prize to give’).

condemned criminal. It is not difficult to recognize the polemic nature of this discourse, which answered to an abhorrence of human sacrifice that was shared by pagans and Christians alike. As such, this rite for Jupiter Latiaris has often been dismissed as a complete invention and an obvious inversion of the accusations of blood sacrifices that were usually directed at Christians.

Recently however, Grandazzi has suggested that there may have been an element of truth in the polemic narratives. He points out that the story of the blood offer was not disputed in pagan sources and is even repeated by one non-Christian author, the Neoplatonist Porphyry. Furthermore, Ittai Gradel has drawn attention to a passage in Suetonius, where it is claimed that Caligula liked to be in immortal company and was hailed as Jupiter Latiaris by some. Gradel reconstructs this as a pun on the bloodthirstiness of the emperor, a theme that was exploited more often by Roman authors. The salutation of Caligula would only make sense to Roman readers if Jupiter Latiaris really did receive human blood, in some form or another. Although it was clearly exploited by later Christian apologists, Gradel suggests that the detail of the sprinkling of the statue with blood was based on a genuine ritual act, be it that the criminal was executed, not sacrificed. While this may be a clever line of reasoning, it fails to take into account that – apart from the openly polemic Christian passages – the cult of Jupiter Latiaris is not attested in the city of Rome at all. Regarding the feriae Latinae, the odd passage in Cassius Dio about the chariot race cannot be considered strong evidence either and our main body of urban evidence – the inscriptions in which the praefectus urbi feriarum Latinarum causa appears – actually refers to the departure of Rome’s elites. Thus, the cult practice seems clearly focused on the mons Albanus, away from Rome, and

---

837 See, most clearly, Tert. Apol. 9.5: Ecce in illa religiosissima urbe Aeneadarum piorum est Jupiter quidam quem ludis suis humano sanguine proluunt. Sed bestiarii, inquitis. Hoc, opinor, minus quam hominis? An hoc turpius, quod mali hominis? Certe tamen de homicidio funditur. (‘But look you! in that most religious of all cities, the city of the pious race of Aeneas, is a certain Jupiter, whom they drench with human blood at his own games. ‘Yes, but only the blood of a man condemned already to the beasts,” you say? That, I take it, makes it something less than a man’s blood? Or is it not so disgraceful because it is the blood of a bad man? At all events it is at least the blood of murder’). Loeb translation with adjustments.

838 Lennon (2010) 74-77, Rives (1995) 65-85, esp. 74-77 for several examples of this rhetorical strategy, with which Christian authors ‘turned the tables’ (retorquere is the verb that Tertulian [Tert. Apol. 9.6-8] uses) against their accusers.


840 Porph. Abst. 2.56.9. Gradel (2002) 241, points out that the formulation is very similar to that of the Christian apologists and that is likely that the author – even though he cannot be accused of Christian sympathies – derived his knowledge from common hearsay rather than from personally witnessing the rite.

841 Suet. Calig. 22.2-3: [...] artePalatiiadForumusquepromovit, ataque aedesCastoriset Pollucis in vestibulum transfigurata, consistens saepe inter frates deos, medium adorandum se adeuntibus exhibebat; et quidam eum Latiaremladem consalutarunt. (‘[...] he built out a part of the Palace [or Palatine] as far as the Forum, and making the temple of Castor and Pollux its vestibule, he often took his place between the divine brothers, and exhibited himself there to be worshipped by those who presented themselves; and some hailed him as Jupiter Latiaris’).

insofar as the *feriae Latinae* created cohesion between the Roman and Latin religious history, it was not through a corresponding ritual programme.

Still, it is enlightening to reflect on the similarities between the activities on the *mons Albanus* and the *mons Capitolinus*, as we see that the ritual practices on both hills— or rather: the narratives surrounding these practices— repeatedly coincide in our sources. We have already discussed a passage in Pliny, who claims that during the *feriae Latinae*, chariot races were held on the Capitoline hill.\(^843\) The sacrifice of the bull on the *mons Albanus*— the climax of the *feriae Latinae* and the beginning of the war season for Roman magistrates with *imperium*— is paralleled by the ritual initiation of the consular year in the city itself, which included the sacrifice of two bulls at the altar of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.\(^844\) Furthermore, there is an isolated passage in Livy, who claims that C. Cicereius dedicated a temple to Juno Moneta on the *mons Albanus*, after his victory against the Corsicans in 168 BC.\(^845\) This temple has not been attested elsewhere in the literary sources, nor can it be traced in the archaeological record. What we do recognize is the clear analogy with the religious landscape of Rome, where the temple of Juno Moneta was located next to the large temple for Roman Jupiter on the Capitolium.\(^846\)

The most obvious parallel, however, is presented by the *triumphus*: the ritual victory procession into Rome at the end of a victorious war, which usually ended with a solemn sacrifice by the commanding *imperator* to Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline hill. According to the extant sources, four of these *triumphi* occurred on the *mons Albanus*, in 231, 211, 197 and 172 BC.\(^847\) There, they presumably (although this is not stated directly) ended with an offer to Jupiter Latiaris. When and why was such an alternative triumph celebrated? From comments in Livy and Valerius Maximus, we learn that it happened only when the Senate denied a regular triumph and the commanders decided on their own initiative to lead their troops up the Alban Mount.\(^848\) As such it was less prestigious than the Roman version and it no doubt attracted fewer spectators, although

\(^{843}\) Plin. *NH* 27.28.45. See note 835.
\(^{845}\) Liv. 45.15.10: *Eodem anno C. Cicereius aedem Monetae in monte Albano dedicavit quinquennio post quam vovit.*
\(^{847}\) 231 BC: C. Papirius Maso; 211 BC: M. Claudius Marcellus; 197 BC: Q. Minucius Rufus; 172 BC: C. Cicereius. A more thorough discussion of these commanders and the circumstances of the triumphs can be found in: Rosenberger (2009) 31-33.
\(^{848}\) Thus Livy, on the Alban triumph of C. Cicereius, 42.21.7: *Is expositis quas in Corsica res gessisset postulatoque frustra triumpho, in monte Albano, quad iam in morem venerat, ut sine publica auctoritate fieret, triumphavit.* (‘When he had set forth his achievements in Corsica and had vainly demanded a triumph, he celebrated his triumph on the Alban Mount, which had now become customary in order to permit the celebration of a triumph without the authorization of the state’). Cf: Liv. 26.21.2-6; 33.23.3-4; 33.23.8-9; 45.38.4; Val. Max. 3.6.5; Plin. *NH* 15.38.126.
Livy mentions instances where the Alban triumph displayed impressive amounts of booty. Although it was a day’s march from Rome and the hill was steep, the road (presumably already paved in the Republic) would have made the ascent easier. What is remarkable is that the contested celebrations nonetheless ended up in the Fasti Triumphales (the inscribed triumphal records in Rome) and thus seem to have been recorded and remembered as legitimate rituals after all.

It has been argued, for example by Cory Brennan, that the triumphal processions on the mons Albanus were created ex nihilo in the third century BC, when a precedent was set by C. Papirius Maso, the first commander who resolved the issue of his rejected triumph in Rome by heading to the cult site of Jupiter Latiaris instead. The importance of this ‘secondary’ triumph would then have diminished quickly in the second century BC, as was for example clear from the humble status of the last of our known triumphators, C. Cicereius (a former scribe of Scipio Africanus). Other interpreters have resisted this reading and have disputed that the Roman triumph served as a model for the Alban variant. They argued that the triumph on the mons Albanus had a longer history, as it probably was the place where the Latins celebrated common victories before the Roman dominance over the region. The first triumphator who appears in our sources, C. Papirius Maso, was a pontifex and thus would have had access to religious archives that preserved ritual history. As such, he could have revived, not invented, the ancient custom. As we have remarked before in this thesis, there is no way to prove whether it was Rome or the Latin cities that took the lead in the development of religio-political institutions in archaic Latium. Nonetheless, in this case, the longer and much better attested history of the triumph in Rome seems to support the idea that the

---

849 On the triumphus of Minucius Felix, 33.23.8-9: *Is triumphus, ut loco et fama rerum gestarum et quod sumptum non erogatum ex aerario omnes sciebant, inhonoratior fuit, ita signis carpentisque et spoulis ferme aequabat* (‘This triumph was of lesser note because of the place where it was held, the gossip about his exploits, and because all knew that the cost of it was taken, not duly requisitioned, from the treasury, but nevertheless in standards and wagons and spoils it almost equalled the other’). Earlier in the passage, Livy (23.33.3-4) also mentions the fact that Minucius followed the example of many distinguished men (*multorum clarorum virorum exemplo dixit*) but in fact, only one of these instances is mentioned before (that of Papirius Maso in 231 BC: 26.21.2-6). On the lower status of this triumph, see: Rosenberger (2009) 29-39.


851 Versnel (1970) 165-166, Mommsen (1874) 134, Brennan (1996) 315-337. Earlier Mommsen (1874) 134, had identified the Alban triumph a late creation. Versnel (1970) 165-166, argued that the Alban triumph was a ‘substitute triumph’ but does (281-283) give some credit to the argument that it may have had earlier orgins and was recreated in the third century BC.

852 Brennan (1996) 328-329 argues that the embarrassment over the triumph of Cicereius – who had paraded 2000 pounds of beeswax as part of his war spoils – lingered and definitively put an end to the Alban triumph. Cicereius was also the one who allegedly dedicated a temple to Juno Moneta (see page 194).


triumphators on the mons Albanus used Latin Jupiter because of his association with Roman Jupiter – and not the other way around.\footnote{One could ask, for example, why the Fasti traced the Roman triumph back to the time of Romulus, while there was no similar projection in the Alban case and Papirius Maso is described as primus in m[onte] Albano [triumphavit]. On the much debated origins of the Roman triumph, in which most authors now recognize an defining Etruscan influence, see: Bonfante (1970) 49-66, Versnel (1970) 284-303, Rüpke (2006) 251-289, Beard (2009) 305-315.}

Both Jupiter Optimus Maximus and Jupiter Latiaris were strongly connected to the politics of the Roman state and their rites annually formed the beginning and the end of Roman war efforts. These common spheres of influence created overlap in the literary discourse, but also (partly) in cultic practices, as is most clearly exemplified by the triumphus. Finally, it should be added that both sanctuaries were linked visually as well. The Alban mount was – and still is – clearly visible from the Capitolium. Grandazzi even suggested that it formed the orientation point in the augural spectio from the Roman hill, while a corresponding augural templum on the mons Albanus would have been oriented towards Rome.\footnote{Grandazzi (2008) 599-600 and plate 20. He supports this by claiming that the Via Latina – which according to Rodríguez Almeida (2002) 11 defined the orientation of the forma Urbis Romae – was directed at the mons Albanus and led the augur’s spectio too. The hypothesis is supported by Simón (2011) 127-128.} As emphasized by Andrew Ziolkowski, this is mere speculation and is actually contested by a number of literary sources that describe the auspices as dependant on cardinal directions not topography (in particular, they looked east).\footnote{Such as Dion. Hal. 2.5.2-4. Ziolkowski (2011) 7-8.} Even without the augural aspect though, the high mons Albanus must have formed an obvious focal point in the city landscape of Rome. Pliny suggests that a reversed situation was possible as well, claiming that the triumphant general Spurius Calvinus made such a huge bronze statue of Capitoline Jupiter out of his Samnite war booty in 293 BC that it could be seen from the cult site of Jupiter Latiaris.\footnote{Plin. NH 34.43: Fecit et Sp. Carvilius Iovem, qui est in Capitolio, victis Samnitibus sacrata lege pugnantibus e pectoralibus eorum orceisque et galeis. Amplitudo tanta est, ut conspiciatur a Latiari love. (’Spurius Carvillus also made the Jupiter that stands in the Capitol, after defeating the Samnites in the war which they fought under a most solemn oath; the metal was obtained from their breastplates, greaves and helmets, and the size of the figure is so great that if can be seen from the cult site of Jupiter Latiaris.’) Loeb translation with minor adaptations.} This claim may be hard to substantiate topographically – if only because we do not know what the orientation of the remains on the mons Albanus was – but it is another example of the way both Jupiter sanctuaries were explicitly paralleled in our literary sources; a confrontation that was no doubt further stimulated by the sight lines that connected the sites.

In the Fasti Triumphales there is one last reference to the mons Albanus, many years after the final triumph took place: on January 26th in 44 BC, Julius Caesar is recorded to have celebrated an ovatio ex monte Albanio.\footnote{CIL 1² 52: [...] C(aius) Iulius C(ai) f(ilius) C(ai) n(epos) Caesar VI dict(ator) IIII ovans a(nno) DC[CIX] ex monte Albano VII K(alendas) Febr(uarias) I.} An ovatio was a minor triumph, which was celebrated when the formal conditions – a decisive victory in a war and a certain number of of enemies slain, for example – were
not met and the Senate denied an official triumph. As an important difference with the other instances on the Fasti, Caesar is reported to have held the ovation ex (from) not in (on) the Alban mount. Cassius Dio provides an explanation for this, when he narrates that Caesar – as part of the exceptional privileges that he acquired in the last year before his death – was allowed to ride back to the city on horseback after performing the rites of the feriae Latinae. That was clearly against normal procedure, since generals who were awarded an ovatio had to walk into town. In Caesar’s case, it was even more remarkable, because he was a dictator at the time and dictatores were not allowed to be on horseback at all. The ovation of 44 BC was different in other ways as well: coming from the feriae Latinae, the Senate was most likely (and contrary to custom) in the procession and instead of the required toga praetexta and myrtle wreath, Caesar probably sported the toga picta (the purple and embroidered dress of the triumphator) and laurel wreath he was allowed to wear since 45 BC. Moreover, there was no victory to be celebrated in 44 BC – not even a minor one. All these innovations are presented in the sources (especially in Cassius Dio) as part of Caesar’s accidental or deliberate flirtations with the kingship and, after having ended the ovation with the final sacrifice to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Caesar significantly found his statues adorned with crowns.

During the descent from the Alban mount, the dictator was also hailed as king for the first time, and although according to our sources rejected the title, Stefan Weinstock has argued that the ovatio after the feriae Latinae represented a deliberate and strategic stage in Caesars royal aspirations. He had been careful to attend to the feriae Latinae before, even during the hasty preparations for the war against Pompey in 49 BC. In that year, the celebration was curious: Caesar was not one of the consuls, and the sacrifice took place in December, while the elected consuls had already performed the sacrifice earlier in the year. It is uncertain if the ceremony was performed as an instauratio (because of a ritual error in the earlier procedures) or as a special honour awarded by the Senate, but in any case it shows the continued attention of Caesar for the

---

860 Versnel (1970) 165-172, Beard (2009) 62-63. After Valerius Maximus (2.8), it is often assumed that there was an official minimum of 5000 enemies that had to be killed before a triumph was awarded, but Beard (2009) 209-211 questions the authority of this rule (and some of the other rules from the ius triumphale), claiming that Valerius was assembling and combining various (conflicting) practices from the Republic.
861 Cass. Dio 44.4.3: ... μετά ταῦτα ἀνοξής τῶν Λατίνων ἔπε κέλητος περὶ τῆς πόλεως ἐν οἷς ἀλβανοῦ ὑσταλαύνειν (‘and after the feriae Latinae to ride from the Alban mount into the city on horseback’).
862 Liv. 23.14.2; Plut. Fab. 4.2. The dictator appointed a magister equitum (master of the horse), strictly subordinate to him and could only be on horseback when he went out of the city, to go to war.
863 Cass. Dio 43.43.1; Suet. Caes. 45.2. For the dress of the triumphator see: Beard (2009) 225-230.
864 The bibliography surrounding the aspirations of Caesar and their relation to religion is large, but sees as an introduction: Wardle (2015) 100-111.
865 Weinstock (1971) 320-331. These events lead up to the more famous incident during the Lupercalia of 44 BC (February 15th), during which Antony offered a royal diadem to Caesar and hailed him as king. Caesar refused the title and had the diadem sent to the Capitoline temple.
866 Caes. BC 3.2.1. Cf: Lucan. 5.400-402.
feriae Latinae, which is also clear from the fact that he made his adopted nephew C. Octavius (the later Octavian) praefectus urbi feriarum latinarum causa in 47 BC.867

According to Weinstock, this devotion should not surprise us. The celebration of the Latin festival on the mons Albanus fitted well within the dynastic claims of the gens Iulia, which traced its ancestry back to Iulus, who is normally identified as Ascanius, son of Aeneas and founder of the royal dynasty of Alba Longa.868 Since 45 BC, Caesar is reported to have worn the red boots of the Alban kings, which were a clear reference to this background.869 The Trojan ancestral claims of the later Julio-Claudian emperors – firmly connected to Aeneas’ divine mother Venus – are well known and well-studied, but Caesar was by no means the first to exploit the theme.870 From coins and literary fragments, it is clear that the Iulii associated themselves with Ascanius, Alba Longa and Venus from the second century BC onwards.871 In Bovillae, the Iulii advertised a different divine theme: they set up an altar for Vediovis – a somewhat ambiguous god who is mostly identified as a young Jupiter – on behalf of their gens and ‘in accordance with Alban law’.872 Here, we see a new indication that the town of Bovillae was strongly associated with Ascanius, Alba Longa and Venus; we may even speculate that the legendary claims and familial strategies of the Iulii contributed a great deal to the establishment and continuity of the link.

The mythical and religious ties between Julius Caesar, the mons Albanus and the Latin festival are not always straightforward. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to see, with Weinstock, how the celebration of the feriae Latinae provided a great opportunity for Caesars political and religious

867 Nic. Dam. V. Caes. 5.13.

868 There are different versions of the myth explaining the relation between Aeneas, Ascanius and Iulus. In Vergil’s *Aeneid* (1.267-271) Iulus is the son of Aeneas and Creusa, whose name was changed into Ascanius after arrival in Italy. The earliest version of the myth appears in a fragment of Cato (fr. 9 – ed. Peter), where Ascanius takes on the name of Iulus after slaying Mezentius (king of the Etruscans of Caere) on the battlefield. Other versions relate that he was first named Euryleon (Dion. Hal. 1.65.1), or that he was the son of Aeneas and Lavinia (Liv. 1.1.11), who could be distinguished from an older Iulus who was the son of Aeneas and Creusa (Liv. 1.3.2). For Caesar’s personal involvement with this ancestral tradition and his attention to the traditions of early Rome, see: Smith (2009) 249-264. For the earlier development of the Aeneas myth and its arrival in Italy: Gruen (1992) 6-51. Cf. pages 154-155, notes 658-660 for the list of Alban kings.

869 Cass. Dio 43.43.2.


871 It was the branch of the Iulii Caesares that first advertised the Trojan ancestry, which is for example visible in the coins of moneyers S. Lucius Caesar in 129 BC (RRC 258) and L. Iulius Caesar in 103 BC (RCC 320). The claim was probably well-known to Roman elites by the time Cato wrote his *Origines*. See further: Erskine (2001) 17-23, Farney (2007) 53-60, Badian (2009) 11-22, Hekster (2015) 240-250

872 CIL XIV 2387: Vediovei Patrei / gentelles iuliei // Vediovei aara // leege Albana dicata. The altar is in almost 1 meter in length and height and can be dated partly because of the attempt at archaized spelling and the (inconsistent) doubling of vowels that was introduced by the poet and grammarian L. Accius (170-86 BC). It is now kept in the gardens of Palazzo Colonna in Rome. Weinstock (1971) 8-12, plate 2, Badian (2009) 14-15. On Vediovis, who also appears as Veiovis in the sources: Radke (1965) 306-310, Lipka (2009) 138-139, where the multiple associations between Jupiter and Vediovis are explained.
ambitions. The multiple references to Jupiter, the relation between the rites and Roman political authority, the symbolic initiation of (justified) warfare and the links to his ancestral (and regal) roots in Alba Longa, may explain Caesars continued interest the festival. Weinstock assumes that the celebrations – much like all of Caesars religious and political activities, especially in the year before his death – formed part of a calculated autocracy and the establishment of a kingship, in 'a grand scheme which cannot have been planned by anyone else except Caesar himself'.\textsuperscript{873} This seems fairly overstated and the book is rightfully controversial; the narratives could have also been shaped by later authors explaining and rationalizing Caesars rise and fall. Apart from Caesars personal motivation however, the continued attention of the Iulii to the \textit{feriae Latinae} – which is also expressed by Augustus’ presence on the mountain and the creation of the \textit{Fasti} – gave a new dimension and significance to the rites. It seems likely that in this period, the diverse narratives concerning the history of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris, concerning consular authority in Rome and concerning Roman military supremacy in Latium and beyond, came together and were (more firmly) connected with the legendary history of Alba Longa.\textsuperscript{874} \textit{The feriae Latinae} established a relation between origin myth, religious history and contemporary cult practice that was not only valuable for the Iulii but that turned out to be lasting: the festival showed how Latin history was part of Roman history and vice-versa.

\textbf{4.9 Conclusions}

Jupiter Latiaris was, from the perspective of our Roman sources, the quintessential example of a Latin god. The name of the deity, his festival (the \textit{feriae Latinae}), and the location of his sanctuary – towering high above the lakes of the Alban hills and visible from the entire region, including the sanctuaries of Juno Sospita and Diana Nemorensis – underline the centrality of the cult. As was shown through the analysis of the literary sources, the celebrations of the \textit{feriae Latinae} were perceived as a direct heritage of the Latin past; in the sacrificial feast, the ancient bond between Rome and the Latin cities was relived and renewed. This constituted an important moment in the Roman ritual year: not only did representatives of the Latin villages come to the hilltop to worship, but all of Rome’s magistrates were also obliged to participate in the proceedings. The consuls established a date at the beginning of their office and only after the rites had been performed correctly, could they leave the city for their troops in the provinces. In this way, the Roman wars of conquest – in which enemies were turned into allies – were always preceded by the symbolic celebration of Rome’s first religious and political bonds with the Latins.

\textsuperscript{873} Weinstock (1971) 270.
\textsuperscript{874} Cf: Smith (2012) 275-278.
On the specifics of this past however, there is little consensus in the sources. Roman authors debated whether the cult was a Roman initiative, instituted by Tarquinius Superbus long before the Roman dominance over the region was an accomplished fact, or whether it was a a pre-Roman celebration of Latin tribes, of which Rome later took control. As modern scholars we may immediately recognize the many forms of anachronism that are preserved in the literary discourse, but – as I have argued – it would not be a valid approach to smooth out these discrepancies and try to identify the ‘real’ origins of the cult on the Alban mount. In the context of the growing Roman empire, the explanation and justification of the feriae Latinae through historical and historicizing narratives was an intrinsic part of the festivities themselves, as it provided a model for Roman relationships with the outside world.

When we move from the mythical origins of the cult to the cult practice during the Roman Republic and empire, the literary discourse is, to a certain degree, supported by the material sources. The mountain was made accessible by a long and well-constructed road and on the hilltop itself, a large wall may have – at least from the second century BC – surrounded the temenos. Moreover, reports in the archival sources suggest that the archaeological landscape was not always as desolate as it appears at the moment. The order of the Passionists, the monks who inhabited the hill from the 18th century onwards, seem to have destroyed and removed remains from the site unhindered in a series of building campaigns. As the analysis above has demonstrated, their accounts are full of interpretation problems, but the drastic building activity has dramatically changed our view of the sanctuary. Whereas we cannot identify a religious structure in the scarce remains we have at the moment – the largest structures date to the second century AD and seem to have belonged to a house rather than a sanctuary building – the discovered walls and votives reported by the monks appear to point to a ritual use of the hill. This is circumstantial yet important evidence, and new excavations on the monte Cavo may well contribute considerably to our knowledge of the layout of the sanctuary. Still, even with these methodological issues taken into account, the material evidence for the cult of Jupiter Latiaris can be considered meagre. The parts of the hilltop on which it was possible to excavate systematically (such as the convent garden) only produced a few traces of religious activity; the almost complete lack of votive material is striking, especially in the light of other cults in the region like that of Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita. Even if we imagine the cult place as an open air sanctuary, this apparent lack of community and elite involvement is puzzling.

In this chapter, I have suggested that we can we explain this relative lack of visible votive activity by looking at the specific ritual context for the worship of Jupiter Latiaris. Not connected to a particular municipium in Latium Vetus and without a (detectable) visual representation, the god
perhaps attracted fewer individual worshippers throughout the year than other cults in the region and primarily became manifest during the days of the feriae Latinae. This does not make the worship in any way less relevant, and it is important to realize that many of the ritual elements that were key characteristics of the feriae Latinae – such as the sacrificial slaughter of a bull and a ritual prayer – may have left little trace in the material record; it was the actions themselves and the people involved that evoked the Latin past. Shifting our attention from the structural remains to the ritual procedures at the site, also allows us to recognize a fairly distinguished cultic organization, in which we can detect several of the actors participating in this process of memory making. First of all, there is the involvement of the Roman state, as represented by the consuls. As we have seen, the feriae Latinae constituted one of the defining moments of consular authority in Rome, and their guidance over the rites is recorded by the formula Latinae fuerunt in the Fasti feriarum Latinarum. The calendar, found on the hilltop itself and put up in the Augustan period, forms an important link between the literary tradition, the cult practice and the landscape in which the cult was celebrated. The inscribed memory also shows how the later emperors presented themselves in line with the religious authority of their consular office. This connection seems to have been particularly relevant for Caesar, Augustus and later Julian emperors, whose attachment to the rites is especially well documented and who could boast an ancestral link to the mythical landscape of Alba Longa. I have argued, in line with earlier interpretations by Weinstock and Smith, that Caesar was well aware of the religious and political significance of the feriae Latinae and consciously exploited the symbolic associations for his own benefit. Vice-versa, the traditions surrounding the cult – most notably the connection between Jupiter Latiaris, the Latin allies and their relation to mythical Alba Longa – may have taken on a new significance by the attention of the Iulii.

It was not only the presence of Rome’s highest elite, however, that shaped the cult practice on the Alban mount. Through an analysis of mostly epigraphic sources, I have identified a priestly organization that connected the rites to a larger group of worshippers and religious officials in the Alban hills, but also – and very explicitly – to the past of that area. In the case of Jupiter Latiaris and the feriae Latinae, I have analysed the presence of sacerdotes Cabenses, pontifices and dictatores Albani, salii Albani and virgines Vestales Albanae. Although not all of these priesthoods can be decisively connected to the cultic proceedings of the feriae Latinae, the reference to the arx Albana does seem to locate them on the Alban mount, which makes a connection to the rites for Jupiter Latiaris plausible. Remarkably, almost all of our epigraphic testimonies date from the second and third centuries AD. We cannot determine with certainty whether the late proliferation of ancient titles was a direct heritage from the Latin past or a later archaistic invention, but what we can observe is a society that was well aware of its religious heritage and engaged with it directly. From the available evidence, we
unfortunately cannot deduce much information on what these officials actually did on the hilltop, but the picture that emerges of their social and political background allows us to formulate some general hypotheses on the position of the priests. Whereas the salii Albani and the sacerdotes Cabenses appear in our record with relatively modest public careers, the function of dictator was – as we have seen earlier for the dictatores in Lanuvium – a distinguished post, perhaps awarded to a rich outsider as an homage or a sign of gratitude. Furthermore, it is striking that the priesthoods connected with the Latin cults seem to have had a distinct appeal for members of the equestrian class. In the material discussed above, many of the men combined their Alban function with a position as augur in the imperial colleges (in the Etrusca disciplina), which was another way for equites to distinguish themselves in the religious domain. Wissowa’s suggestion that this focus was the result of Augustus’ reform of the urban priesthoods in the city of Rome – which were available only to men of senatorial rank – needs to be substantiated through further research, but we may tentatively conclude that, for ambitious equites looking for ways of associating themselves with traditional Roman state religion, the ostensibly ancient priesthoods surrounding the cult on the Alban mount were as close as one could get.
Chapter V: Conclusions

In the year 340 BC, tensions were running high in Rome. Constant interference in the military affairs of their neighbours had brought the Romans to the verge of a new war with the Latins and bloodshed seemed inevitable. Although, according to Livy, the Latins were confident that they could easily defeat the Romans in the field, the Latin commander Lucius Annius Setinus made his way up to the Capitol one last time to negotiate for peace. Before the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, he was received by the Senate, and – unimpressed by the sacred surroundings – he stepped forward ‘like some conqueror who had taken the Capitol by storm’, according to Livy. 875 In the passionate speech that follows, Annius warns the Romans that they are up against a large majority of Latins, and that even their own colonies had turned against them. Nonetheless, the commander urges for friendship and unity among all who shared Latin blood, as Livy records:

“One consul should be chosen from Rome, the other from Latium, the Senate should be drawn in equal proportions from both nations, there should be one people and one state; and that we may have the same seat of empire and the same name for all, by all means let this be our city, since one side must make concessions,—and may good come of it to both peoples!—and let us all be known as Romans.” 876

The bold statement was not taken lightly by the Roman consul Titus Manlius Torquatus, who swore before Jupiter that he would come to the Senate with his sword and slay every Latin who set foot in the Curia with his own hands. 877 Unsurprisingly, the peace offer was turned down and one last brutal war was fought. That this would not end well for the Latins was clear from the start: their commander Annius, furiously coming down from in the Capitol, tripped over his own feet, fell down and was knocked unconscious. After their final defeat in 338 BC, the Latins were united with the Romans, but not on equal terms or to equal advantage, as they had to suffer the loss of lands, political independence and – in some cases – religious authority. All Romans may have been Latins, but in this case, not all Latins were Romans.

In this dissertation, I have studied the ways Romans engaged with their Latin past. By doing so, I have presented a dichotomy that is, in a sense, artificial: from their earliest beginnings, Romans

875 Liv. 8. 5.2: [...] Annius, tamquam victor armis Capitolium cepisset.
876 Liv. 8.5.5-6: Consulem alterum Roma, alterum ex Latio creari oportet, senatus partem aequam ex utraque gente esse, unum populum, unam rem publicam fieri; et ut imperii eadem sedes sit idemque omnibus nomen, quoniam ab altera utra parte concedi necesse est, quod utrisque bene vertat, sit haec sane patria potior, et Romani omnes vocemur.
877 Liv. 8.5.7-8: [...] gladio cinctum in senatum venturum se esse palam diceret, et quaecumque in curia Latinum vidisset, sua manu interempturum.
were Latins, and – as we have seen in many of the sources discussed in the chapters above – they were well aware of their shared kinship, history, language and religious background. At the same time, however, Latins were actively remembered as non-Romans, as enemies. As the passage above illustrates well, they may have claimed a share in the Roman success, but were also just the first of many conquered enemies – peregrini, as Livy labels them.\textsuperscript{878}

In my research, I have investigated this dual relationship with the Latin past by focusing on a crucial element of that past: religion. In the case studies that form the core of my work, I have studied in detail the three large sanctuaries of the Alban hills and the deities that resided there: Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita, and Jupiter Latiaris. Located less than a day’s travel southeast of Rome, these deities were among the first foreign cults to be added to the Roman pantheon through military conquest, but – as with the communities of the Alban hills – contacts existed long before Roman supremacy over the region was established. Notwithstanding this long communal history, the specific Latin history of the deities remained important as well, in literary discourse as well as in the material record. Making use of insights from the developing field of memory studies, I have argued that the Latin past of the Alban gods is best understood as something that was an active part of everyday cult practice: it was perceived, experienced, communicated and promoted by the worshippers who visited the cults. The discourses on the origins and early histories of the deities were not static relics of a distant past, but they were repeatedly reinterpreted, reframed and even reinvented by the communities and individuals engaging with that past. As such, worshipping a Latin deity could become part of sharing and performing a Latin identity.

By analyzing the cult practices for Diana, Juno and Jupiter in detail, I have reconstructed the process of memory making and the context in which this happened, not necessarily the memories themselves as fixed results of this process. At the same time, while I have chosen to emphasize the contextual and dynamic nature of the Latin past, I do not wish to deny or devalue the long continuity of worship that actually existed at the cult sites. As the overview of material remains presented in this thesis has clearly shown, the worship at the large sanctuaries of the Alban hills can be traced back to the pre-Roman and pre-urban world of the early Latins. Votive material from as early as the eight century BC was found along the shores of lake Nemi; on the Colle San Lorenzo in Lanuvium a hut from this period was even identified as the earliest cult structure. Archaeological research in recent decades has focused primarily on these early beginnings, and even when I have questioned some of the arguments with which the excavators have connected the early finds to the later cult practice and to the mythological narratives in Roman literary sources, the religious continuity that can be deduced from these earliest nuclei of worship is in itself remarkable and

\textsuperscript{878} Liv. 8.5.7.
significant. My argument has been that, by focusing exclusively on the earliest beginnings in an attempt to pierce the Roman layers of interpretation and reach the original Latin core, we miss the role these gods and their pasts played in the contemporary society of the Roman Republic and Empire.

In our discussion of the three deities of the Alban hills, we have encountered many questions that have triggered decades of academic debate, but ultimately seem unanswerable. Can a hut from the eight century BC in Lanuvium be identified as an early cult building? Was the temple of Diana Nemorensis older than that of Diana Aventinensis, or vice-versa? Was there or was there not a temple for Jupiter Latiaris on the *mons Albanus*? Even if future archaeological research would somehow resolve all these questions – and, certainly in the case of Jupiter Latiaris, new excavations may shift our understanding completely – these absolute chronologies would not produce absolute histories of the Latin deities. The past not only existed as an objective and observable reality on the cult sites, but also existed in the minds of the worshippers that visited the sites.

* 

So far, I have argued that the Latin past was an integral part of the cult practice for the deities of the Alban hills. But what were these deities like and what did worshippers expect of them? How exactly was the past relevant for the everyday rites that took place in the sanctuaries? As was clear from all three of our case studies, modern attempts to label the deities and ascribe to them one essential sphere of influence, are rarely supported by the ancient evidence. On the basis of literary motifs, Diana Nemorensis and Juno Sospita are both described in academic literature as women’s goddesses, who dealt with feminine issues like fertility and maternity. When looking at the material traces left by their worshippers, however, no such feminine connection can be detected: the votive deposits contain models of (male and female) genitals in comparable quantities to other cults in the region, and the epigraphic evidence reveals both male and female worshippers, as well as priests who are mostly male.

This should warn us to not apply one central framework to our own interpretations: Latin identity in the cults could take many forms and shapes, according to the context it was expressed in and the medium that was used to express it. Nevertheless, some general patterns in the way the Latin cults were perceived can be detected.

First of all, the Latin cult practice could present itself as something foreign that was far removed from the ritual world of Roman state religion. This was most clearly expressed by the discourse surrounding the rex Nemorensis, the priest king of Nemi, who – as both the murderer of his predecessor and the victim of his successor – formed a violent and alien element in the story.
world around the cult of Diana Nemorensis. Another example of such an apparent foreign element was presented by the agricultural rite in Lanuvium, which involved a giant draco in a cave and girls who had to feed it to prove their virginity and ensure a prosperous harvest. Both narratives were identified as literary topoi and can be connected to similar stories connected to cult sites all over the Mediterranean. As such, the strange and violent rites seem to have existed mainly in the words of the poets and had little relevance for the ‘actual’ cult practice of our deities. And yet, I have repeatedly argued that it makes no sense to try to isolate the literary domain from a material domain that was somehow more real or believable. Not only was the perception of a cult shaped by both literary and physical encounters with a god, we can also see these encounters overlapping and interacting. Thus, the serpent of Juno Sospita appears as a frequent companion on visual representation of the goddess, and the priest king of Nemi makes an appearance under the influence of famous visitors of the site, like the emperor Caligula. The alien elements cannot be smoothed out as dissonant factors in an otherwise venerable and stable cult practice, since this cult practice did not produce a coherent belief system to begin with.

The foreign connotation of the cults of the Alban hills could also be based on the fact that the deities were once, like the communities that worshipped them, enemies of Rome. As we have seen, historical sources preserved the fact that Juno Sospita was formerly – before the end of the Latin war in 338 BC – a specifically Lanuvian deity; one of the traditions surrounding the feriae Latinae attributed the origins of the festival to a pre-Roman gathering of Latin tribes. But in the case of Diana Nemorensis, this Latin tradition was slightly more explicit: the cult had kept not only a pre-Roman connotation, but was also associated with an anti-Roman past. This is illustrated by a fragment of Cato’s Origines, which seems to record a meeting in Diana’s lucus during one of the wars of the Latins against Rome. The fragment has considerable issues of interpretation, but gains significance if confronted with the traditions surrounding Diana on the Aventine in Rome. There, the foundation of the cult is presented as a deliberate attempt to unite Latins under Roman rule and was remembered as a vehicle for establishing relationships with new allies. In this light, the cult on the shores of lake Nemi may have been perceived as a rival for that in Rome, and – in a situation where the brutal wars with the Latin tribes were recorded as well – the Latin status of Diana Nemorensis could stand for something distinctly non-Roman.

* 

For most worshippers visiting the cults in the Alban hills, however, the association with an ancient Latin cult was not opposed to, but constitutive of their Roman identity. In the competitive world of the Roman Republic, an origo in an esteemed Latin municipality could be made into an asset, and the
deities of the Alban hills frequently functioned as symbols of their hometowns. This seems to have been the case, for example, for the Arician moneyer Accoleius Lariscolus who put an ancient cult statue of Diana Nemorensis on his coins, but also for the various tresviri monetales from Lanuvium, who used an apparently well-known archaizing image of Juno Sospita to refer to the town and promote their gens. That this expression of local pride and religious commitment did not conflict with Roman loyalties but went hand in hand with them is famously illustrated by the large scale monumentalization of the sanctuaries of Latium Vetus in the second and first centuries BC. The constructions in Nemi and Lanuvium may be considered a deliberate reference to and promotion of a local identity, but at the same time these were only made possible by the wealth streaming in from the Roman conquest wars and fitted within the trend of similar religious structures in the region. In other words, the local identity of a deity from the Alban hills explicitly took shape in a larger regional and Roman context, and worshippers in the sanctuaries were reminded of the local and individual characteristics of the cult, but also of the shared Latin history.

For our reconstruction of this process of local memory making, the epigraphic evidence was of crucial importance. It revealed how the cults of the Alban hills were visited by worshippers from all over the Mediterranean, but how they were also very much embedded in the civic life of their administrating communities. Especially in the case of Lanuvium, we have identified an intricate cultic network that included many of the town’s inhabitants and thus offers an interesting insight into the people concerned with the rites for Juno Sospita. We can image that some of these groups, such as the local iunones, had a marked presence in the village and on the sanctuary grounds, and as such were able to put their mark not only on the cultic procedures but also on the representation of the goddess, which they helped spreading by issuing tesserae with her image. Interestingly enough, the cult site of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban hill – for which we have barely any traces of local involvement – seems to have had a fairly elaborate organization of priestly offices associated to it. This reminds us that not all ritual activity leaves an imprint in the archaeological record: some of the most defining moments in the cult practice of Jupiter Latiaris – such as the ritual meal on the mons Albanus that defined the relationship between cult, god, landscape and Latin peoples – were passed on through the generations in the form of actions, gestures and prayers. As such, this type of ritual behaviour is difficult to investigate for the modern observer.

The priestly offices reported in the region reveal one other important element: a clear reference to the shared Latin past of the area. We have identified several cultic officials with titles that have an archaic ring to it: dictatores connected with each of the sanctuary grounds, several salii and two reges sacrorum, for example. We know these titles from the early history of Rome itself and may suspect that they were religious relics of functions that were once political in nature. At the
same time, the relatively late arrival of these functionaries on the scene (most of the inscriptions date to the second century AD or later) implies that the titles were archaizing rather than archaic. Perhaps they reflected the intellectual efforts of new elites (especially those of the equestrian class) to connect themselves to the core of Roman religion, thereby reinventing rather than recovering the ancient offices. In any case, the epigraphic material shows the appeal of the distant Latin past – be it imagined or not – for the participants in the Alban cults, and it also provides us with evidence as to how the narratives on this distant Latin past were woven into the cult practice of the Roman present.

As we have seen, the cult practices in the Alban hills could – depending on the context they were perceived, presented and remembered in – take on a foreign and un-Roman dimension, as well as a local dimension that was specifically connected to one of the municipia of the area. However, in the context of the cult for Jupiter Latiaris and the feriae Latinae, the Latin past presented itself as the mirror image of the Roman past. Paradoxically, Jupiter Latiaris – the primordial example of a Latin god – becomes manifest as a god only in the context of rituals related to the Roman state. Here it is not the animosity or strife with the Latins that is being remembered; nor is there room for personal or community advertisement of a Latin deity. What is being celebrated here is the dual relationship and joint cause of Latins and Romans, a bond that was preordained through their shared blood and strengthened in in their earliest encounters, but which remained relevant in the context of the growing Roman empire. Celebrating Latinitas meant celebrating being Roman.

Throughout the discussion in the three case-studies, I have used insights from the field of memory studies to understand the role of the Latin past in the Roman present. By focusing on the ways worshippers perceived and communicated the past of the Latin cults, and on how they were confronted with it in the daily routine of the cult practice, I have identified religious memory as a defining factor in Latin identity. At the same time, from the beginning of my study, I have been conscious of the risks of terminological vagueness. Whose memory are we actually talking about? And how collective was the Latin identity that was being shaped through the worship of Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris? Although the evidence often does not allow us to systematically name, count and describe individual worshippers, some general remarks about specific groups involved in the process of memory making can be made.

The voice of the common, non-elite visitors of the sanctuary is – as so often, in the study of ancient religion – hard to trace. While we can detect their presence through the large quantities of votive offers found on the sites, the largest group of worshippers must unfortunately remain
anonymous. We may hypothesize that the performative element in some of the rites – such as the sacrificial meal on *mons Albanus* or the yearly visit of the consuls to Juno Sospita in Lanuvium – evoked images of the Latin past that were comprehensible for large groups of participants. However, the ritual actions themselves left little to no imprint in the material record, and we cannot (or hardly) reconstruct the way the ‘ordinary’ – and perhaps illiterate – visitor made sense of the Latin past in the Alban hills. For other groups identified in the cult practice, this situation is different. We have encountered several freedmen in the epigraphic evidence, who were active in the cultic organization of the sanctuaries or acted as donors, such as Fundilius Doctus in the case of Nemi. Their presence is not an indication of the special care of the Latin gods for slaves or former slaves – as *liberti* are overrepresented in the epigraphic record in general – but it does show how people with a relatively humble social status (but who possibly had considerable sums of money to spend) affiliated themselves with the time-old worship on the sanctuary grounds. Hence the position of Agilius Septentrio, for example, who as an imperial freedman and pantomime player seems to have gained prominence in the town of Lanuvium during the reign of Commodus and was thus adopted into the aristocratic ordo of the *local iuvenes*.

For members of the equestrian class, the Latin past invoked by the cult practice seems to have had a special appeal. As stated above, we can observe their participation in the rites mainly through the epigraphic evidence from the second and third centuries AD, which testifies to a priestly organization that was full of ostensibly ancient function titles. The priesthoods could establish a connection between a prominent *eques* and a specific *municipium* in the Alban hills, as was the case for the *sacerdotes Lanuvini*. These priests were rich outsiders, who were probably awarded with the religious honour by the Senate of Lanuvium. In the case of the *sacerdotes Cabenses*, the religious office holders were probably from the area itself but in the reference to Cabum we can observe a strong archaistic element. Their function title formed a link between the individual *eques*, the cult practice on the Alban mount and the (reinvented) past of the area. Apart from titles referring to specific (real or imagined) communities, we also see titles appearing that refer to the wider Latin history, such as the *dictatores* and *reges sacrorum*. For the *equites*, I have argued, these priesthoods were a way of religiously distinguishing themselves; they did not only connect the holders with honourable Latin *municipia*, but also with the time-old religious and political traditions of the Roman state. Because of their involvement with the deities of the Alban hills, the equestrian priests influenced the perception of the cults and so, the Latin past gained new prominence and meaning in their presence.

Finally, for the aristocratic families from the Lanuvium, Aricia and (to a lesser degree) Bovillae, the relation between Latin identity and religious memory was perhaps most directly
experienced. Many of the interferences in the cult practices that we have studied – from the visual representations on coins of Juno Sospita to the involvement of the Iulii with the *feriae Latinae* - can be related to the competitive world of Roman aristocracy. For the *gentes* in the Roman Republic, the religious commitment to the gods in their Latin hometowns was part of their public representation: the claims of the *gens* Papii on the Lanuvian heritage or of the *gens* Voconia on the cult practice of lake Nemi, stood in direct competition with similar (and perhaps competing) claims of other *gentes* on the Latin past. The promotion of these Latin roots remained important in the empire, as we can observe for example through the involvement of the Antonine emperors in the cult of Juno Sospita. For these elites, their Latin identity was very much part of a Roman identity: this is where Cicero’s two fatherlands (*duae patriae*) came together. But, although the value of a Latin *origo* was recognized and utilized by many, we should not assume that this resulted in a fixed framework of collective Latin identity. The power of the Latin past lay in its ability to be flexible, so that it could suit many political and religious purposes.

*My research has analysed the various ways in which worshippers of Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris engaged with the past of the cults, and has also identified the individuals and groups involved in this process of memory making. Taken together, my findings show that the past of the Latin cults remained an important point of reference throughout Roman history, because new groups of people found new ways of associating themselves with the cult practice and recognized its strong symbolic value. As such, the Latin past was an active and integral part of the Roman present.*
Bibliography


Alföldi, A. 1960. 'Diana Nemorensis', *American Journal of Archaeology* 64 (2), 137-144.


Attenni, L. and Maras, D. 2004. 'Materiali arcaici dalla collezione Dionigi di Lanuvio ed il più antico alfabetario Latino', *Studi Etruschi* 70, 61-78.


Bald Romano, I. 2013. 'The Collection of Sculpture from the Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Philadelphia: the


Bendinelli, G. 1921. 'Monumenta lanuvina', *Monumenti Antichi* 27, 293-370.


Cecamore, C. 1993. 'Il santuario di Iuppiter Latiaris sul Monte Cavo: spunti e materiali dai vecchi scavi', *Bollettino Della Commisione Archeologica Comunale Di Roma* 95, 19-44.


Colburn, G.B. 1914. 'Civita Lavinia, the Site of Ancient Lanuvium', American Journal of Archaeology 18, 18-31.


Damgaard Andersen, H., 1998. Etruscan Architecture from the Late Orientalising to the Archaic Period (c. 640-480 B.C.), PhD Diss., University of Copenhagen.


De Rossi, M.S. 1876. 'Scavi e studii nel tempio di Giove Laziale sul Monte Albano', Annali Dell'Istituto Di Corrispondenza Archeologica 3, 314-333.


Eck, W. 1986. 'Inschriften aus der vatikanischen Nekropole unter St. Peter', Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik, 245-293.


Finocchi, P. 1980. 'Il" templum" di luppiter Latiaris sul Mons Albanus', *Archeologia Laziale* 3, 156-158.


Klein, L. 2000. 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse', *Representations* 69, 127-150.


Lugli, G. 1930. 'Saggi di scavo per la ricerca del tempio di Giove sulla vetta di Monte Cavo', Bollettino d'Arte 10, 162-168.

Lugli, G. 1923. 'La via trionfale a Monte Cave e il gruppo stradale dei Colli Albani', Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Serie 3: Memorie 1, 269-270.


Momigliano, A. 1984b. 'The Theological Efforts of the Roman Upper Classes in the First Century B. C', Classical Philology, 199-211.


Mommsen, T. 1861. 'Sul sacerdos Cabesis', Bullettnino Dell'Instituto Di Corrispondenza Archeologica, 205-207.


Morpurgo, L. 1903. 'Nemus Aricinum', Monumenti Antichi 13, 297-368.


Savile Lumley, J. 1886. 'Antiquarian Researches at Civita Lavinia', *Archaeologia* 49, 367-381.


Scheid, J. 1987. 'Polytheism Impossible; or, the Empty Gods : Reasons behind a void in the History of Roman Religion', *History and Anthropology* 3, 303-325.


238


Weinstock, S.M. 1983. The Nature and Functions of Sound in the Roman Pedagogical Rhetorics of Auctor ad Herennium, Cicero and Quintilian. s.l.: s.n.]


Ziolkowski, A. 2011. 'The Legend of Alba or a Discourse on the Method', *Archaeologia* 60, 1-10.


— IMAGES —
Figure 1.1: Region of Latium Vetus.

Source: adapted from Ancient World Mapping Centre.

Released under CC BY-NC 3.0
CHAPTER II: DIANA NEMORENSIS
Figure 2.1: Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis, general site plan.

A: Collonade
B: Wall with semicircular niches
C: Mosaic floors
D: 'Service rooms', for visitors and sacerdotes
E: Proposed site of lucus
F: Thermal structures
G: Small theater on the site
H: Votive chambers
I: Proposed location of temple
J: Proposed site of lucus
K: Proposed location of temple
L: Visitors and sacerdotes
M: Service rooms, for
N: Mosaic floors, semicircular niches
O: Wall with

Source: Soprintendenza per i beni archeologici del Lazio (with my own adaptations).
Figure 2.2: Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis, aerial picture of site

A: nymphenum
B: Collonade, wall with semi-circular niches, mosaic floors
F: 'service rooms', for visitors and sacerdotes
K: proposed location of temple
M: votive chambers
S: small theater on the site
T: thermal structures
U: proposed site of lucus and abeo
V: nympheum

Source: Ghini and Diosono (2012) (with my own adaptations.)
Figure 2.3: Upper and middle terrace, results of excavations 2003-2007: Nymphaeum (V) and uncertain structures (U), which were proposed as location of *lucus* and *albero sacro* (U1) by the excavators.

Source: Soprintendenza per i beni archeologici del Lazio and Università di Perugia: with the kind permission of Francesca Diosono.
Figure 2.4: Seated figure, 1.95 in height, found on the shores of lake Nemi. Identified as Caligola (see detail of soldier’s sandal).

Source: Author’s photo.
Figure 2.5: Base of the so-called ‘albero sacro’, the tree of the *rex Nemorensis* With brick interior and indication of size (about 1.5 metres by 1.5 metres)  
**Source:** Authors photo (with the kind permission of dr. Francesca Diosono).

Figure 2.6: Small marble votive head, identified as Diana, with characteristic bow-knot. 12 cm., early first century BC. Now in the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

**Source:** Object MS3478,  
Courtesy of the Penn Museum.
Figure 2.7: Acrolith head identified as Diana, found in the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis. 48 cm, marble, late Republican. Now in the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

Source: Object MS3483. Courtesy of the Penn Museum

Figure 2.8: Acrolith head identified as Diana, found in the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis. 46 cm, marble, late Republican. Back of the head broken off; perhaps typical bow knot hairstyle (with the bundled locks leading towards the knot, see detail in 8a). Now in the Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

Source: Pictures by Sanne Klaver
Figure 2.9: RRC 468.1, *denarius* of P. Accoleius Lariscolus: bust of Diana (obverse) and – supposedly archaic – triple cult statue of Diana Nemorensis (reverse).

*Source:* © The Trustees of the British Museum

---

Figure 2.10: Bronze head from the fifth century BC, found in the town of Aricia. Now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

*Source:* Picture by Sanne Klaver
Figure 2.11: Marble head from early Imperial age, archaistic, after older model? Found on during the 1920’s excavation of the theater near the sanctuary. Now in the collections of the Museo Nazionale Romano.

Source: LIMC, ‘Diana’, no. 106.
CHAPTER III: JUNO SOSPITA
Figure 3.1: Sanctuary of Juno Sospita, monumental phase (1st century BC).

Source: Adapted from Galietti (1928) figure 1.

A: First terrace, with monumental porticus  
   A1: Entrance 'Antro del serpente'  
B: Second terrace, with nymphaeum  
C: Service rooms  
D: Roman street  
E: Terracing walls  
F: Temple area
Figure 3.2: Late archaic temple (in dotted line), according to reconstruction of G. Colonna, with three cellae. Letters H, M, O, P and Q refer to remains of this temple. Letters L and R refer to older mural remains 6th (possibly early 6th century BC) that have belonged to the small rectangular building reconstructed in dotted lines.


Figure 3: Late archaic temple (in dotted line), according to reconstruction of F. Santi, with two cellae. Remains of this temple are lined, the floor pavement is shaded.

Source: Santi (2014) figure 17.
Figure 3.4: Mid-Republican temple, with single cella. The stretches of walls still visible are indicated in black.

Source: Galietti (1928) figure 6.

Figure 3.5: Excavated area underneath mid-republican temple podium. The trench of the circular temple is indicated in red (I), the rectangular hut with 'porticus' in green (II) and the votive pit in blue (III). The letters correspond to the later temple phases (see figure 2.2).

Source: Adapted from Zevi, Attenni and Santi (2011) figure 6.
Figure 3.6: So-called sculpture group of Licinius Murena. Found in Lanuvium by Lord Savile. Greek marble, 2nd quarter of the 1st century BC. Now kept in the British Museum (number 1899,1230.1).

a. Heroic torso, with tunic and mantle
b. Frontal part of horse

Source: Coarelli (1987) figures 40 and 47.

Figure 3.7: entrance of the so-called ‘antro del serpente’, at the northern end of the porticus of the sanctuary.

Source: Author’s picture

Figure 3.8: corridor of the so-called ‘antro del serpente’. Building phases established after speleological research.

Figure 3.9: Pantanacci votive deposit, exterior, interior and site plan of the cave, current state of excavations.

Source: Upper picture by author, lower pictures adapted from Attenni (2014) fig. 2.
Figure 3.10: Pantanacci votive deposit, part of the finds. Encircled: Anatomical models of lower jaw with open mouth.  
Source: Picture by author

Figure 3.11: Peperino blocks found at Pantanacci votive deposit, with scale pattern.  
Source: Right picture with all blocks from Attenni (2014) fig. 8, detail picture by author.
Figure 3.12: Black-figure Etruscan amphora, probably from Cervetri. So-called Pontic style. Possibly produced in Vulci, along with other vases by Paris Painter. Dating: 530-520 BC. Juno Sospita in battle pose with Heracles, held back by Poseidon. Now in the British Museum, museum number 1839.0214.71, vase B57.

Source: @ Trustees of the British Museum

Figure 3.13: Tripod, base of incense burner. Two sides: Juno Sospita with goatskin, shield and curled shoes (left) and Hercules with lion skin (right). Height: 28 cm. 520-500 BC. Found in Castel San Mariano (near Perugia), now in the Staatliche Antikensammlungen, München. Museum number MID2755.

Source: LIMC, Herakles/Hercle 151, Juno 14
**Figure 3.14:** Applique of bronze helmet or cista, Silen with Hercules and Juno Sospita in combat. 5th century BC. Now in the collections of the Louvre, antique bronzes, nr. 357.

**Source:** Roscher (1884) 2261.

**Figure 3.15:** Golden ring, with Hercules and Juno Sospita, arms and weaponry raised. 5th century BC. Now in the Victoria and Albert museum, London. Museum number 445-1871.

**Source:** Roscher I (1884) 2261.

**Figure 3.16:** Bronze statuette of Juno Sospita. 500-480 BC. J.S. leaning forward in battle position, (missing) weapon in left hand. Right hand missing, possible shield. Height: 12.6 cm. Unknown provenance, now in the Museo Archeologico, Florence.

**Source:** Museo Archeologico, Florence (with permission).
Figure 3.17: Bronze statuette of Minerva in battle pose. 480-470 BC. Height: 21.4 cm. Unknown provenance, now in Galleria Estense, Modena.

Source: Galleria Estense Modena (with permission)

Figure 3.18: So-called Juno Sospita antefix. Semi-circular background with helmeted female figure, ears and horns coming out of the helmet. Late sixth - early fifth century BC. Unknown provenance. Now in the Altes Museum, Berlin (inv. no. TC 544).

Source: Wikimedia commons
**Figure 3.19:** Antefix found in Lanuvium, with elaborate corona and faintly smiling female figure. 520-470 BC. Now in the collections of the British Museum, London.

**Source:** @ Trustees of the British Museum

**Figure 3.17:** Bronze statuette of Minerva in battle pose. 480-470 BC. Height: 21.4 cm. Unknown provenance, now in Galleria Estense, Modena.

**Source:** Galleria Estense Modena (with permission)

**Figure 3.21a:** RRC 316/1: L. Thorius Balbus, *denarius*, 105 BC.

**Source:** @ Trustees of the British Museum

**Figure 3.21b:** RRC 397/2: L. Procilius, *denarius*, 80 BC.

**Source:** @ Trustees of the British Museum

**Figure 3.21c:** RRC 412/1: L. Roscius Fabatus, *denarius*, 64 BC.

**Source:** @ Trustees of the British Museum

**Figure 3.21d:** RRC 509/4: Q. Cornuficius, *denarius*, 42 BC.

**Source:** @ Trustees of the British Museum
Figure 3.21e: Forrer 231: Celtic Imitation of *denarius*, Danube area, 1st century BC.

Source: www.wildwinds.com

Figure 3.21f: RRC III 1583. L. Marcus Aurelius for his son Commodus, *aureus*, 64 BC.

Source: @ Numismatica Ars Classica

Figure 3.22: Colossal statue of Juno Sospita (2.75 metres in height), with heavily restored head, chest and goatskin. The arms, lower part of the legs and snake are later additions. Over life size, Antonine period. Now in the Vatican museums, inv. no. 241.

Source: author’s picture
**Figure 3.23:** Colossal head of Juno Sospita, with holes on both sides. Height 56 cm, marble. Discovered after the second world war in Villa Monelli (the later Villa Frediani-Dionigi), Lanuvium. Find spot and current location unknown. Mid-first century BC.

**Source:** Arachne, Object Database Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (Creative Commons).

**Figure 3.24:** Colossal head of female acrolith, with holes on both sides. Now in the Vatican museums Museo Gregoriano Profano (Saletta degli originale Greci), inv. no. 905. Find spot unknown, dated to 5th century BC Magna Grecia (perhaps Southern Italy) because of sculptural style.

**Source:** Egisto Sani, Flickr (with permission).
Figure 3.25: fragments of a terracotta hoof, as photographed by G. Hafner. Then in private possession, location now unknown. Possible dating 5th/6th century BC. Source: Hafner (1966) 203

Figure 3.26a-c: lead tesserae found in Lanuvium, early Principate. With bust of Juno (a), Juno standing next to a snake (b,c), a girl sacrificing to a snake (a), and legends SACR(A) LANI(VINA) and IUVEN(ALIA).

Source: Rostovtzeff (1900) 82-83, nos. 2, 3, 5.
CHAPTER IV: JUPITER LATIARIS
Figure 4.1: Detail of the stucco decoration from the peristyle of the Stabian baths at Pompey, now lost. So-called oscillum ('swinging pebble') encircled.

Source: Taylor (2005) 96, fig. 11.

Figure 4.2: So-called oscillum ('swinging pebble') from Monte Cavo.
Source: Cecamore (1996) tav II, fig. 3.

Figure 4.3: Monte Cavo, present day state (closed to the public).
Source: Creative Commons, Wikipedia.
Figure 4.4: Giambattista Piranesi, *Antichità d’Albano e di Castel Gandolfo,* Rome 1764.

Figure 4.5: Monte Cavo, overview of excavated remains.
A: Monastery: surrounding wall
   A1: Ancient wall (Lugli)
B: House-like building (Lugli)
C: Cistern (Giovannoni)
D: Parts of ancient wall, now lost
   (de Rossi)
E: Possible location of votive well
   (Passionist records)
Source: Adapted from Cecamore (1996) 51
Figure 4.6: Monte Cavo (mons Albanus), Via Sacra (1\textsuperscript{st} century AD).

Source: Author’s picture.
**Figure 4.7:** Barb. Lat. 1871: Anonymous drawing of remains on Monte Cavo, in 19th century notebook.

*Source:* adapted from Cecamore (1996) figure 2.

**Figure 4.8:** Funerary monument for L. Antestius Cn. f. Horatius, *salius Albanus*. 1st century AD.

*Source:* @ Trustees of the British Museum.
Summary

This thesis has studied the role of the Latin past in the Roman present, by investigating three large sanctuaries in the Alban hills: that of Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris. The Alban hills are volcanic highlands southeast of Rome, which are located in the heart of Latium Vetus (‘old Latium’). The sanctuaries on and below these hills had long histories as religious meeting places for Latins, both in times of war and in times of peace. In contrast to many recent studies on ancient Latium, my study has not focused on reconstructing these earliest beginnings of worship in the area, nor have I attempted to establish the original spheres of influence of the deities involved. Instead, I have analysed the ways in which later Romans – including the inhabitants of the towns administrating the cults – engaged with the Latin past that surrounded them. Relying substantially on insights from the field of memory studies, my study started from the premise that the Latin character of the cults of the Alban hills was not a static relic of the distant past, but was actively perceived, communicated and remembered by the worshippers visiting the sites. In this way, worshipping a Latin deity could be part of performing a Latin identity. The narratives surrounding the history of Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris were an integral part of everyday cult practice for the Latin deities and, as such, could change shape and meaning under different circumstances.

In chapter I, the introduction of this thesis, it was acknowledged that in recent decades, the academic concept of memory has increasingly become more stretched, resulting in a terminological vagueness that is often far from helpful in analysing specific historical circumstances. Furthermore, many of the key conditions for establishing a memory culture – as defined by modern theorists – turned out to be hardly applicable to the complex and competitive society of the Roman Republic, in which most of the narratives on our Latin deities took shape. Memory in Republican Rome was intrinsically linked to the gentes, who actively produced, promoted and manipulated perceptions of the past. These claims to the past stood in direct contact with other, often competing claims, and there was – at least until the early empire – no central authority to decide which memories could be made into ‘collective’ or even ‘national’ memories. In order to do justice to the dynamic and essentially pluralistic nature of the Roman perceptions of the Latin past, the analysis in my case studies was strongly focused on the communicative aspect of memory: on the activity of remembering itself instead of on fixed memories as the results of that process. Only when the analysis is strongly concentrated on specific cases and memory is conceived as the product of acting and communicating individuals, I have argued, can its role in the formation of identity be recognized and understood. The research in the case studies has thus focused on the active
communication of group specific memories, and in order to trace these in the worship of Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita and Jupiter Latiaris, I have undertaken a detailed and systematic analysis of their cult practices, by studying literary and visual representations, ritual practices and archaeological remains.

* In chapter II, 'Diana Nemorensis and her worshippers', I have investigated the cult practice of Diana Nemorensis on the shores of lake Nemi. In my analysis of the literary sources surrounding this cult, it was demonstrated that Diana was perceived and presented as an essentially multidimensional goddess. As a hunting goddess in the lush surroundings of the shores of lake Nemi, she could exhibit a traditional role and appearance that was perhaps comparable to other Diana cults, but it was the epithet Trivia that most distinguished the cult in Nemi. Poets associated the threefold nature of Diana with the crossroads between day and night, the cultivated and the wild, and even life and the afterlife. Numismatic and sculptural evidence suggests that this character was also reflected in oldest cult statue of the deity, which consisted of three female figures. While it is not clear if the archaic features displayed by the image are a relic of the past or a later archaistic invention, the fact that the image was actively promoted by Aricians in the late Republic, shows that the threefold representation was recognized as Diana Nemorensis by larger groups of people. As a specific Arician deity, Diana was also ascribed with archaic characteristics that suited the supposed long continuity of worship at the cult site on the shores of lake Nemi.

In the descriptions of the cult practice for Diana Nemorensis, the discourse on the rex Nemorensis seems an abnormality. The priest king of Nemi – who was both the murderer of his predecessor and the victim of his successor – would have received its bloody character from Artemis Tauropolis, the bloodthirsty goddess in Euripides’ Iphigenia in Tauris. My analysis has shown that the narrative presents clear signs of a literary topos, but was also interwoven with the cult practice for Diana Nemorensis, for example through the involvement of the emperor Caligula, who brought a Partian prince to the sanctuary grounds that proclaimed himself king. As such, the discourse of the murderous priest was part of the ritual landscape of lake Nemi.

In the discussion of the material remains of the sanctuary, I have identified a long continuity of religious activity, with votive offers and elaborate terracotta temple decorations dating back to at least the sixth century BC. Several building phases in the middle Republic, as well as the large monumentalization in the late Republic, testify to the active involvement of local elites from Aricia. Wealthy worshippers, such as the freedman Fundilius Doctus, acted as donors to the sanctuary, and the epigraphic evidence demonstrates that Aricians – as individuals and as a community – paid homage to the goddess of their hometown. Through a systematic analysis of individual traces of
worship, I have challenged the assumptions of earlier scholars that the cult practice for Diana Nemorensis was specifically aimed at women or (former) slaves. Inscriptions inform us that the sanctuary was visited by men and women alike, and through the donations, we can observe connections with the local community, the city of Rome and the bigger world around Nemi.

An important part of my analysis was based on the connection between Diana Nemorensis and the early relations between Latins and Romans. This was illustrated by an early fragment of Roman historiography that testified to the presence of a Latin dictator at the grove of Diana. The episode gains significance in the light of the active syncretism that we have observed between the worship in Nemi and the cult of Diana on the Aventine in Rome, which according to literary tradition was instituted by Servius Tullius to celebrate the bonds between Rome and its Latin neighbours. So, Diana seems to have been perceived as a vehicle for (or guardian of) the negotiation of religious bonds with new allies (who had formerly been enemies). This memory was preserved not only in the literary record, but also because Latin dictatores were still performing (religious) duties on the cult site in Nemi in the first and second centuries AD, as we have seen in the discussion of the epigraphic evidence. It is hard to determine whether this was an antiquarian reinvention of a half-forgotten office or a direct remnant of the earlier dictatorship, but either way, it gives us an idea as to how worshippers and cult officials memorialized the religious heritage of Diana Nemorensis’ worship and how these perceptions of a real or imagined past penetrated everyday cult practice.

* In chapter III, ‘Juno Sospita: guardian of Lanuvium and Rome’, I have studied the cult of Juno Sospita on the Colle San Lorenzo in Lanuvium. After the end of the Latin war in 338 BC, the Romans took over control in the area and a special stipulation was made to ensure that the cult of Juno Sospita was administered by Romans and Lanuvians together. However, as my analysis of the literary sources in the first part of the chapter has shown, Juno Sospita remained firmly attached to the town and the people of Lanuvium, even though she eventually received a temple in Rome as well. She is regularly presented by Roman authors as a specific Lanuvian deity, who was worshipped and promoted by the Lanuvian magistrates who had made political careers in Rome. From her hilltop sanctuary, Juno Sospita watched over the affairs of the town of Lanuvium and the protective role seems clear in the characteristic iconography of the goddess as well: on images from the Middle Republic onwards, she wears armour and a goatskin, and sometimes strides forward with raised spear and shield, clearly adopting a battle pose. The iconography is most clearly visible on coins issued by Lanuvian monetarii. Her clothing and weaponry on the coins seem archaizing rather than archaic, because we cannot establish a direct connection between these images and images from the
sixth and fifth centuries BC that have been identified as Juno Sospita by other scholars. What we mainly identify, I have argued, is an attempt of the monetarii to promote their origo and affiliate themselves with the authority of the Latin past.

The analysis of the literary sources also showed how Juno Sospita’s protection eventually extended to Rome. Each year, the consuls performed a sacrifice in Juno’s sanctuary and Lanuvium’s most important magistrate, the dictator, was often a Roman senator. Very significant is the long list of prodigia that were reported in Lanuvium. By recognizing these divine warnings and responding to them, the Roman Senate secured the support of the goddess and at the same time underlined its own religious authority, that now extended to cults that were once distinctively non-Roman. Through an analysis of the archaeological remains of the sanctuary, I have argued that the continuous involvement of local elites in the construction and restoration of the sanctuary must interpreted as a deliberate reference to and promotion of a local Lanuvian identity. The contribution of local officer Licinius Murena to the large monumentalization of the sanctuary in the first century BC is our best illustration of this phenomenon. At the same time, these donations were only made possible by the wealth streaming in from the Roman wars of conquest; as thus they and fitted within the trend of similar religious structures in the region. In other words, the local Lanuvian identity of Juno Sospita took shape in a larger regional and Roman context.

This interpretation is strengthened if we take into account the cult practice on the sanctuary grounds, in which we can trace the involvement of local worshippers and priests, larger groups of Latins and also people from far afield, such as Quintus Cornuficius, proconsul of the province of Africa. For the earlier phases of worship, the evidence of votive offers is very suggestive. In the area of the temple building, votives dated as early as the eight century BC suggest that the Colle San Lorenzo was a centre of religious activity from archaic times onwards, although it is uncertain if the deity addressed in these early rites was related to the later Juno Sospita. Furthermore, the recent discovery of the Pantanaccio votive deposit (located at about 1,5 kilometre from the sanctuary) adds an extra layer to our understanding of the ritual landscape of Lanuvium. Large quantities of votives from the fourth and third centuries BC were excavated and although further research is needed to investigate the exact link with Juno Sospita’s cult, the discovery has provided an exciting opportunity to study a fully functioning religious locus.

From the middle Republic onwards, inscriptions seem to become the medium of choice for worshipping Juno Sospita. As in Chapter II, these sources provided valuable information on the daily routine of the cult practice: they testify to worshippers from all layers of Roman society and to an intricate priestly organization that was a dominant factor in the civic life of Lanuvium. The archaizing character of many of the functions – especially the dictatores and reges sacrorum – had a
distinct appeal for members of the equestrian class. For them, the priesthoods were a way of distinguishing themselves in the religious domain and affiliating themselves with shared socio-political history of Latium, of which the offices – however reconstructed or reinvented – were a living memory.

* For my third and final case study (chapter IV), I have examined the cult of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban Mount and its main festival, the *feriae Latinae*. As was shown through a detailed analysis of the literary discourse surrounding this cult, Jupiter Latiaris was presented in the Roman sources as the quintessential example of a Latin god. The celebrations of the *feriae Latinae* are portrayed as a direct heritage of the Latin past: in the sacrificial feast, the ancient bond between Rome and the Latin cities was relived and renewed. Although there is little consensus between Roman authors on the origins of the celebrations – that were either presented as a Roman initiative or as a pre-existing Latin celebration – the festival is considered as an important moment in the Roman ritual year. Not only did representatives of the Latin villages come to the hilltop to worship, but all of Rome’s magistrates were also obliged to participate in the proceedings. For the consuls, it was an important confirmation of their power, as they established a date at the beginning of their office and could only leave for their troops in the provinces after the rites had been performed correctly. In this way, the Roman wars of conquest – in which enemies turned into allies – were always preceded by the symbolic celebration of Rome’s first religious and political bonds with the Latins.

However, the significance that the cult of Jupiter Latiaris holds in the literary domain is not matched by the material traces it left on the *mons Albanus*. There are several signs of religious activity on top of the hill, of which the well-constructed road leading up and fragments of the ritual calendar known as the *Fasti feriarum Latinarum* are perhaps most significant. Furthermore, the archives of the monks that inhabited the hill in the 19th century suggest that quite some material was removed. Even with this taken into consideration, however, the archaeological evidence for the cult of Jupiter Latiaris can be considered meagre. The few structural remains have no apparent religious function and there is a remarkable lack of decorative and votive material. Without the literary sources explaining its ritual significance, I have argued, we would probably not have identified the *mons Albanus* as a place of worship.

In my analysis, I have suggested that we can explain this relative lack of visible votive activity by looking at the specific ritual context for the worship of Jupiter Latiaris. Not connected to a particular *municipium* in Latium Vetus and without a (detectable) visual representation, the god perhaps attracted fewer individual worshippers throughout the year than other cults in the region and primarily became manifest during the days of the *feriae Latinae*. Shifting the focus of my analysis
to the ritual proceedings at the site and to the actions that invoked the Latin past, I have systematically investigated the epigraphic evidence, which has allowed me to distinguish an elaborate cultic organization. Perhaps even more so than in chapters II and III, there was a strong connection to the past of the area observable in this material. In the ranks of archaizing priesthoods surrounding the cults – like the sacerdotes Cabenses and the Vestal virgins of Alba – I have again encountered many equites. Most inscriptions are from the second and third centuries AD and the late proliferation of ancient titles may thus be an attempt of new elites to connect themselves to the core of Roman religion, thereby reinventing rather than recovering the ancient offices. In any case, the epigraphic material shows the appeal of the distant Latin past – be it imagined or not – for the participants in the rites of the feriae Latinae. As my research has shown, the authority of this past was particularly relevant for Caesar, Augustus and later Julian emperors, whose attachment to the cult of Jupiter Latiaris is especially well documented and who could boast an ancestral link to the mythical landscape of Alba Longa. Vice-versa, the traditions surrounding the feriae Latinae may have taken on a new significance by the attention of the Iulii.

* 

Finally, when bringing together my findings in the conclusion of my work (chapter V), I have emphasized how the Latin past of the cults in the Alban hills could take on a foreign, local or Roman dimension – depending on the context it was perceived, presented and remembered in. I have demonstrated that the Latin past remained an important point of reference throughout Roman history, because new groups of people found new ways of associating themselves with the narratives of that past and recognized its strong symbolic value.
Samenvatting in het Nederlands

Latijnse culten door Romeinse ogen. Mythe, herinnering en cultuspraktijk in de Albaanse heuvels.

Dit proefschrift bestudeert de rol van het Latijnse verleden in het Romeinse verleden, aan de hand van drie grote heiligdommen in de Albaanse heuvels: dat van Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita en Jupiter Latiaris. De Albaanse heuvels vormen een vulkanisch gebergte ten zuidoosten van Rome, gelegen in het hart van Latium Vetus ('het oude Latium'). De heiligdommen op en aan de flanken van deze heuvels hadden in de Romeinse Republiek reeds een lange geschiedenis als religieuze ontmoetingsplaatsen voor Latijnen, zowel in tijden van oorlog als in tijden van vrede. In tegenstelling tot veel andere recente studies over het antieke Latium, is mijn onderzoek niet primair gericht op de vroegste religieuze geschiedenis van het gebied, noch heb ik geprobeerd om voor de goden die ik heb onderzocht een oorspronkelijke of authentieke invloedssfeer vast te stellen. In plaats daarvan heb ik geanalyseerd hoe latere Romeinen – waaronder ook de inwoners van de Latijnse plaatsen die de culten onderhielden – betekenis gaven aan het Latijnse verleden dat hen omringde. Steunend op belangrijke inzichten uit het onderzoek naar herinnering – de zogenaamde memory studies – beschouwt mijn onderzoek het Latijnse karakter van de Albaanse culten niet als een statisch relict uit een ver verleden, maar als iets dat actief werd vormgegeven, vastgelegd en gecommuniceerd door de bezoekers van de heiligdommen. Op deze manier kon het vereren van een Latijnse god onderdeel worden van het uiten en promoten van een Latijnse identiteit. De verhalen over het verleden van de Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita en Jupiter Latiaris waren een integraal onderdeel van de dagelijkse cultuspraktijk en konden daarom van vorm en betekenis veranderen al naar gelang de omstandigheden.

In hoofdstuk 1, de inleiding van dit proefschrift, wordt vastgesteld dat herinnering als academisch studieobject de afgelopen decennia in steeds bredere contexten is toegepast, resulterend in een terminologische complexiteit die vaak verre van werkbaar is bij het onderzoeken van specifieke historische omstandigheden. Veel van de voorwaarden waaraan een herinneringscultuur zou moeten voldoen – volgens moderne theoreti – blijken niet van toepassing op de complexe en competitieve samenleving van de Romeinse Republiek waarin de verhalen rondom de Latijnse goden vorm kregen. Herinnering was in de Republiek onlosmakelijk verbonden met de gentes, de aristocratische geslachten in Rome, die bewust een voor hen voordelige versie van het verleden creëerden en promootten. Deze aanspraken op het verleden bestonden naast alternatieve, dikwijls tegenstrijdige visies op het verleden van andere gentes en er was – in ieder
geval tot de start van het Principaat – geen centrale autoriteit die kon bepalen welke herinneringen tot het ‘collectieve’ of zelfs ‘nationale’ verleden zouden moeten behoren. Om recht te doen aan de dynamische en pluralistische aard van het Romeinse perspectief op het Latijnse verleden, is de analyse in mijn proefschrift sterk gericht op het communicatieve element in de Romeinse herinneringscultuur; dat wil zeggen op het proces van herinneren zelf in plaats van op statische en vastomlijnde herinneringen als resultaat van dat proces. Zo betoog ik dat herinnering als academisch concept verhelderend kan zijn bij de bestudering van Romeinse en Latijnse identiteit, maar alleen als het wordt toegepast op specifieke en concrete gevallen en als de handelende en communicerende individuen die herinneringen vormgeven niet uit het oog worden verloren. Mijn onderzoek is dan ook gericht op de actieve communicatie van specifieke beelden van het Latijnse verleden, door specifieke groepen en individuen in de Romeinse samenleving. Om deze beelden op te sporen in de verering van Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita en Jupiter Latiaris heb ik een gedetailleerde en systematische analyse gemaakt van de cultuspraktijken rondom de drie goden, waarin literaire representaties van de goden naast visuele representaties werden bestudeerd. Daarnaast heb ik ook onderzoek verricht naar de rituelen die in de heiligdommen werden uitgevoerd en de sporen die daarbij werden achtergelaten in het archeologisch landschap.

Het tweede hoofdstuk, ‘Diana Nemorensis en haar volgelingen’, staat in het teken van de cultus van Diana Nemorensis, gelegen aan de oever van het meer van Nemi en grotendeels onderhouden door de inwoners van het naburige Aricia. Mijn analyse van de literaire bronnen rondom deze cultus toont aan dat Diana veel verschillende vormen kon aannemen en op diverse manieren werd geverifieerd door antieke auteurs. Als godin van de jacht, aan de uitbundig begroeide oevers van het meer van Nemi, toonde ze zich van haar traditionele kant en was ze wellicht het meest vergelijkbaar met Diana culiën elders in het Mediterrane gebied. Het epitheton Trivia is specifiek voor de cultus aan het meer: het onderscheid deze Diana van andere godinnen met dezelfde naam. Dichters associeerden Trivia met drievoudigheid en met letterlijke en symbolische kruispunten, tussen dag en nacht, tussen gecultiveerd en wild land en zelfs tussen leven en dood. Uit munten en sculpturen blijkt dat de drievoudige aard van Diana Nemorensis waarschijnlijk ook werd gereflecteerd in haar oudste cultusbeeld, dat bestond uit drie met elkaar verbonden vrouwelijke figuren. Het is onduidelijk of de archaïsche kenmerken van dit beeld een rechtstreekse erfenis waren van het pre-Romeinse verleden van de cultus of dat het wellicht ging om een latere, archaïstische toevoeging. Het feit dat het drievoudige beeld echter actief werd gepromoot op munten door inwoners van Aricia, laat zien dat het werd herkend als een representatie van Diana Nemorensis door grote groepen mensen. De archaïsche of archaïstische kenmerken van het beeld
zijn specifiek voor de Latijnse Diana en passen bij de lange vereringsgeschiedenis aan de oevers van het meer.

Binnen de cultuspraktijk van Diana Nemorensis is er een opvallende en op het eerste gezicht merkwaardige rol weggelegd voor de rex Nemorensis. Deze gewelddadige priesterkoning, die volgens de bronnen zowel de moordenaar van zijn voorganger als het slachtoffer van zijn opvolger was, zou zijn bloeddorstige karakter hebben geërfd van de cultus van Artemis Tauropolis, de wrede godin uit Euripides’ *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Mijn onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat het verhaal van de rex Nemorensis duidelijke elementen bevat van een literair topos maar dat het tegelijkertijd duidelijk verweven was met de cultuspraktijk voor Diana Nemorensis. De keizer Caligula bracht bijvoorbeeld een Partische prins naar het heiligdom die zich met de titel koning toodie. Zo werd het verhaal van de moordlustige priester gerealiseerd en een onderdeel van het rituele landschap rondom het meer van Nemi.

In mijn studie naar de materiële overblijfselen van het heiligdom heb ik aangetoond dat de verering van Diana Nemorensis een lange continuïteit kende, zoals bijvoorbeeld te zien is aan votiefgiften en tempeldecoraties die terug voeren tot de zesde eeuw v. Chr. Diverse restauraties en uitbreidingen in de Midden-Republiek, alsook de indrukwekkende monumentalisering van het heiligdom in de Late Republiek, tonen aan dat lokale elites uit Aricia erg betrokken waren bij de cultuspraktijk. Rijke weldoeners zoals de vrijgelatene Fundilius Doctus financierden de bouwplannen. Bovendien tonen inscripties aan dat de inwoners van Aricia – zowel individuen als de voltallige gemeenschap – dikwijls eer betuigden aan hun patroongodin. Door middel van een systematische analyse van individuele tekenen van verering – meestal in de vorm van inscripties – heb ik laten zien dat de cultuspraktijk voor Diana Nemorensis niet speciaal was gericht op vrouwen of op slaven, zoals door eerdere wetenschappers wel is aangenomen. De godin werd bezocht door zowel mannen als vrouwen uit alle lagen van de bevolking; door middel van hun donaties kunnen we zien dat het heiligdom in contact stond met de lokale gemeenschap, met inwoners van de stad Rome, maar ook met gemeenschappen uit verre uithoeken van het Romeinse rijk.

Een belangrijk aspect van de verering van Diana Nemorensis was het verband tussen de cultus en de vroege relaties tussen Romeinen en Latijnen. Dit verband wordt het meest duidelijk door een vroege passage uit de Romeinse historiografie die melding maakt van de aanwezigheid van een Latijnse dictator in het woud (*lucus*) van Diana. Deze episode voert terug op de pre-Romeinse of zelfs anti-Romeinse geschiedenis van de cultus, toen Latijnen in het heiligdom samenkwamen om zich te verenigen tegen Rome. In mijn onderzoek heb ik vastgesteld dat er in deze traditie een duidelijk syncretisme waarneembaar is met de cultus van Diana op de Aventijn in Rome, die volgens de literaire traditie werd opgericht door de Romeinse koning Servius Tullius om de banden tussen
Rome en haar Latijnse buren te vieren. In deze hoedanigheid lijkt Diana op te treden als mediator bij het sluiten van religieuze verbintenissen tussen bondgenoten (die voormalige vijanden waren). De herinnering aan deze religieuze-politieke geschiedenis werd niet alleen bewaard in literaire tradities, maar ook doordat er in de eerste en tweede eeuw n. Chr. nog altijd Latijnse dictatores in het heiligdom bij het meer van Nemi actief waren, zoals te zien is aan het epigrafisch materiaal uit die periode. Opnieuw is het lastig vast te stellen of het hierbij gaat om een antiquarisch functie – een verzinsel van latere datum – of dat het dictatorschap uit de Romeinse tijd rechtstreeks afstamde van het Latijnse dictatorschap. In ieder geval toont de aanwezigheid van de dictator ons hoe Diana's volgelingen en priesters het verleden van de cultus levend hielden, en hoe herinneringen aan dat – daadwerkelijke of imaginaire – verleden doordrongen in de cultuspraktijk van alledag.

Het derde hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift, ‘Juno Sospita: patrones van Lanuvium en Rome’, bespreekt de cultus van Juno Sospita op de heuvel van San Lorenzo in Lanuvium. Aan het einde van de Latijnse oorlog, in 338 v. Chr., namen de Romeinen de controle over in dit gebied en zorgden zij er via een speciaal verdrag voor dat de cultus van Juno Sospita voortaan door Lanuviërs en Romeinen gemeenschappelijk beheerd zou worden. Mijn onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat de godin, ondanks dat zij uiteindelijk ook een tempel in Rome kreeg, zeer nauw verbonden bleef met Lanuvium en haar bewoners. Romeinse auteurs presenteren haar met regelmaat als een patroongodin van de Lanuvium, die speciale verering genoot van Romeinse magistraten met een familiegeschiedenis in de Latijnse plaats. Vanaf haar heiligdom op een heuveltop, keek Juno Sospita uit over Lanuvium en epigrafische bronnen tonen dat een belangrijk deel van het stadsleven zich afspeelde rondom het heiligdom. De beschermende functie van Juno Sospita blijkt eveneens uit haar iconografie: op beeltenissen vanaf de Midden-Republiek draagt ze wapens en een geitenhuid en ze treedt soms naar voren, met geheven schild en speer, klaar om aan te vallen. De iconografie is het duidelijkst te zien op munten die werden uitgegeven door Lanuvische monetarii (muntmasters). Haar kleding en wapens lijken in deze beeltenissen eerder archaïstisch dan archaïsch, omdat we geen rechtstreeks verband kunnen aantonen tussen de beeltenissen uit de zesde en vijfde eeuw v. Chr. die door andere wetenschappers wel als Juno Sospita geïdentificeerd zijn. Wat de munten vooral tonen, zo betoog ik in hoofdstuk drie, is de pogingen van de monetarii om hun oorsprongsgeschiedenis te promoten en hun familie te verbinden met Juno Sospita en een voornaam Latijns verleden.

Uit het onderzoek naar de literaire bronnen is gebleken dat Juno's bescherming zich uiteindelijk ook uitstrekte tot de stad Rome. Elk jaar tegen de consuls naar Rome om te gaan offeren en de belangrijkste magistraat van Lanuvium, de dictator, was vaak een Romeins senator. De lange lijst aan prodigia (goddelijke voortekenen) die werden gerapporteerd uit Lanuvium biedt ons veel
inzicht in de relatie tussen Lanuvium en Rome. Door het erkennen van de goddelijke waarschuwingen en door er op te reageren met verzoeningsrituelen, kon de Romeinse Senaat zich verzekeren van de steun van Juno Sospita en op hetzelfde moment haar religieuze autoriteit benadrukken, die zich uitstrekte tot culten die ooit in vijandelijk gebied lagen. De analyse van de archeologische resten in dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat er een continue betrokkenheid was van diverse generaties lokale Lanuvische elites, die zich lieten gelden door het financieren van verbouwingen en vergrotingen van het heiligdom. Deze activiteiten moeten worden gezien als het bewust benadrukken en promoten van een lokale Lanuvische identiteit. Het beste voorbeeld hiervan is de bijdrage van de lokale legerofficier Licinius Murena aan de grote monumentalisering van het heiligdom in de eerste eeuw v.Chr. Uitbundige donaties zoals deze waren echter alleen mogelijk door de rijkdom die beschikbaar was gekomen door de Romeinse veroveringsoorlogen; hiermee is de situatie in Lanuvium vergelijkbaar met de ontwikkelingen van andere heiligdommen in Latium.

Met andere woorden: de lokale identiteit van Juno Sospita kreeg vorm in een regionale en Romeinse context.

Deze conclusie wordt nog versterkt als we kijken naar de cultuspraktijk binnen het heiligdom, waarin we priesters en volgelingen uit Lanuvium zelf herkennen, maar ook andere Latijnen en bezoekers uit verder weggelegen gebieden, zoals Quintus Cornuficius, de proconsul van de provincie Africa. Voor de vroege fasen van verering in Lanuvium, vormen de votiefgiften een inzichtelijke bron. Een aantal votieven dat gevonden werd rondom het tempelgebouw kan gedateerd worden in de achtste eeuw v.Chr., waarmee duidelijk lijkt dat de heuvel van San Lorenzo al sinds de archaïsche periode het centrum van religieuze activiteit was. Het is echter onduidelijk of de godheid die bij deze vroege riten werd aangesproken verband houdt met de godin die wij later als Juno Sospita herkennen. De recente ontdekking van het Pantanaccio votiefdepot (op ongeveer anderhalve kilometer afstand van het heiligdom) vormt eveneens een belangrijke bijdrage aan mijn onderzoek naar het rituele landschap van Lanuvium. Archeologen ontdekten daar grote hoeveelheden terracotta votiefgiften uit de vierde en derde eeuw v.Chr. en hoewel het precieze verband met de cultuspraktijk van Juno Sospita nog moet worden aangetoond, biedt het votiefdepot een interessante kans om de rituele handelingen in een natuurlijke cultusplaats (een zogenaamde lucus) nader te bestuderen.

Vanaf de Midden-Republiek werden inscripties het belangrijkste medium om met Juno Sospita te communiceren. Dit type bron biedt, zoals eerder te zien was in hoofdstuk twee, zicht op waardevolle details van de dagelijkse cultuspraktijk: de inscripties tonen een grote variëteit aan volgelingen uit alle lagen van de maatschappij en onthullen eveneens een complexe ordening van priesterlijke functies, die een belangrijke rol speelden in het openbare leven van Lanuvium. Mijn
onderzoek toont aan dat het archaïserende karakter van veel van de functies – in het bijzonder de dictatores en de reges sacrorum (priesterkoningen) – een bijzondere aantrekkingskracht uitoefende op leden van de riddersstand. Voor hen vormden de priesterfuncties een manier om zich te profileren op religieus terrein en om zich te verbinden aan het verleden van Latium, waarvan de schijnbaar aloude titels een – al dan niet opnieuw geconstrueerd – relict vormden. *

De derde en laatste case study die in dit proefschrift aan bod komt is de cultus van Jupiter Latiaris op de mons Albanus (de Albaanse berg). In hoofdstuk vier worden deze god en zijn belangrijkste festival, de ferae Latiae, nader onderzocht. Uit een gedetailleerde bespreking van de literaire bronnen rondom de cultus blijkt dat Jupiter Latiaris door Romeinse auteurs wordt geportretteerd als hét kenmerkende voorbeeld van een Latijnse god. De rituele viering van de ferae Latiae wordt in deze narratieve gepresenteerd als een directe erfenis van het Latijnse verleden: in een gezamenlijk offerfeest werd een aloude vredesverbond tussen Romeinen en Latijnen opnieuw beleefd en opnieuw gesmeed. Hoewel er onder antieke auteurs weinig consensus bestond over de precieze oorsprong van het festival, dat ofwel een Romeins initiatief ofwel een al langer bestaand Latijns gebruik zou zijn, werd het jaarlijkse feest beschouwd als een belangrijk moment in het rituele jaar. Er kwamen representanten van de Latijnse steden en dorpen naar de heuveltop en ook werd van alle Romeinse magistraten verwacht dat ze participeerden in het feest. Voor de consuls was het festival een belangrijke bevestiging van hun macht (imperium), omdat ze de datum ervan vaststelden aan het begin van hun ambtstermijn en pas mochten afreizen naar hun troepen in het veld wanneer de riten van de ferae Latiae op een correcte manier waren uitgevoerd. Op deze manier werden de Romeinse veroveringsoorlogen – waarin vijanden tot bondgenoten werden – altijd voorafgegaan door een symbolische viering van Rome’s eerste religieuze en politieke bondgenootschap, dat met de Latijnen.

De belangrijke politieke en religieuze rol die de verering van Jupiter Latiaris krijgt toegedicht in de literaire bronnen vormt echter een scherp contrast met de zeer beperkte hoeveelheid materiële resten op de mons Albanus. Er zijn wel degelijk sporen van religieuze activiteit gevonden op de heuvel: de restanten van de Fasti feriarum Latinarum – de rituele kalender waarop de data van de ferae Latiae werden bijgehouden – en de zorgvuldig geconserveerde en goed geconserveerde weg naar boven vormen daarvan de belangrijkste voorbeelden. Bovendien tonen de archieven van de monniken die de heuvel in de 19e eeuw bewoonden aan dat er een behoorlijke hoeveelheid antiek materiaal werd verwijderd. Zelfs met deze overwegingen in aanmerking genomen moet worden vastgesteld dat het archeologische bewijs voor de cultus van Jupiter Latiaris schaars is. De weinige structurele resten op de heuvel hebben geen duidelijke religieuze functie en
er is een opvallend gebrek aan vondsten van decoratieve of votieve aard. Als de literaire bronnen de rituele betekenis van deze heuvel niet zo sterk hadden benadrukt, zo betoog ik in hoofdstuk vier, dan hadden we in de archeologische resten op de mons Albanus vrijwel zeker geen heiligdom herkend.

In het vervolg van mijn studie suggereer ik dat dit relatieve gebrek aan bewijs voor religieuze activiteit kan worden verklaard door de specifieke rituele context van de verering van Jupiter Latiaris. De god was niet verbonden aan één municipium in Latium en had – voor zover wij kunnen reconstrueren – geen herkenbare uiterlijke verschijningsvorm. Als zodanig, had de god wellicht minder individuele volgelingen dan andere culten in de regio en was zijn rol vooral zichtbaar en merkbaar tijdens de jaarlijkse viering van de feriae Latinae. Mijn onderzoek was dan ook sterk gericht op de rituele handelingen in het heiligdom, waarbij ik specifiek de rituelen heb geanalyseerd die het Latijnse verleden van de cultus opriepen en actualiseerden. Opnieuw bleek het epigrafisch materiaal hiervoor zeer bruikbaar en door middel van een systematische analyse van votief-, ere- en grafinscripties wordt een complexe cultusorganisatie blootgelegd. Wellicht nog sterker dan in hoofdstuk twee en drie, valt er bij dit materiaal een sterke connectie met het verleden te ontwaren. In de rangen van de archaïserende priesterschappen die de cultus omringden – zoals de sacerdotes Cabenses en de Vestaalse maagden van Alba – valt opnieuw het grote aantal individuen uit de ridderstand op. De meeste inscripties komen uit de tweede en derde en de relatief late verspreiding van de antieke titels kan zodoende worden gezien als een poging van nieuwe elites om zichzelf te liëren aan het hart van de Latijnse religie, waarmee ze de archaïsche priesterschappen niet zozeer reconstrueerden als wel opnieuw uitvonden. In de conclusie van dit proefschrift (hoofdstuk vijf) heb ik mijn bevindingen samengebracht en aangetoond dat het Latijnse verleden van de Albaanse culten verschillende gedachten kon aannemen, al naar gelang de context waarin dat verleden werd waargenomen en gecommuniceerd. Zo kon een Latijns cultus een uitheems of zelfs vijandelijk verleden representeren, een specifiek lokaal of Latijnse verleden oproepen of kon de cultus volledig verweven zijn met het Romeinse
verleden. Zo heb ik aangetoond dat het Latijnse verleden een belangrijk referentiepunt bleef voor vele generaties Romeinen, omdat steeds nieuwe groepen mensen de symbolische waarde ervan herkenden en omdat zij steeds nieuwe manieren vonden om zich met dit verleden te verbinden.