Triumphs of compromise: an analysis of the monumentalisation of sanctuaries in Latium in the late republican period (second and first centuries BC)
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INTRODUCTION

Monumental architecture from classical antiquity has always attracted a great deal of attention. By its very nature, it has a better chance of preservation over the centuries, although seldom completely intact, and is obviously far more visible than many other material categories from ancient times. It is one of the more inviting testimonies of ancient culture, since it allows visitors to walk among its remains, directly appealing to people's senses in a way that shards or other more humble material generally fail to do. Not surprisingly, monumental architecture has also occupied a central place in scholarly research on Roman and Italic culture. Of course, the lion’s share has been directed at the architecture of the city of Rome itself, the baths and fora; in other words the great examples of imperial architecture. But the period prior to this phase of architectural maturity is no less interesting, and especially during the last decades the architecture of the republican period, both in Rome itself and in other regions of Italy, has been given greater prominence. Traditionally the research has been dominated by the study of formal architectural and stylistic characteristics, but increasingly attention is shifting in the direction of contextual analysis of sanctuaries, relating architecture to societal developments instead of studying it as a stand-alone phenomenon. A prominent place within the research of republican architecture is occupied by a group of sanctuaries in Latium, which were built or restructured on a monumental scale between roughly 175 and 50 BC. Imposing building complexes arose on highly visible locations, demonstrating an ability and desire to reshape the natural landscape as a setting for feats of architectural daring.

The fact that the construction of these sanctuaries took place in a relatively limited period of time and that so many of them were located in a relatively limited geographical area, combined with similarities that have been observed in their architectural features, has lead to a perception of these sanctuaries as belonging to a specific and more or less standardised typology. According to this typology, the standard monumental sanctuary was built on one or more artificial terraces, had a centrally placed temple building and a pi-shaped portico surrounding the temple. 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. In the second half of the 20th century, this has become the standard image of the late republican Latial monumental sanctuary, repeated, projected and reasserted in many publications about sanctuary complexes in Latium.

A fine example of this tendency can be found in the first publications of the excavation results of the building complex at Colle Noce, near the town of Segni, excavated in the late 20th century.

1 All dates hereafter are BC, unless reference is made to modern excavations and research, or specifically stated in the case of dates in classical antiquity.
1990s. The complex consisted of a series of terraces and was dated to the late republican period. Anna Maria Reggiani, publishing the first excavation results, immediately concluded that we were dealing with a sanctuary and gave a reconstruction of the complex with a central temple on the highest terrace surrounded by a pi-shaped portico, while the excavation results were far from conclusive regarding the structural remains on this terrace. Indeed, subsequent research brought to light new data which called into question the earlier identification as a sanctuary (although this remains a possibility) and moreover the proposed architectural reconstruction. Clearly, the combination of (artificial) terracing, a date during the late republican period, and the fact that the complex probably had cultic functions for at least some time during the republican period in this case led to an immediate mental parallel with the canonical Latial sanctuary. Architectural features which have become firmly established as an essential feature of such sanctuaries, such as a central temple building and a pi-shaped portico, were used for the reconstruction drawing of the remains at Colle Noce, regardless of the archaeological reality presented by the site.

The described case clearly illustrates that Latial sanctuaries have become part of a standard typology. The typology itself is hardly ever questioned or studied, but used as a benchmark to compare other monuments with, providing a blueprint of characteristic architectural features with which to complete incomplete ground plans. This situation can lead to a false sense of certainty and fast and ready conclusions resulting in stagnation of further relevant research. The present study is aimed at testing and scrutinising the preconceptions and assumptions about Latial sanctuaries by providing a thorough analysis of the monuments. By reconstructing the specific context of each sanctuary, we can perhaps gain a better understanding of the process of monumentalisation. This goal, primarily historiographical in nature, is supplemented with another research question, which can be answered at the same time: why did people invest such incredible amounts of time and resources in the construction of these grand complexes; what was it that they were hoping to gain from this undertaking? By analysing the monumental sanctuaries of Latium, I hope to provide answers to both questions.

The objects of study: definitions

It will be clear by now that the objects central to this study are monumental sanctuaries located in the region of Latium. This raises two very obvious questions. The first is related to the concept of monumental architecture: what exactly do we mean by a ‘monumental sanctuary’ and how can we differentiate such entities from ‘normal’ temple buildings. The second question is related to the geographic delimitation of the subject: what area can we call ‘Latium’ in the late republican period? Below, I will propose definitions for both, and introduce the sanctuaries that fit this particular designation.

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2 Reggiani 2000.
3 Alvino et al. 2003.
What constitutes a ‘monumental sanctuary’?

The first definition that needs to be clarified when discussing the monumentalisation of sanctuaries is what exactly is implied by the term ‘monumental sanctuary’? A cult place does not have to include permanent structures: early cult places were most likely open-air sanctuaries, and buildings were not strictly required for the basic religious purposes of a cult place. Although permanent structures could become necessary as shelters for the cult image, constituting a true house of the gods, structures built at a cult place exceeding the dimensions needed for this specific purpose can be considered an example of monumental architecture, if we consider that “its principal defining feature is that its scale and elaboration exceed the requirements of any practical functions that a building is intended to perform”.4 Other requirements have been formulated to define monumental architecture and to distinguish it from non-monumental architecture, such as permanence (the fact that monumental structures are generally permanent buildings meant to last over generations), centrality (monumental structures are centrally located in a settlement or isolated, away from the residential area), visibility (the fact that one should be able to see monumental buildings from a distance) and ubiquity (in relation to the number of settlements, there should be a relatively low distribution of monumental structures).5

The fact of the matter is that we are dealing with a relative phenomenon; what is considered monumental in a given time depends on other contemporaneous architectural types, and it will be difficult to establish a firm cut-off point to determine what is considered to be monumental and what not. If the main characteristic with which we distinguish monumental architecture in the late republican period is the fact that we are dealing with building complexes, architectural units (although the extent of this unity has yet to be determined) instead of single entities (such as isolated temple buildings), the criteria established by Jerry Moore can be seen as a helpful general guideline. Monumental are those sanctuaries that clearly stand out from their surroundings, and while their numbers increase during the late republican period, the distribution in relation to the number of towns in Latium and the number of ‘regular’ temples is relatively low. Furthermore, they are clearly meant to be seen and either occupy a central (visual) position in the town or are located outside the city walls. In the context of the present study, when I talk about monumentalisation, monumental sanctuaries or the monumental phase of sanctuaries, I will mean the specific late republican construction phase which involves the (re-)structuring of cult places with more or less unified building complexes as a result, while being fully aware that the construction of temples and sanctuaries in previous periods can, by some criteria, just as well be understood as a monumentalisation of sacred space.

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4 Trigg er 1990, 119.  
5 Moore 1996, 139-140. Although writing about the ancient Andes, Jerry Moore’s criteria can be applied here and serve to distinguish, although still somewhat vaguely, ‘true’ monumental structures from more common structures.
What constitutes “Latium”?

The choice for Latium as a test case was determined primarily by the availability of a more or less all-encompassing body of material evidence which can be used to reconstruct the sacred landscape of the area and the fact that it is arguably the first region in Italy to achieve some sort of homogeneity in the period of the Roman conquest of the peninsula, in a political sense at least, which enables comparison of this body of evidence on a roughly level playing field. From a geographical perspective, there is some justification in defining the area of Latium roughly as it is presented here (fig. 1). The area is bounded on the western side by the Tyrrhenian Sea and to the east by the high central Apennine mountain range. The northern side of the area is taken up by the Tiber valley, delimited by the Monti Sabatini, while the lower Liri valley forms its southern border. In short the region consists of a series of coastal plains, the largest of which is the Pontine plain, and an extended fluvial valley system, primarily consisting of the valleys of the rivers Sacco and Liri and the Tiber valley. However, it is highly questionable if this particular geographic area was actually regarded at any point in time as officially constituting ‘Latium’; while natural boundaries must have been important in antiquity, they did not necessarily coincide with political or ethnic ones. Furthermore, familiar concepts, even geographical ones, may be later rationalisations of situations which never properly existed. Knowledge of the spread and eventual extent of Roman control may have had implications for the reconstruction and definition of the area by both ancient and modern scholars. It is fairly certain that at least up to the fourth century, this geographical area did not form a unified political, ethnic, or even cultural whole. In this early period the region known as Latium, area of the Latin people, was much smaller.

It is around the mid-fourth century that the contours of a Latium roughly coinciding with the geographical area indicated above begin to emerge. In 338, Rome won a decisive victory over the Latins, making her not only factual but also formal mistress of Latium. The start of Roman expansion into Etruria ensured Roman effective control over the territory in the north up to the Monti Sabatini in the fourth century, while the founding of a great number of Latin colonies in the southern part of the region under consideration here in the late fourth and early third century established a firm Roman military and political presence in that area. The river Liri is mentioned several times in the literary sources as a boundary line for the sphere of Roman influence in the fourth century; a treaty between Rome and the Samnites, dated to 354, probably indicated this particular river as the dividing line between Roman and Samnite spheres of influence. The founding of the Latin colony of Fregellae in 329, on the left bank of the river and therefore in Samnium agro, set off the Second Samnite War in 327, again underlining the territorial importance of the Liri. Pliny also explicitly mentions the Liri as the southern border of Latium, and in another passage writes that the town of Sinuessa, located some 15 kilometres to the south of Minturnae, was extremum in adiecto Latio, thereby suggesting

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7 For a detailed discussion of the development of Latium as a (geographical) concept, see Solin 1996.
8 See Salmon 1967, 192-3 for a speculative reconstruction of the terms included in the treaty.
9 Liv. 8.23.6; Dion. Hal. 15.8.5, 15.10.1; Appian. Samn. 1.4
that the entire lower Liri valley was part of Latium. The fourth and early third centuries BC thus reveal an increasingly secure Roman political presence throughout the area that has earlier been defined here as constituting Latium in geographical terms. This is further illustrated by the fact that Rome embarked on several ambitious infrastructural projects in the area from the late fourth century onwards, such as the network of consular roads begun in 312 with the via Appia, *regina viarum*, surely one of the most potent symbolic statements underlining Rome’s dominant position in the region.

It is likely that these infrastructural projects, and other actions actually changing the physical fabric of an area such as colonisation and, perhaps to a lesser extent municipalisation, had a considerable impact on the lives of people. It is less clear what the effects were of changes in legal status accompanying Roman expansion. Issues such as exactly what status the land had and in which region you lived according to the central authorities was probably important in matter such as the military levy and certain voting procedures, but did not affect day-to-day life all that much. It is only fair to point out that in religious matters, territorial boundaries were indeed considered important. Distinction was made in the period prior to the Social War between Roman and non-Roman *sacra*, and in prodigies reported inside and outside the *ager*

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12 De Cazanove 2000, 71-74.
Romanus. I am convinced that such territorial distinctions were of minor importance to the everyday functioning of religion and only became an issue in politically charged situations. One of the best examples to illustrate this point is the fact that in 241, the Roman consul Q. Lutatius Cerco wanted to consult the oracle of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste, which the Senate forbade, stating as a reason the alien nature of the cult. However, the material aspects of this and other cults at Praeneste is very similar to what is found in Rome and the rest of Latium, demonstrating the discrepancy between practical and political aspects of cult and religion in Latium.

It is important to keep in mind that in general Latium was not a static, clearly defined geographical area and was probably - though not necessarily consciously or intentionally - continuously and perhaps confusingly redefined in the wake of Roman expansion. It is certainly possible that changes in boundaries had to be accompanied by ritual acts, in any case for such religiously important boundaries as the Roman pomerium. It is not clear whether the extension of the ager Romanus, particularly relevant for Latium, necessitated such acts as well; Filippo Coarelli seems to suggest as much, and indeed confirms that territorial expansion put the religious boundary system to the test, necessitating the creation of new categories. It is probably safe to assume that during the entire period under consideration, even after the great enfranchisement laws of 90 and 89, the situation in Latium was a lot less straightforward, uniform and homogenous than is sometimes suggested. We should therefore keep in mind when interpreting the data that what area we regard as Latium is almost by definition a mental construct, which might not correspond with any real, historic Latium.

Monumental sanctuaries in Latium

The sanctuaries which will be analysed, fitting the conditions of monumentality and location outlined above, are the seven sanctuaries described by Filippo Coarelli in his 1987 publication, at or in the towns of Fregellae, Gabii, Lanuvium, Praeneste, Tibur, Terracina and on the shores of Lake Nemi, and one additional sanctuary at the town of Tusculum that has been analysed in the period after his book was published (fig. 1). While it would have been interesting to include the building complex at Colle Noce (Segni), apart from the reports already mentioned the results of the excavation have not yet been published which unfortunately means that the available data are insufficient for a full analysis.

I will now provide a brief description of each sanctuary, presenting information about the divinity to which they were dedicated, as well as their location and chronology. In the course of the following chapters, more detailed and precise information will be provided about each of these subjects, including a discussion of the material evidence on which they are based.

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14 Val. Max. 1.3.2.
16 COARELLI 2000, esp. 289
18 COARELLI 1987.
20 A full publication of the excavations at the complex has been announced for 2010.
The first sanctuary to be monumentalised was the sanctuary of Aesculapius at the Latin colony of Fregellae. The building complex is located on a hill just at a short distance from the plateau on which the settlement itself was located and to which it was probably connected by a road. It has been dated to the second quarter of the second century.

The next sanctuary, chronologically, is situated at Gabii, an ancient Latin town close to Rome. The sanctuary was dedicated to the goddess Juno Gabina, and was situated along the via Prenestina, inside the inhabited urban area. It has been dated to the period around the middle of the second century.

The monumental sanctuary that was built on top of Monte S. Angelo at Terracina probably had more than one construction phase. The first of these, which can be connected to the remains of the so-called ‘piccolo tempio’, has been dated to the second half of the second century, while the second monumental phase can be dated to the second quarter of the first century. The building complex is located just outside the Roman citizen colony of Terracina. The divinity to which the sanctuary was dedicated has traditionally been identified as Jupiter Anxur.

The sanctuary at the town of Tusculum also underwent several construction phases during the late republican period. Although these phases are difficult to date, the sanctuary probably was first monumentalised during the second half of the second century. It was subsequently enlarged in the first half of the first century, and a final monumental phase has been dated to the period around or just after the middle of the first century. The building complex is located outside the urban area, at a short distance from the western town gate. Its main divinity is unknown, but Castor and Pollux, Jupiter or Hercules are the most likely suggestions.

The sanctuary dedicated to the goddess Fortuna Primigenia was located in the Latin city of Praeneste, some 30 km northeast of Rome. By scholarly consensus, the construction of this complex has been dated to the late second century. It is situated on the northern edge of the urban plateau comprising the republican town, against the slope of Monte Ginestro.

On the shores north of Lake Nemi in the area of the Alban Hills, a sanctuary was constructed dedicated to the goddess Diana Nemorensis. Its late republican monumental phase has been dated to the period around 100. Although it is located in the territory of the town of Aricia, the sanctuary is situated several kilometres from the nearest urban centre.

Just south of the urban centre of the Latin city of Tibur, a sanctuary was constructed dedicated to the god Hercules Victor. It is built on top of one of the most important access routes towards the city from Rome, the via Tiburtina. Building activities spanned several decades, and can be dated to the end of the second century and the first quarter of the first century.

Finally, there is the sanctuary dedicated to the goddess Juno Sospita at Lanuvium. The sanctuary belongs to a sacred area occupying the Colle S. Lorenzo in the northern part of the town; the sanctuary of Juno Sospita was constructed on the hill’s southern edge. The late republican monumental building phase has been dated to the second quarter of the first century.

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21 Although it did not exist as a town in the republican period, for the sake of brevity and comprehension I will regularly refer to this sanctuary with the toponym Nemi (as in: sanctuary at Nemi) instead of Aricia or Nemus Aricinum, to designate its geographical proximity to this town.
History of research

Some of these sanctuaries have been known and studied for a long time, while others have been discovered more recently. The availability of information is therefore rather disparate. Some sanctuaries, such as Praeneste, have always attracted a lot of attention and inspired a large number of studies, while others are far less well studied. Although the context of certain sanctuaries can therefore be fleshed out more thoroughly and successfully than others, the availability of descriptions of recovered material and plans of the remains for each sanctuary allows us to compare them in some basic ways. In addition, scholarly research has greatly influenced the way in which these sanctuaries are approached in modern publications. I would therefore like to offer a brief history of the study of the monuments. It is by no means intended as an exhaustive account, containing all publications which have appeared until now. Rather, it seeks to outline a general development in scholarly thinking about these monuments, especially as an architectural group. What ideas about the individual building complexes and their shared characteristics have been formed throughout the years, and how does this affect modern research?

Early research: identification, drawing and collecting

Some sanctuaries have always remained visible, at least in part, although the building complex as such was not always recognised as a sanctuary. This was certainly the case for those sanctuaries of which considerable sections of the elevation were preserved: at Gabii, the walls of the cella remained visible; at Praeneste, parts of the sanctuary were used for the construction of new buildings but its remains were never completely obscured nor its classical origin forgotten; at Tibur, the sanctuary of Hercules Victor remained in use over the centuries, its spaces adapted to modern needs; at Terracina, the impressive substructures of the main terrace always remained visible; and at Tusculum, even in its more ruined state, the remains of the monumental temple continued to attract attention.

Interest in the monumental sanctuaries was translated from the 15th century onwards in a great quantity of drawings and sketches made of the monumental remains themselves and possible reconstructions of the original building complexes. The most famous artists and scholars of their time made sketches and reconstruction drawings of probably the most impressive ancient remains of Latium, at Palestrina and Tibur; we find the likes of Giuliano and Antonio da Sangallo, Pirro Ligorio, Pietro da Cortona, Andrea Palladio and Giovanni Battista Piranesi among the names of those who expressed an artistic or scholarly interest in the monumental remains at these two towns. Perhaps because the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Palestrina had always been identified as a sanctuary, it was the complex that attracted the most attention and that had the greatest influence on architects of the Renaissance and later periods. Certain architectural features of the sanctuary even ended up in contemporary building designs. The lateral ramps of the Belvedere court at the Vatican

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22 Giuliani 1985, 311. In general, see Merz 2001 for an overview of especially artistic interest in the remains of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia.
designed by Donato Bramante, for instance, seem to have been inspired by the great porticated ramps of the sanctuary. However, while these drawings have some scientific merit, it is best to approach them with caution, since a large part of the reconstruction drawings seem to be based on artistic invention. We only need to compare the reconstruction drawings made by Andrea Palladio of the sanctuaries of Hercules Victor and Fortuna Primigenia to note that the two look disconcertingly similar, which seems to suggest pre-conceived ideas about their original appearance or the projection of features of one sanctuary on the other.

In several cases, the structural remains were not identified as a sanctuary until well into the 19th century. The ruins of Tivoli and Tusculum were both interpreted as monumental villas belonging to illustrious figures of the Late Republic or Early Empire. The sanctuary at Tivoli was known as the 'Villa of Maecenas', which had later passed into the hands of the emperor Augustus himself. In a similar manner, the ruins located outside the gates of ancient Tusculum had traditionally been taken for the remains of a large villa. Some identified it as the beloved Tuscan villa of Cicero, and later it was suggested that the villa had perhaps belonged to the emperor Tiberius, an attribution which was strengthened by the recovery of a headless statue of a seated divinity later reconstructed as the emperor in the guise of Jupiter. In the 19th century the architect Luigi Canina, who wrote extensively on ancient architecture, suggested that the monumental remains of the 'Villa of Maecenas' belonged to the famous Temple of Hercules, although he considered it to be the lower part of the sanctuary, with a circular temple itself located higher up in the town near the Cathedral of San Lorenzo. Antonio Nibby later argued that the remains near the cathedral and the remains of the so-called Villa of Maecenas should be understood as separate structural entities, and that the latter should probably be identified as the famous Temple of Hercules. However, in his description of the ancient remains in the vicinity of Rome, Thomas Ashby maintained that the sanctuary extended further up the hill and included the remains behind the apse of the cathedral, and Luigi Borsari likewise continued to consider the monumental platform just a part of the temple, clearly demonstrating that Canina's reconstruction remained influential. It was also Ashby who suggested that the remains at Tusculum probably belonged to a monumental sanctuary.

Archaeological research in the form of excavations seems to have been rather rare until the 19th century, and in general took the form of treasure hunting, locating valuable objects such as sculpture to add to collections, without much interest in the structural features of the ancient remains. The sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis in particular seems to have been a notable source of sculpture. The fact that the excavations and research carried out between the 17th and 19th centuries were conducted by groups of different nationalities and the fact that a lot of objects were sold has the unfortunate consequence that the material from the sanctuary has become scattered; material from Nemi is included in the collections of the Villa Giulia museum in Rome, the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, the Castle Museum in

24 Zorzi 1957 (the sanctuary at Tibur); Fancelli 1974 (Praeneste).
25 Nibby 1848 III, 190-198 (esp. 193-194).
26 Ashby 1907, 150; Ashby 1927, 111-113.
27 Borsari 1887.
28 Ashby 1910, 342-348; Ashby 1927, 168-169.
Nottingham and the University of Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia. Although this level of dispersion is exceptional, the fact that non-Italians were active in 19th century excavations ensured that a lot of material disappeared to foreign museums.\(^\text{29}\)

At the beginning of the 20th century, those sanctuaries with structural remains which were still visible at the time had been correctly identified, although in some cases debate about the correct identification of the remains and the construction dates continued. Excavations seem to have become slightly more professional and in the late 19th and early 20th century, the first formal plans of sanctuaries, with varying degrees of accuracy, were published.\(^\text{30}\) However, formal comparisons between the various sanctuaries were not yet being made.

In his famous two-volume publication about Hellenistic architecture in Latium, Richard Delbrueck only mentioned the sanctuaries of Palestrina and Gabii, and did not compare these stylistically or technically to each other, nor to other sanctuary complexes.\(^\text{31}\) In his description of the famous sanctuaries of ancient Lazio, Giuseppe Lugli calls attention to the intensity of building activity in the region during the period between the Gracchi and Sulla, resulting in the reconstruction of many old temples and the construction of grand complexes the remains of which were still visible, citing Tivoli, Palestrina and Terracina as examples.\(^\text{32}\) While Lugli also describes the sanctuaries of Juno Gabina and Diana Nemorensis, he does not seem to consider them part of the same phenomenon, or at least does not deem it necessary to explicitly comment that they were.\(^\text{33}\)

This perhaps demonstrates that at this time, while several sanctuaries were seen as the result of a period of intense building activities in the late second and early first centuries, these sanctuaries were not yet considered to be part of a single architectural group, and it is likely that this shift in perception happened during the second half of the 20th century.

The canonisation of the Latial monumental sanctuary

One of the most significant developments in the study of late republican monumental sacred architecture was the result of the damage done to Italian towns during World War II. The allied bombings in Italy during 1944 destroyed part of the historic centre of Palestrina, yet offered a unique opportunity for scientific research; the medieval houses that had been built on top of the foundations of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia were made uninhabitable and could thus be cleared, enabling the systematic investigation of the ancient remains. Published in 1953, the report of the excavation and analysis of the complex by the archaeologist Giorgio Gullini and architect Furio Fasolo marks an important turning point in the study of the monumental sanctuaries of Latium, generating interest and providing new opportunities for comparison. Up to this point, as we have seen, while some considered the sanctuaries as products of a particular historical period, namely the period between the Gracchi and Sulla, the only

\(^{29}\) Especially the excavation activities at Nemi and Lanuvium of Sir John Savile Lumley, English ambassador at Rome in the late 19th century, ensured that a lot of the material found there was shipped off to English museums.

\(^{30}\) In contrast to artists’ sketches which had been the rule in the earlier period. Examples include the sanctuary at Nemi (Wallis 1893), Lanuvium (Bendinelli 1921) and Terracina (Borsari 1894; Lugli 1926).

\(^{31}\) Delbrueck 1907; Delbrueck 1912.

\(^{32}\) Lugli 1932, 8, 78-82 (Tivoli), 87-93 (Palestrina), 110-114 (Terracina).

\(^{33}\) Lugli 1932, 38-40 (Nemi), 50-55 (Gabii).
generic similarity noted in the form of these sanctuaries was their size. Direct comparisons of architectural elements and the establishment of a formal typology were not made. Fasolo and Gullini take a first step in this direction by a direct stylistic comparison of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia with other public monuments in Latium, most importantly the sanctuaries of Terracina and Tivoli.34

In the decades after the publication of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia by Fasolo and Gullini, more detailed and thorough analyses of Latial late republican sanctuaries began to appear, especially from the 70s onwards. The presentation of the architectural remains of the sanctuary of Hercules Victor at Tivoli by Fulvio Cairoli Giuliani in a volume of the Forma Italiae series in 1970 marks the emancipation of that sanctuary, which had up to this point been rather neglected, especially in comparison to the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia.35 The important colloquium Hellenismus in Mittelitalien held at Göttingen and published in 1976 is perhaps symptomatic of the increased interest of the manifestations of Hellenism across the Italian peninsula, and monumental architectural complexes, in Latium but also in other parts of Italy, occupied an important place in the papers presented.36 The focus of attention during this period continued to be the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia and the issue of the correct chronology of the complex, as well as the extent of the sanctuary complex.

The publication in 1982 of the systematic excavations at the sanctuary of Juno Gabina at Gabii, undertaken from 1956 until 1969 by the Escuela Española de Historia y Arqueología en Roma, meant yet another ‘official’ addition to the group of late republican sanctuaries inspired by Hellenistic architectural principles.37 While the sanctuary had always been known and several plans of its remains had been published, this was the first official excavation report with a full analysis of the material found at the site and which explicitly placed the complex in the series of late republican Italic sanctuaries. The complex comprised a centrally placed temple with an altar in front of it, surrounded by a garden and framed by a pi-shaped Doric portico, with tabernae on two of its sides, and with a monumental frontal access, all of which constructed on an artificially created platform, adapted to the topography of the location of the sanctuary while at the same time modifying this topography to achieve a particular effect and creating an architectural landscape, a scenography which underlined the grandiosity and beauty of the complex.38

The discovery of the sanctuary of Aesculapius, excavated during the late 1970s and the early 1980s, and the publication of the excavation results in 1986 served to further entrench the idea of a standard typology in the scientific research of monumental sanctuaries. Although the southwestern part of the sanctuary had been lost because of erosion of the landscape, it was suggested that we were dealing with an axially symmetric complex. Of course, the underlying assumption in this reconstruction is that the sanctuary belonged to the typology of monumental Latial sanctuaries: the sanctuary of Aesculapius was obviously built with its intended scenographical effect in mind, and could be dated in the early second century, thereby

34 Fasolo/Gullini 1953, 415-439.
35 Giuliani 1970.
36 See in particular the contributions on Samnium (La Regina 1976) and Picenum (Mercando 1976), as well as the more general observations about Italic architecture in the Hellenistic period (Rakob 1976) in these volumes.
37 Almagro Gorbea 1982.
38 Almagro Gorbea 1982, 611.
making it the first example in Latium of this particular type of hellenised building complex.\(^{39}\) While it is certainly possible that the complex did display axial symmetry, it is important to keep in mind that the reason for this reconstruction is the perceived inclusion of the sanctuary, based on certain characteristics, in a typology which dictates certain architectural regularities, rather than the actual remains.

In 1987 all Latial monumental sanctuaries known at that time were presented in a single volume. Filippo Coarelli published a survey of seven sanctuaries: Gabii, Fregellae, Palestrina, Tivoli, Terracina, Lanuvium and Nemi.\(^{40}\) It was not the first time he had tackled the issue of the monumentalisation of sanctuaries in the late republican period; two articles in particular, published in 1983, already contained important observations about some of the Latial sanctuaries which Coarelli would later repeat and elaborate.\(^{41}\) Although he does not offer a synthesis of the phenomenon, Coarelli clearly argues that the monumental sanctuaries are manifestations of the same general phenomenon, and scattered among the descriptions of the individual monuments in his 1987 book and his articles we can observe a sanctuary ‘model’ which is more or less similar to the one presented above for the sanctuary of Gabii. Perhaps not surprisingly, Coarelli has become the standard reference when late republican Latial sanctuaries are mentioned.

It thus seems that the ‘canonisation’ of the late republican sanctuary occurs in the period between 1970-1990, and especially the second decade of that period. The official publication within the span of a few years of two sanctuaries which could be included in the series of late republican monumental building complexes and especially the synthetical treatment of these sanctuaries by Filippo Coarelli, led to their conception as a true group and we can observe the implicit acceptance of this group of sanctuaries as constituent parts of an architectural typology. In its canonical form, a typical late republican sanctuary would consist of a central temple building, surrounded on three sides by a pi-shaped portico (porticus triplex), preferably with a theatrical cavea in front of it, while the concept of scenography inspired the attention to the relation of the building complex with its environment, sometimes necessitating a transformation of this environment through terracing using extensive substructures. It is striking to see how firmly this basic concept of a standardised sanctuary form has anchored itself in scientific literature. In modern handbooks on Roman architecture, they are invariably presented as a more or less homogenous group. In earlier publications which presented these sanctuaries as examples of the building activities during the Gracchan and Sullan period without referring to specific characteristics apart from perhaps the dimensions of the complexes and the scenographical aspects (sometimes related to the use of substructures), no mention was made of additional features which a sanctuary of this type should have. However, the emphasis in modern publications shifts slightly but noticeably from a descriptive to a prescriptive treatment of the building complexes.

This does not necessarily mean that the standard characteristics of late republican monumental sanctuaries are always repeated in every publication mentioning them. While Pierre Gros mentions the group of sanctuaries in his survey of Roman public architecture,

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\(^{39}\) Crawford 1981, 199.

\(^{40}\) Coarelli 1987.

\(^{41}\) Coarelli 1983b; Coarelli 1983a.
he gives descriptions of only three sanctuaries: Gabii, Palestrina and Tivoli. However, by explicitly presenting them as a coherent group, with terracing as a defining characteristic, he implicitly supports the idea of a standard sanctuary typology. In other handbooks, this idea of a standardised typology is even more strongly felt. A survey of ancient architecture published in 2006 by a group of Italian scholars presents Coarelli’s canonical group of seven sanctuaries as a homogenous complex of great Latial sanctuaries, and gives as their defining characteristics the existence of a temenos area, partly provided with porticoes, the presence of a sacred wood or garden, an altar, a temple, a theatrical cavea, a possible oracular function of the sanctuary and the vertical development of the sanctuary on several levels through terracing. Although some of the characteristics mentioned are rather generic, we can clearly observe that virtually all the characteristics attributed to the sanctuary at Gabii by the Spanish excavators are apparently valid for and applicable to the entire group of monuments.

One of the most explicit references to the existence of a standard typology for late republican monumental sanctuaries is found in a contribution by Pia Guldager Bilde to an exhibition catalogue about the sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis. Although she admits that there are differences between the building complexes, she goes on to enumerate the many similarities, highlighting the dominant position in the landscape and the fact that the building complexes imply a subjugation of nature by man and culture; the fact that the entire complex is an organised project comprising many different structural elements in a single whole; the use of modulation or geometric figures to structure the relationship between the different components of the structure; the principles of axiality, symmetry and frontalität holding together the design. She also refers to the importance of porticoes in the creation of space in these sanctuaries; while often in the form of a porticus triplex, it is also possible that stairs or a temple were placed in the middle of the portico. A theatre is also often present inside the sanctuary. These are all elements which we have encountered elsewhere, but Guldager Bilde goes one step further, suggesting that there are similarities between the dimensions of sanctuaries, with 200 feet being a theoretical basis for several different sanctuaries in Central Italy, not just Latium. Guldager Bilde argues that on closer examination, it appears that the architects were in possession of a particular ‘sanctuary-module’, which clearly indicates a supposed element of standardisation in sanctuary design in the late republican period.

The implications of the fact that we are apparently dealing with a more or less standardised architectural category become apparent in several modern publications dealing with late republican sanctuaries and architectural remains the function of which has not yet been established with certainty. At the most basic level, this leads to a functional imposition of the sanctuary typology. This is clearly visible in the case of the vast substructures located in the Colli Albani called the Barco Borghese. It consists of a giant platform of 219 x 245 m, dated

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42 Gros 1996, 136-140.
43 Bozzi et al. 2006, 226.
45 Guldager Bilde in Molteisen 1997, 184: she mentions that the width of several sanctuaries seems to approach 200 feet, while a different standard feet used would account for differences in the measurements (55 m for Pietrabbondante; 57 m for the sanctuary at Cagliari; 59 m for the sanctuary at Fregellae; 62,5 m for the sanctuary at Gabii and 64 m for the sanctuary at Teanum Sidicinum).
46 Guldager Bilde in Molteisen 1997, 184.
to the middle or the second half of the first century; an artificial terrace formed by extensive substructures dated to the late republican period (or possibly the early imperial period). It has traditionally been interpreted as the platform on which a monumental villa complex was built. And yet, because of the date and the fact that we are dealing with a platform intended to sustain a building complex of monumental proportions, the option is kept open that it was a sanctuary complex.\textsuperscript{48} Thus, in this case, the similarity of chronological and technical characteristics of this complex to the Latial sanctuary typology leads to the suggestion that we are dealing with a religious complex even though no material has been found sustaining this suggestion, nor have structural remains been unearthed which strengthen the hypothesis.

While the example given above may seem harmless enough, since it keeps an option open on the basis of certain characteristic which are actually attested, it is another matter when the sanctuary typology is used to supplement the reconstruction of excavated remains, which in this case implies the architectural imposition of the sanctuary typology. I have already given the example of the architectural remains of Colle Noce in the vicinity of Segni, where the application of the standard sanctuary scheme by Reggiani is among the most obvious examples. As indicated above, in this case the fact that excavations revealed terracing that could probably be dated to the late republican period led to a proposed reconstruction of a sanctuary with a centrally placed temple and a surrounding pi-shaped portico; the projection of elements of the ‘typical’ Latial sanctuary, as exemplified by the sanctuaries of Gabii and Tivoli, onto the excavated remains.

The extra-urban sanctuary at Tusculum provides another case where assumptions about what a late republican monumental sanctuary in Latium \textit{should} look like seem to influence descriptions of the remains. In 1995, Lorenzo Quilici and Stefania Quilici Gigli published a detailed architectural analysis of the remains of the extra-urban sanctuary of Tusculum.\textsuperscript{49} After Ashby’s identification of the remains as a sanctuary, it had been largely ignored by scholars. It is interesting to note that Quilici and Quilici Gigli refrain from overt generalisations and do not immediately include the building complex in the series of sanctuaries described by Coarelli. The only comparisons that are made are with the sanctuaries of Hercules Victor at Tivoli and the sanctuary on Monte S. Angelo at Terracina, since they consider the architectural characteristics of these sanctuaries in particular to be the closest parallels to the building complex at Tusculum.\textsuperscript{50} However, we do notice implicit assumptions about the sanctuary’s architectural characteristics; on the platform containing the remains of the temple, no other structural remains have been found, yet all descriptions of the building complex, including the otherwise careful architectural analysis by Quilici and Quilici-Gigli, suggest the possibility of a portico surrounding the terrace.\textsuperscript{51} While Luigi Canina, who led excavations of the monument from 1830 until 1834, recognised the remains of an ample peristyle on this level, we do not know on which observations his assertion was based.\textsuperscript{52} Bearing in mind his reconstruction of the sanctuary of Hercules Victor, and the fact that at this time the remains were still considered

\textsuperscript{48} Valenti 2007, 166.
\textsuperscript{49} Quilici/Quilici Gigli 1995.
\textsuperscript{50} Quilici/Quilici Gigli 1995, 512. The specific architectural features mentioned are the use of substructures to create a platform on which the temple building is placed.
\textsuperscript{51} Quilici/Quilici Gigli 1995, 531; Ghini 2002, 197, 200; Gorostidi Pi/Ribaldi 2008, 84; Ribaldi 2008, 55.
\textsuperscript{52} Borda 1958, 20.
to have formed part of a villa, it is certainly possible that the suggestion was not based on the encountered remains but on presumptions about the function of the terrace. It therefore seems that the modern insistence on the possible reconstruction of a portico is not so much grounded in fact as in standard assumptions. This is perfectly reflected in a publication by Giuseppina Ghini, who describes an upper terrace with colonnades surrounding the temple on three sides, going on to mention that only scarce remains of the temple were found and none of possible colonnades, only to conclude with the statement that the plan of the entire sanctuary closely recalls those of contemporaneous complexes in Latium, in particular those of Hercules Victor at Tivoli and Jupiter Anxur or Feronia at Terracina, above all for the presence of colonnades and impressive substructures.

Although not always explicitly, it is clear that the eight sanctuaries under discussion here are generally grouped. While this is certainly justified in the sense that we are dealing with a phenomenon of monumentalisation in a limited chronological and geographical framework, the habit of grouping these sanctuaries becomes counterproductive when it implies the automatic assumption of a set of standard architectural characteristics which are then used to complete plans by extrapolating those features which are considered standard without sufficient critical reflection and without a factual basis provided by the recovered remains. While it is certainly possible that the sanctuaries in question did have these architectural features, it is important to be aware of the mechanisms by which such conclusions are reached in many modern publications and the level of generalisation that they imply. In my opinion, the cases presented above are perfect examples of the circular reasoning often encountered in descriptions of late republican monumental sanctuaries; a monument is included in the typology on the basis of chronology and certain characteristics, the typology is then used to complete or strengthen a proposed reconstruction, which in turn is used to justify inclusion of the monument in the typology and to underline the standard elements of the typology.

Nature and structure of the study

During the last decades relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to explanations for the genesis and development of monumental sanctuaries in Latium. It seems as if these sanctuaries simply are, and have become a standard with which to compare existing and newly discovered building complexes. This study will evaluate this standard by analysing the monumentalisation of sanctuaries in Latium. In order to answer these questions, I have formulated two main research questions: (1) how can we explain the monumentalisation of Latial sanctuaries in the late republican period; and (2) what are the specific choices being made during the monumentalisation process with regard to architecture and ornamentation? It is emphatically not a presentation of new material, but rather a fresh appraisal of existing material, a deconstruction of sorts of the typology of the Latial monumental sanctuary. The starting point for the analysis of this group of building complexes in this study will therefore always be the individual monuments, yet these will be continually confronted with possible patterns emerging for the group of monuments as a whole. By this process of informational feedback I will take care to avoid relativistic interpretations of single monuments, while at the same time testing the internal consistency of the monuments as a group.
The study moves from general frameworks to more detailed analysis. In Chapter One, I will try to reconstruct the religious context of the Latial monumental sanctuaries. Since so much attention is given to the architecture of these complexes, we perhaps tend to forget that what we are dealing with is functioning religious sites. People came to these places to worship divinities and dedicate objects. It therefore stands to reason that this study starts out by examining how the process of monumentalisation is related to developments in religion. Changes can be observed in the ways in which the gods were approached in the late republican period; the question is how these changes can be explained. Since religious developments are often interpreted as reflecting or being affected by societal developments, explanations will be discussed offering cultural and socio-economic models accounting for religious change. In order to assess their validity, and in order to perhaps offer new insights into the development of cult places in the late republican period, a reconstruction of the sacred landscape of Latium will be presented, based on the archaeological evidence of recovered votive material. This will give us a per-century picture of the spatial distribution of cult places; where are they located, and is there a pattern to change and continuity within this sacred landscape? And, most importantly, how is this landscape of devotion related to the construction of sacred structures, including monumental sanctuaries? It might be possible that the monumentalisation of sanctuaries is influenced by their popularity among worshippers. I will try to establish if the scale of sanctuaries reflects the level of attendance, by comparing the distribution and chronology of building activities at sanctuaries with the votive material found there.

In Chapter Two, the focus is shifted from the religious context to the socio-political context. Besides being cult places with a religious function, these sanctuaries were built by the leading political elite of the time; religious architecture had always been used for representational ends, and the late republican sanctuaries of Latium are no exception. The question is who the people are who wanted to represent themselves through this type of architecture, and what this says about the monuments themselves and the patrons commissioning them. Since the monumentalisation process in Latium is part of a phenomenon also affecting other areas of the Italian peninsula, it is interesting to see what explanations have been offered for this process in other regions, and to investigate the possibilities of applying these to the monumentalisation process in Latium. The central question thus becomes if a similar phenomenon, extensive building activities at sanctuaries producing large building complexes, can be explained in a similar way in the whole of Italy, or if we should pursue region-specific interpretations of the process. This of course depends on the desires and perspectives of those responsible for the construction of the sanctuaries. If we accept the fact that temples and sanctuaries are built by a competitive aristocracy, we need to establish with whom they were competing and how the identity of those competing affected the means that were chosen to compete with. If monumental sanctuaries were considered to be an effective investment of resources that could have been used in different ways, it is necessary to ascertain what their added value was with respect to, say, regular temples. Apparently, the specific context of aristocratic competition in Latium made the construction of monumental sanctuaries both possible and desirable. This chapter will explore those specific characteristic of competition and building policies.

After having studied the religious and socio-political context of the monumentalisation process and hopefully having gained some insights into the reasons and modalities of this
process, it is time to consider the sanctuaries themselves in more detail. Although some aspects of individual sanctuaries will inevitably have to be discussed earlier, the final chapter is devoted entirely to an analysis of the architectural and decorative aspects of Latial monumental sanctuaries. In Chapter Three, I will study the way in which they were perceived, presenting the sanctuaries as coherent visual systems. Given the fact that we are dealing with a construction phase which produced such large building complexes, it will be interesting to see what choices were made during the monumentalisation of sanctuaries. Did earlier building phases play a role in the genesis of the new design, and did these earlier phases perhaps even remain visible in the new design? Earlier phases of each sanctuary will be investigated to establish the appearance of the sanctuary before the late republican monumental phase, and an attempt will be made to establish what the effects were of these earlier phases and of the surroundings on the design of the sanctuaries. Subsequently, some architectural elements which have often been connected to Latial monumental sanctuaries will be studied. Since these are the elements on which the establishment of a standard typology of the Latial monumental sanctuary is based, this will give us some idea about the validity of this typology. Finally, the decorative categories of the sanctuaries will be discussed, both the decoration which formed an integral part of the structure itself (architectural terracotta decoration and wall decoration) and sculpture set up in the sanctuary precinct. The relationship between the ornamentation of the sanctuaries and their architectural characteristics will be examined, and compared to general developments in Rome and the rest of Italy.

The principal aim of this study is to provide an analysis of the reasons and different manifestations of the monumentalisation process in Latium without immediately taking recourse to the established image that is so often encountered in the scientific literature. By studying the monuments individually and as a group simultaneously, the possible errors inherent in such generalisations will hopefully become clear. It is not my wish to propose corrections of the standard image so often repeated, since I question the usefulness of the standard type to begin with. With this study, I would like to underline the need to continually question assumptions, especially since these can generate a false sense of security. By continually referring to a standard typology and applying its supposed standard elements on monuments which are considered to be similar, it is suggested that we have a thorough, even complete knowledge of these building complexes. I wish to point out that by assuming imperfect knowledge and searching afresh for similarities and differences, patterns and idiosyncracies, we can actually further our knowledge of these monuments instead of continually referring to the same standard features.

In the field of archaeology, we are always confronted with how little we really know and can know about the objects that we study. The lack of complete data sets may lead to a structural uncertainty, while at the same time it gives us an opportunity to approach our material with various interpretative models which are not wrong or unsuitable beforehand, just different; the archaeologist’s weakness can also be considered a strength, or advantage, since it allows several competing visions or models of the past to exist at the same time, and no vision is necessarily more ‘true’ than the other. This study is therefore also an attempt to see just how much we can say on the basis of the little concrete evidence we do have, and what models, theories and assumptions this evidence can bear.