

TIVOLI AND THE TIBURTINE TERRITORY

HISTORICAL NOTES

Tivoli (ancient Tibur) enjoyed a strategic position on the route between the upper and lower Anio basin, a situation that made it the key to Latium Vetus for those traveling from the area corresponding to present-day Abruzzo. From a very early period, Via Tiburtina, which originally connected Tivoli with Rome, must have proceeded inland, on a route that was continued by Via Valeria, established at the end of the fourth century BC.

The foundation of Tivoli is attributed to Tiburnus, one of the three sons of the Argive hero Amphiaraos. Hercules, the most important local divinity, probably assumed his epithet “Victor” after the ancient Tiburtines routed the Volscians. The Tiburtines were among the Latins who fought the Romans at Lake Regillus at the beginning of the fifth century BC. Immediately after, through the *Foedus Cassianum*, Tivoli became part of the league dominated by Rome.

In 361 BC war between the two cities began again. In this conflict Tivoli must have been allied with the Gauls, who for several decades continued their pillaging in central Italy. The war ended with Rome’s capture of Empulum and Saxula in 354 BC. The last conflict between Rome and Tibur took place during the Latin War, which ended in 338, when Latium became Rome’s subject once and for all. The chaos of the Social War, and the subsequent civil wars, must have engulfed the city, which probably supported Marius.

Toward the end of the second century BC at the latest, and especially from the first century on, the outskirts of Tivoli became one of the areas favored by the Roman nobility for their luxurious villas. The beauty of the countryside and its proximity to Rome, less than a day’s journey, added to its attraction. Among the local families were the illustrious Munatii, of which the famous L. Munatius Plancus, consul in 42 BC and founder of the cities of Lyon and Augst, was a member.

While it was still independent, Tivoli must have included in its territory almost the entire valley of the Anio, perhaps as far as Subiaco, covering an area of about 352 square kilometers, the most extensive in Latium after Rome. This was substantially reduced in 338 BC. When Tivoli became a *municipium* after the Social War, the praetors were replaced as magistrates by the *quattuorviri*, who assumed the function of censors every five years (*quinquennales*). The most important cult, that of Hercules Victor, gave rise to a *collegium* of *Herculanei*. When the *Seviri Augustales* were introduced during the Augustan period, the college adopted the name *Herculanei Augustales*.

ITINERARY

Via Tiburtina passes through a district of travertine quarries that are still very much in use. The remains of the ancient quarries can be seen on the right side of the road (with a turnoff after 24 kilometers), near Casale del Barco. These occupy an area of more than 500,000 square meters near a large bend in the Anio.

Somewhat beyond this, the ancient Via Tiburtina veers toward the right with respect to the modern road, crossing the river over a well-preserved bridge, the so-called **Ponte Lucano** (FIG. 141). Originally, this had five arches, of which four are still visible (the fifth is buried). The third arch from the left bank was destroyed and then restored in antiquity. As was the case with the Ponte Nomentano and the Ponte Salario, the bridge was probably cut off by Totila during the Gothic War.

At the end of the bridge, toward the east, lies the **Tomb of the Plautii**—a high cylinder clad in travertine blocks resting on a base, with a protruding cornice band a little more than halfway up its surface. Alterations undertaken in the fifteenth century noticeably changed the appearance of the tomb, which was put to use as a tower to protect the bridge. The oldest inscription, carved on a marble slab above the middle cornice, records the name M. Plautius Silvanus, consul with Augustus in 2 BC, who was in Illyricum with Tiberius in AD 10. The tomb can be dated between AD 10 and 14.

Later, inscriptions were installed in a kind of antechamber, whose facade was accentuated by Corinthian semicolumns; only the largest of these, at the center, and another on the right remain. On the central plaque—the largest—the inscription within the tomb is repeated, naming the consul of 2 BC, as well as his wife, Lartia, and a son, A. Plautius Urganianus, who died at the

age of nine. The son took his cognomen from his grandmother Urgulania (whether maternal or paternal is unknown), a powerful woman of Etruscan origin and a personal friend of Livia, the wife of Augustus.

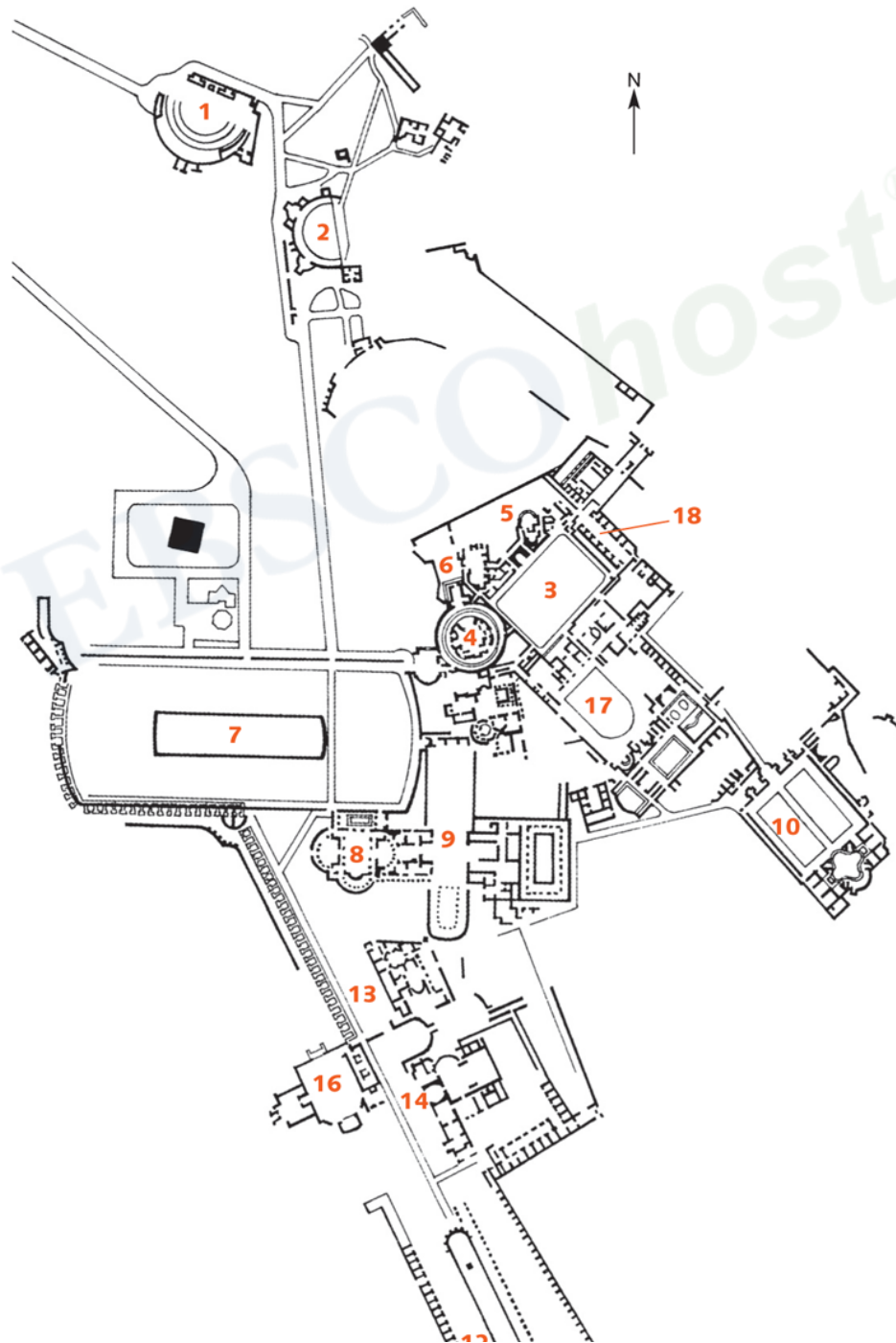
The inscription on the right, the longest, carries the very interesting *elogium* of *Ti(berius) Plautius M(arci) f(ilius)*, perhaps another son of the consul of 2 BC. Tiberius, the subject of the *elogium*, was consul in 45 and again in 74. He must have died before 79, the year of Vespasian's death, as the emperor is not called *divus* in the inscription. The family's tribe, identified in the inscription as *Aniensis*, did not belong to Tivoli; the tribe of Tivoli was in fact the *Camilia*. We know that the Plautii originated in Trebula Suffenas, present-day Ciciliano, where other inscriptions naming members of the same family have been found.

Hadrian's Villa

The largest Roman villa, the work and residence of the emperor Hadrian (AD 117–38), occupied a spacious plateau that ran from southeast to northwest on the slopes of the Monti Tiburtini southwest of Tivoli (FIG. 142). Its size (covering about 120 hectares), its richness, and its variety of architectural forms, along with its picturesque location, make it one of the most extraordinary archaeological sites in Italy.

A late biographer of the fourth century recounts that Hadrian “built his villa at Tivoli in a marvelous way, and he named parts of it after provinces and famous places, calling them for example the Lyceum, the Academia, the Prytaneum, the Canopus, the Poecile, and Tempe. So as not to omit anything, he even created a Hades” (*S.H.A., Hadr.* 26.5). The custom of taking inspiration from famous models in constructing villas—albeit very freely—was hardly new. The practice is documented as early as the Republic.

At one time the complex at Tivoli was presumed to have been the work of Hadrian's old age, but today we know that the villa came into existence during the first ten years of his reign. The emperor retired permanently to Tivoli only following a serious illness, probably the same illness that ultimately led to his death. Hadrian's direct involvement in the villa's design is confirmed by what we know of him as an architect. The emperor's character was summed up as follows (*S.H.A., Hadr.* 14.11): “He was at once austere and congenial, serious and fun-loving, deliberate and fast to act, stingy and generous, guarded and open, cruel and forgiving, and likely to change at any minute.” We can perhaps see traces of this personality in the varied and even capricious architecture of his villa, which might be considered Hadrian's one true work of art. The villa does not give the impression of having been built according to a unified plan (the park is a later addition—a feature that became common from the Renaissance on, as exemplified by the nearby Villa d'Este). Rather, it is a series of pavilions, set randomly against the background of nature, determined, it would seem, by the changing landscape or the varying levels of the terrain rather than by some preconceived design. Hadrian's complex was preceded by a Republican villa, which occupies the heart of the palace (FIG. 142:17). The Republican villa itself sits upon a platform, partly carved out of the natural tufa, in which a cryptoporticus of four branches was created. An enclosed area (corresponding to Hadrian's Court of the Libraries) precedes the platform, with a nymphaeum situated on the central axis toward the north. Hadrian's great palace developed and spread out from this central point, which remained the heart of the Imperial residence. The complex was created entirely during the first ten years of Hadrian's reign, while in the last years of the emperor's life there were at most only small alterations and repairs.



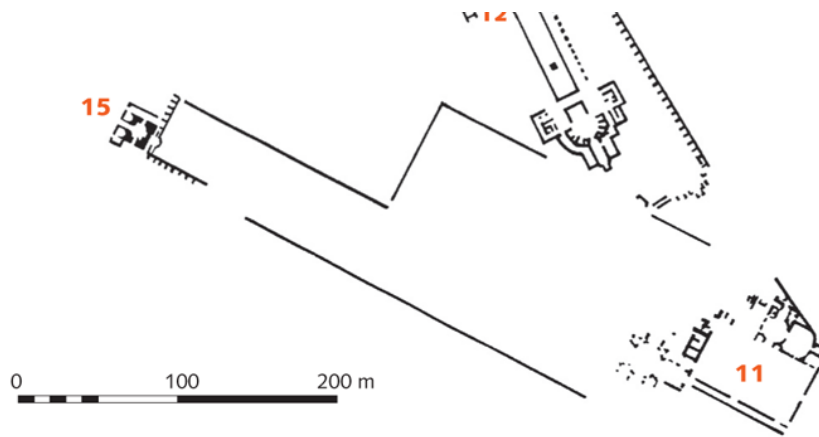


FIGURE 142. Hadrian's Villa. 1 Greek Theater. 2 Temple of Venus. 3 Court of the Libraries. 4 Maritime theater. 5 Latin library. 6 Greek library. 7 Poecile. 8 Summer *cenatio*. 9 Stadium. 10 Piazza d'Oro. 11 Academy. 12 Canopus. 13 Small baths. 14 Large baths. 15 Tower of Roccabruna. 16 Vestibule. 17 Republican villa and central area of the palace. 18 Ospitali.

Various building projects followed the rhythms of the emperor's long journeys. The work, however, seems to have been concentrated mostly in the years when Hadrian was in Italy (from 118 to 121 and from 125 to 128). In the beginning, the project was limited to the Imperial residence around the old Republican villa, with the addition of baths and a gymnasium (the porticus north of the Poecile with the library—to be identified, perhaps, with the so-called Sala dei Sette Sapienti), as well as the official dining room (the building with three exedras) and the large and small baths for personnel. The remainder dates to a second phase, when the villa assumed its definitive monumental form.

One little-noticed feature of the villa, which has recently been studied, is its elaborate system of underground passageways, some large enough for ox carts and others suitable only for foot traffic. The main entrance to the underground complex must have been to the north, on a side road coming from Via Tiburtina. Of the isolated buildings beyond those most often visited, the so-called Greek Theater and the small Temple of Venus can still be seen. The temple, partially restored in recent times, is set within a large semicircular exedra. The discovery here of a copy of the Aphrodite of Cnidus by Praxiteles (a cast of the original, which is in the villa's museum, is displayed on site) suggests one model for Hadrian's building: the small round Temple of Aphrodite on Cnidus that housed the original of the famous statue.

Ordinarily, a visit to the villa begins from the modern pavilion, north of the Poecile, near the center of the northern double porticus, where a large model of the villa is displayed. The main entrance, however, was probably northeast of the so-called Ospitali (FIG. 142:18). Here we see a rectangular room, which opens to the north with two columns *in antis*, preceded by a porticus, probably a later addition. A long wall, which runs at an angle toward the west from this point, barred access to the palace. The area in front of this, on the east, is occupied by the so-called Tempe Terrace, which looks over a deep hollow usually identified (probably correctly) with the region that Hadrian named after the famous valley in Thessaly.

The dormitories behind this, now called the Ospitali, were probably intended for the praetorian guards who protected the entrance. The complex consisted of two groups of what are obviously bedrooms, five on either side of a wide corridor. South of this are latrines and a large central room, perhaps a sanctuary for the Imperial cult. The black-and-white floor mosaic represents graceful geometric and vegetal designs.

The **Court of the Libraries** lies to the west (FIG. 142:3). This is the oldest part of the palace, dominated on the south by the podium of the Republican villa and on the north by the two buildings, once thought to be libraries, that have given the complex its name. The structure consists of a peristyle, enclosed by a porticus on all four sides (the central section has not been excavated), with a nymphaeum in the middle of the northern side that dates to the oldest (Republican) phase. Two passageways on the sides of the nymphaeum lead to the "libraries" (FIG. 142:5–6). In reality, these are two summer dining rooms whose orientation (almost perfectly north-south) is completely different from that of the nearby buildings. On the western side of the Court of the Libraries a stairway descends to the Maritime Theater. It is, however, better to continue to the south and visit the residential section of the villa.

The southern end of the Court of the Libraries is closed by the podium of the **Republican villa**. Near the center of this, an

opening built in Hadrian's time gives access to a rectangular-shaped cryptoporticus with four branches. The southern section of this building contains fragments of a beautiful mosaic pavement, as well as important decoration in its vaulted ceiling, including a framed panel in small tesserae of white marble and blue glass, with a round medallion at the center (dating to the second quarter of the first century BC).

On the floor above, remains of the Republican structures are visible, along with copious restorations and alterations by Hadrian. This is an important section of the Imperial palace, certainly intended as the official reception area. At the center of the south side there is a large square exedra, transformed by Hadrian into a library, probably for his private collection. (A full-scale reproduction of this can be seen in the Museo della Civiltà Romana in EUR.) East of the library is a basilical hall, divided into three aisles by two rows of four columns. On the opposite side, we can make out traces of a peristyle, at the end of which (toward the south) a large doorway gave access to a small group of impressive rooms that were probably intended to receive representatives of state.

Immediately behind the doorway is a large room with a semicircular niche at the north, a porticus, and a large nymphaeum in the form of a theater at the south. This precedes the spacious rectangular **Hall of the Doric Piers** (32 meters long, 23 meters wide), a true basilica, from which a rectangular chamber with two columns *in antis* leads to what must have been, because of its axial position, the main room of the complex. It has traditionally been called the throne room, not unreasonably, given the raised floor at the center of the apse.

Behind the hall, but outside the palace, is the small building known as the **Caserma dei Vigili** (firemen's barracks). This is a purely utilitarian structure, in striking contrast to the luxurious rooms nearby. It was probably meant to house the slaves who were stationed here to serve the palace. A long porticus and an octagonal vestibule (approximately 10.35 meters in diameter) lead to the **Piazza d'Oro**; the vestibule contains one of the most interesting examples of a segmented dome, supported by arches resting on brackets (FIG. 142:10).

A porticus with two aisles borders the large peristyle of the Piazza d'Oro (61 × 51 meters). The columns that separate the two aisles have an intercolumniation twice as wide as the external colonnade, which consists of square piers with engaged columns. The perimeter wall of the porticus has small blind arches resting on piers with engaged columns. The whole is of solid masonry construction, which was originally covered with stucco.

To the right and the left of the vestibule are two small, square cross-vaulted rooms, pierced by niches, that are apsidal on the sides and rectangular on the back. The room on the west is much better preserved than the other, with traces of the marble facing on the walls and of the polychrome mosaic with a geometric design on the floor. Outside the porticus, on the western and eastern sides, are two corridors (cryptoporticoes) with a series of cross vaults that give access to the rooms facing the Vale of Tempe. At the center of the open piazza was a long axial basin, bordered by gardens that were set off by small walls.

The most remarkable feature of the building is the complex at the south. At its center is an octagonal space with curved sides, alternately concave and convex, each of which is supported by two columns. At the rear is a large apsidal nymphaeum, with alternating semicircular and rectangular niches, each enclosing a fountain. The convex sides open onto small apsidal nymphaea, while the concave sides lead to a pair of small courts, each with two convex and two straight sides, onto which three barrel-vaulted rooms open. Whether a dome spanned the center room has been extensively debated; the question seems now to have been resolved in favor of the absence of a roof. We have, then, an open court with a nymphaeum. The complex seems to have served as a summer dining room. The bas-reliefs on the epistyle frieze of the side courts, with scenes of hunting, confirm this identification.

Returning to the Court of the Libraries, a small stairway leads to the **maritime theater**, which is at a lower level (FIG. 142:4). This fanciful (and completely unwarranted) name describes a circular building with an annular porticus, covered with a barrel vault that rests on a marble colonnade on the opposite side. A canal separates the porticus from the little island at the center, which contains a villa in miniature. Originally, the canal would have been crossed by two small wooden bridges, which could be retracted to the island (the mechanism is displayed in a model in the south exedra of the porticus); these were later replaced with a brick bridge. This picturesque island villa was probably meant to be a place of refuge. We can, perhaps, identify the model that inspired it: a similar building also isolated by a canal in the palace of Dionysius I of Syracuse (Cic., *Tusc.* 5.59).

A group of buildings surrounding the maritime theater was probably meant to represent a similar complex familiar to Hadrian from his travels, perhaps a Greek gymnasium (the Academy or the Lyceum?). From the maritime theater, a small stairway leads directly down to the so-called **Hall of the Philosophers**. This rectangular room, with an apse on the south, might have served as a library; if so, the seven niches in the apse were perhaps intended to hold bookcases.

South of the Hall of the Philosophers is a bathing complex, the **Heliocaminus Baths**, the most important of all the baths annexed to the palace. On the south of the large hall is the remarkable room that has given its name to the whole complex: a circular space, entirely taken up by a large circular pool, originally spanned by a coffered dome. The lack of any hydraulic installations, together with the five large windows on the southwest, has suggested to some that this was a *heliocaminus*, a room heated by the sun, but the evidence of artificial heating in the room makes it likely that it was a *sudatio* (sauna).

At the northeastern end of the **Pocile**, the curved end of a long double porticus touches the western wall of the Hall of the Philosophers (FIG. 142:7). A spina wall that supported a double pitched roof divides the porticus, providing separate walkways on both sides of the wall. At the two ends of this spina, circular passageways made it possible to turn around from the inside of the wall to the outside without leaving the cover of the porticus. An inscription, found probably nearby in 1735, specifically refers to this building: "Porticus measured: the circumference is 1,450 feet long, a lap around it seven times makes 2,030 paces." The measurement corresponds to about 429 meters—double the length of the porticus (around 214 meters). This is therefore one of those *ambulationes* or *xysti*, intended for healthful walks of a measured length, so often described by Latin writers.

The Pocile square (232 × 97 meters), added at a later phase, was enclosed within a quadriporticus, with its shorter sides slightly curved. It in turn enclosed a garden with a large pool at the center. The entire western section rested upon a very large foundation, consisting substantially of a series of rooms arranged on four levels on the west and three on the south (the **Cento Camerelle**, or Hundred Chambers). The rooms were probably intended to house the large number of slaves who worked at the villa.

On the southern side of the Pocile is a building with three exedras, which can be identified as a large **dining room** (*cenatio*) for formal banquets (FIG. 142:8). Its two distinct phases largely correspond to those of the villa itself. From the first phase there is a large covered rectangular room, in front of which (on the north) stands a rectangular room containing a basin. The building's southern end is occupied by a semicircular exedra with a porticus. In the second phase, the two lateral semicircular exedras and the fountains were added.

On the east, we find a series of other buildings, all oriented in the same direction as the Pocile. Recent excavations in the so-called **stadium** have revealed that it is in fact a very large nymphaeum divided into three sections (FIG. 142:9).

Farther to the east is a complex of buildings that some have identified as the **Winter Palace**. Its most striking feature is a large porticoed courtyard (59 × 33.50 meters), which originally had forty marble columns raised on a podium that includes part of the cryptoporticus below. At the center of the courtyard is a pool enclosed by a high wall containing niches for statues.

The next group of buildings on the south assumes yet a different orientation, informed by the contours of the small valley. This group includes two bath buildings, along with the so-called Praetorium and Vestibule, and the Canopus. The first of these buildings houses the **small baths**, whose very small area incorporates an impressive variety of plans with amazingly diverse designs (FIG. 142:13). The external facade is undulated, containing three niches flanked by columns. The heart of the building is an octagonal room, whose alternately convex and flat walls provide access to other rooms of the complex. Along the western side is the circular domed *caldarium*, and through this, a pool with curved short sides and the *tepidarium*; the *frigidarium*, containing two large apsidal pools, lies to the south.

These baths form a single, unified complex with those farther south, the **large baths**, which were designed at the same time, although they may have been built somewhat earlier (FIG. 142:14). The large baths show a more classic design, with a preference for square and rectangular rooms. Here too the heated rooms are on the western side, with the long external corridor for furnaces (the *prae-furnium*) situated alongside. The small baths were probably reserved for women, and the large baths for men. The complex was apparently intended for the villa's extensive service personnel.

Fronting the hill south of the large baths is a multistory complex of tabernae (the **Praetorium**), which has been identified as either a residence for the complex's personnel or, less likely, a group of storage rooms.

In the long narrow depression south of this lies the **Canopus**, one of the most famous and evocative of the villa's architectural groups (FIG. 142:12). The valley was leveled and reinforced with a buttress wall on the east and a retaining structure preceded by two stories of tabernae on the west. A long pool (119 × 18 meters) runs through the center of the valley. The short end on the north is curved and embellished with a colonnade that carries an alternately flat and arched architrave, re-erected after excavations in the 1950s. Another two colonnades run along the sides of the pool; the one on the east was a double colonnade, while that on the west was single. At the middle of the latter, six caryatids replace the columns, four of which are copies of the caryatids in the Erechtheum on the Athenian acropolis; the other two represent Sileni. The originals,

discovered in the pool like the rest of the ornamental pieces, are in the nearby museum, and cement copies have been set up on the site. Replicas of other statues—the Nile, the Tiber, and a crocodile—are displayed on the curved end of the pool. Between the columns are copies of Severan statues of Ares, Athena, and Hermes, as well as two reproductions of the Amazons by Phidias. At both ends of the pool are bases that supported Scylla groups, fragments of which were found here.

The valley is closed off near its end by a large nymphaeum (the **Serapeum**) in the form of a semicircular exedra, which extends in a long and high barrel-vaulted corridor that terminates in a rounded apse. The exedra has a ribbed half dome, whose segments are alternately concave and flat. An elaborate system of fountains enlivened the building, which can be identified as a large summer *cenatio*. The inspiration for the plan came from temples of the Egyptian cult. This, along with the elongated shape of the pool and numerous Egyptian statues discovered in the area, suggests that the complex may be the Canopus mentioned in Hadrian's biography, modeled on the Egyptian canal that joined Alexandria to the city of Canopus, which contained a famous temple dedicated to Serapis. The Villa of Hadrian contains what is in effect a reconstruction of the course of the Nile (the rectilinear area in front of the Serapeum) and of the Delta (the Serapeum itself), thus representing Upper and Lower Egypt. The Egyptian Museum of the Vatican has a reconstruction of the monument, showing the statues that were originally placed here.

The **museum**, which is located in the rooms west of the Canopus, houses some of the materials discovered during excavations in the 1950s. It displays, of course, only a small portion of what has been discovered at various times, much of which is now dispersed in museums throughout Italy and Europe.

Room 1. Four reproductions in Pentelic marble of the Caryatids from the Erechtheum (2.06 meters high), surmounted by Doric capitals with ovolos. Two Sileni carrying baskets (*canephoroi*).

Room 2. Statue of a crocodile in cipollino. Statues of the Nile and the Tiber.

Room 3. Statues of a warrior (probably Ares) and of Hermes. Fragmentary statue of an athlete from an original by Myron.

Room 4. Copy of the Amazon by Phidias. Male portrait, probably that of the young Lucius Verus. Portrait of a young man, from the Canopus.

Room 5. Torso of Aphrodite of Cnidus by Praxitiles. Portraits of Caracalla, Septimius Severus, and Julia Domna.

Room 6. Numerous decorative and architectural pieces found in recent excavations.

On the small hill that overlooks the valley of the Canopus on the southwest is a group of once well-known buildings now, unfortunately, in large part gone. These include the Tower of Roccabruna, as well as the so-called Academy, probably a small detached palace (FIG. 142:11). The **Tower of Roccabruna** is a nearly square building (16.50 × 16.75 meters), standing alone at the northwestern end of the terrace; it was probably one of those isolated towers of a type often found in ancient parks on sites with exceptionally panoramic views (FIG. 142:15).

Tivoli

A number of large Republican villas occupy the western slopes of Tivoli facing Rome. A large winding road, known as the Girata delle Carrozze, leads down to the so-called **Villa of Cassius**. There remain three foundation terraces belonging to this property that face west. The villa is famous for the discovery of an important group of sculptures (now mostly in the Vatican) on two occasions—in the 1700s and again in 1846.

Walking upward along Via Tiburtina, between it and the street above called Pomata, we can see from below a huge foundation that is distinguished by a reticulate facing in two colors (tufa and palombino) with linear and triangular geometric designs. The building is known by the wholly fanciful name **Villa of Brutus** and is often confused with the Villa of Cassius, situated a bit farther to the south. The ancient Via Tiburtina, following a more direct route than the modern road, passes the **Tempio della Tosse** (Temple of the Cough) on the right side of the street (FIG. 143:1). This is a large circular hall in *opus vittatum*, topped by a dome in the shape of a hemispherical bowl. It was transformed during the Middle Ages into a church,

called S. Maria di Porta Scura (or S. Maria del Passo). The structure was probably the monumental atrium of a villa from the first half of the fourth century AD, certainly part of an Imperial estate, and was perhaps a remodeling of the villa that belonged to Augustus.

Via Tiburtina next reaches the **Temple of Hercules Victor** (FIGS. 143:2; 144). Part of this was occupied by a convent at the end of the fifteenth century and subsequently by factories. Finally it became a paper mill, which was dismantled only a short time ago. At the time of writing, the temple was under restoration and not open for public visits.

The cult of Hercules Victor, one of the most important in Latium, originated in Tivoli, from where it was introduced into Rome during the late Republic. Hercules came to be worshiped as the protector of transhumant flocks. Tivoli's position, on the route between the Abruzzi Apennines and the plain of Latium, explains why a god with this function would have his cult place here. The sanctuary is mentioned several times by ancient authors as the most important of the city. It was the seat of an oracle, based like that of Fortuna at Praeneste on the drawing of lots. The impressive size of the sanctuary, which exceeds that of the Temple of Fortuna at Praeneste, confirms the prestige that ancient tradition attributes to it. Its position, certainly outside the city walls, shows that it was a suburban sanctuary; indeed, cults tied to commercial routes and to markets, as that of the Tiburtine Hercules must have been, were often outside the boundaries of the city.

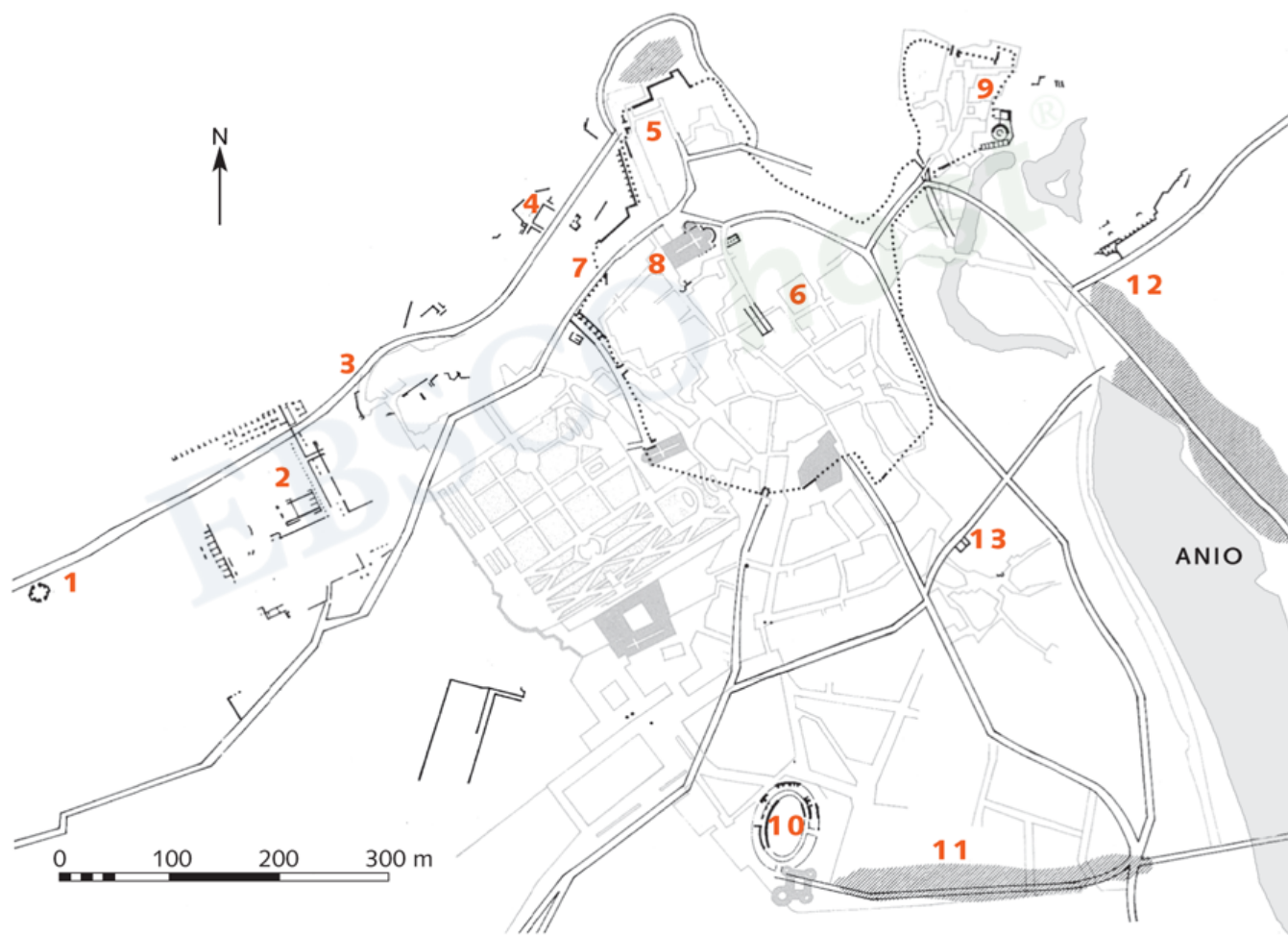


FIGURE 143. Map of Tivoli. 1 “Tempio della Tosse.” 2 Temple of Hercules Victor. 3 Via Tiburtina. 4 Republican villa. 5 Porta Esquilina and cryptoporticus. 6 Rione S. Paolo. 7 Porta Maggiore. 8 Forum. 9 Acropolis. 10 Amphitheater. 11 Iron Age necropolis. 12 Necropolis and tomb of the Vestal. 13 Baths.

The heart of the sanctuary was its large porticoed square, constructed on cyclopean foundations in *opus incertum*, with blind arches separated by buttresses, especially on the northwestern side, where the hill slopes down to the Anio valley. Via Tiburtina was diverted at an oblique angle through a barrel-vaulted tunnel in the podium of the temple (the medieval Porta Oscura known

in antiquity as *Via Tecta*). A series of noncommunicating rooms opens onto this off the right side as one ascends. On the other side there is a more systematic organization of rooms, which are larger and perpendicular to the street, and onto which a symmetrical series of tabernae faces on two sides. The complex had, without question, a commercial character that preserved the function of the older market tied to the sanctuary.

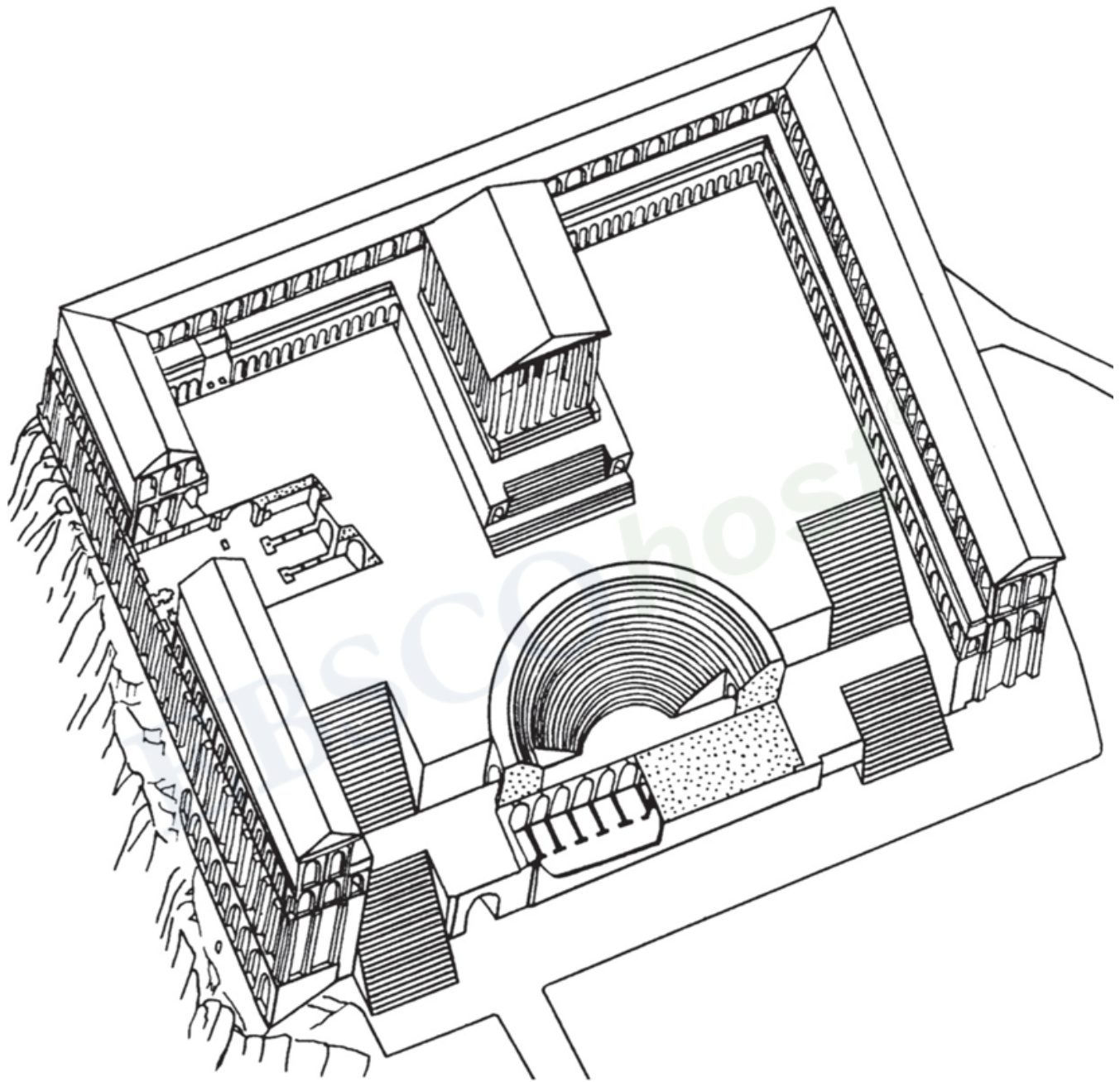


FIGURE 144. Temple of Hercules Victor. Reconstruction. (After Giuliani)

The public square above, surrounded by a porticus on three sides, measures about 152 by 119 meters. The southwestern side, facing the Roman Campagna, was left open; it was probably entered by two large stairways, located at the sides of a theatrical cavea. The porticus consisted of a series of arches framed with Doric semicolumns, an architrave, cornice, and high attic. The whole building was constructed in *opus incertum*, while the arches are travertine and the capitals are monoliths.

The square, like the Terrazza della Cortina at Palestrina, formed the central part of the whole sanctuary. The temple stood at the back end of the enclosed space; a theatrical area (about 70 meters wide, much of it recently excavated) that takes advantage

of the sloping ground rises along the southeastern perimeter of the complex. The combination of temple and theater is typical of a group of sanctuaries in central Italy. In addition to Palestrina, there are examples at Gabii, Pietrabbondante, Teano, the Theater of Pompey at Rome, and the so-called Punic Temple of Cagliari.

The Temple of Hercules was covered in 1925 with huge cement tanks and is not currently visible, except for the two long sides of the lower foundation. It stands quite close to the porticus in a position that is not perfectly axial. As we can gather from old reliefs, it was a large *peripteros sine postico*, an Italic modification of the Greek peripteral temple that eliminated the rear colonnade. The dimensions are remarkable: about 61 by 41 meters for the lower podium, and 42 by 25 for the temple itself. The oldest inscriptions discovered in the sanctuary (*CIL* XIV 3664, 3667, 3668) allow us to date it with fair precision to between 90 and approximately 82 BC.

The forum corresponds to the present-day Piazza del Duomo, but it was considerably larger than this square, extending to the so-called market (FIG. 143:8). The latter was probably the foundation that supported the southwestern side of the square, eliminating the original difference in ground level in the area of the Duomo. The “market” consists of an ascending row of five niches with a street, certainly earlier in date, that passed in front, arranged into a series of ramps and covered in this stretch by a barrel vault.

Via del Colle passes by this building along a north-south orientation. The street corresponds to an ancient access road, parallel to the *Clivus Tiburtinus*. Here the walls form a salient on the right that protected a gate through which the road passed. Some elements of this gate, today called **Porta Maggiore**, can be seen on the right, including the springing of an arch with travertine voussoirs and the attic in brick, probably a late Imperial addition (FIG. 143:7).

An important building of the forum once stood in the area of the Duomo. This structure was an apsidal hall of rectangular plan, perpendicular to the northeastern edge of the square. In a hollow space at the rear of the church, a large apse (with a diameter of 15.60 meters) in *opus quasi reticulatum* is still visible. At the center of this is a rectangular niche, 3.35 meters high and 1.20 meters wide. The shape of the building and its position with respect to the forum correspond well to those of a basilica. The construction technique dates the building to the second quarter of the first century BC.

The southeastern side of the forum was bordered by a line of structures, two of which were found quite by chance at the end of the nineteenth century and in 1920. The **mensa ponderaria** (office of weights and measures) was discovered in 1883. The remains include two niches next to one another, in which we can recognize at least two building phases: an older one, in *opus incertum* (side walls), and a more recent one, in polychrome *reticulatum*. In the niche on the right is a marble table with four bowl-like recesses for measures carved into its surface. The table is supported by three vertical slabs that have figures of thyrsi and a club on their edge. The inscription on the front of the table attests that M. Varenus Diphilus, the *magister* of the Herculanei (surely a commercial guild), had the table of weights made at his own expense. A similar table with the same inscription and with two recesses now stands in an exedra on the left.

Right next to the *mensa ponderaria*, to the southwest, an apsidal hall, slightly trapezoidal in plan (4.10 meters wide by 5.47 at its maximum length), was discovered in 1920. The hall has marble flooring and walls with remains of frescoes and a marble baseboard. In the center of the apse was a statue base (probably a seated Augustus), the fragments of which were found and put back in place; unfortunately, the head has not survived. As an inscription indicates, M. Varenus, the donor of the nearby *mensa ponderaria*, also constructed the hall, certainly an *Augusteum*—a chapel of the Imperial cult—at his own expense to commemorate one of Augustus’s returns to Rome, probably that of 19 BC.

The city’s **acropolis** (known today as Castrovetero) lies on a strip of land jutting out to the north (FIG. 143:9). It was completely cut off from the rest of the city by an artificial moat that is now spanned by a modern bridge, which certainly replaced an ancient one. East of this, where the famous waterfall of the Anio plunges over a projecting rock, are two important small temples reached by passing through a restaurant. In the Middle Ages they were transformed into the (rectangular) Church of St. George and the Church of S. Maria Rotonda (FIG. 145).

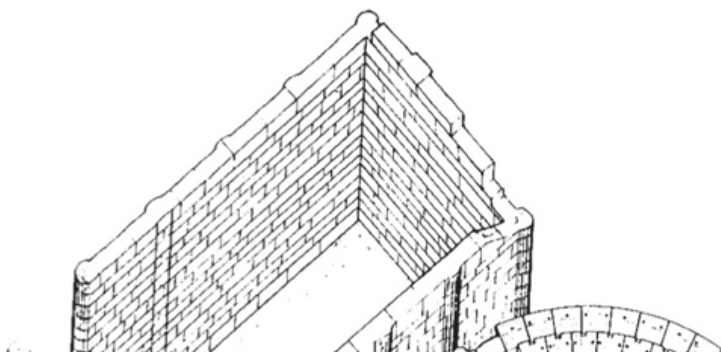
The temples do not date from the same period. The one on the north, the **rectangular temple**, is older. Its podium, 1.76 meters high, is in *opus quadratum* of travertine, with a simple *cyma reversa* molding at both the top and the bottom. Only the two lateral columns of the front colonnade, which was originally tetrastyle, remain. The walls of the cella, built in travertine *opus quadratum*, terminate in the front with three-quarter columns. The four other semicolumns on the long sides and the four along the back completed the scheme of this pseudo-peripteral structure. Only one Ionic capital has been preserved, the second from the north on the back. The building, measuring 15.90 by 9.15 meters, dates to the middle of the second century BC.

The **round temple** is later in date. It rests partly upon an artificial platform, consisting of two rows of concrete vaulted

rooms set on top of each other, with a tufa facing in *opus incertum*. It is closely akin to and contemporary with the structures found along the entire urban perimeter of Tivoli, all of which are part of a monumental project of urban renewal undertaken in the last decades of the second century BC. The structure is a peripteral temple (14.25 meters in diameter) with Corinthian columns, standing on a concrete podium (2.39 meters high) and dressed in travertine *opus quadratum*. The base molding is a rather flattened *cyma reversa*, while the crowning molding is somewhat more pronounced. The original peristasis consisted of eighteen columns with Corinthian-Italic capitals, of which ten remain. The entablature includes the architrave, which once carried the dedicatory inscription, and the frieze with complete bulls' heads of Hellenistic type instead of mere skulls. These supported garlands, within whose loops were *paterae*. The ambulatory ceiling was finished in travertine and had coffers embellished at the center with rich four-leaf flowers.

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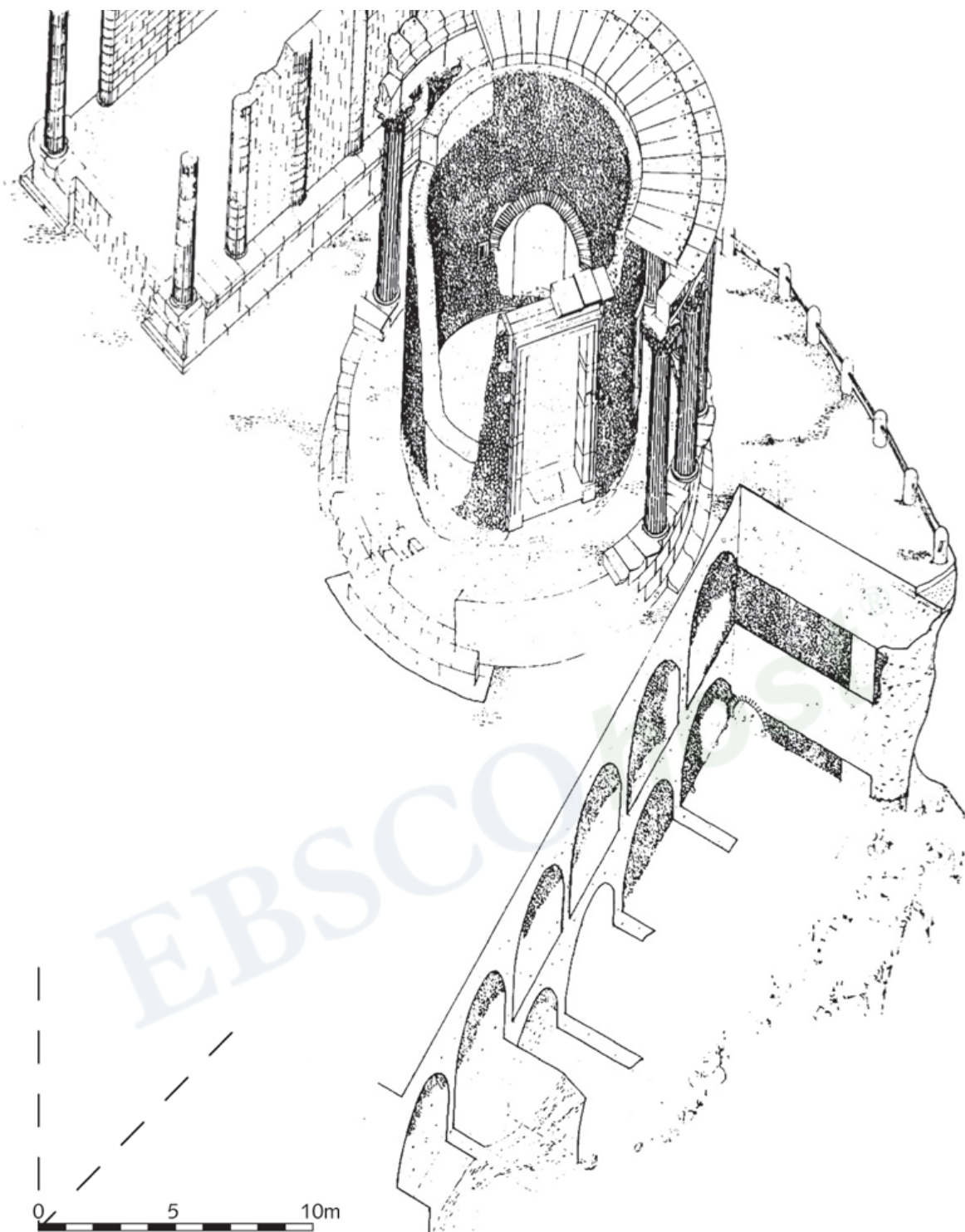


FIGURE 145. Acropolis. Reconstruction. (After Giuliani)

The original stairway, which has disappeared, corresponded to the doorway and faced the southwest. The entrance is 5.01 meters high, with jambs and lintel in travertine blocks, surmounted by an elaborate cornice. Of the two windows at the sides of the door, only the one on the right survives. A travertine cupboard—perfectly on axis with the door—was inserted into the wall at the back of the circular cella, which is entirely in *opus incertum* that was meant to be stuccoed. The cupboard must originally have been closed by a door of two small leaves, as holes for its hinges show. The short fragment of an inscription that survives on the outer architrave names a certain Lucius Gellius, son of another Lucius, perhaps to be identified as Lucius Gellius Poplicola, praetor in 94 and consul in 72 BC.

The position of the two temples corresponds to what the literary sources record for the cults of the city founder, Tiburnus,

and Albunea, the Tiburtine Sibyl, which were near the Anio waterfall. The small stone cupboard, originally furnished with doors and set into the wall behind the cult statue, may have held the prophetic book of the Tiburtine Sibyl, to whom the round temple was probably dedicated. The rectangular temple may have been dedicated to Tiburnus.

On the opposite side of the ravine, inside the **Villa Gregoriana**, a series of foundations in *opus incertum* survives, part of a villa that stood opposite the small temples of the acropolis. The villa must be that of Manlius Vopiscus, a wealthy man who lived during the reign of Domitian; Statius describes it at some length in a poem (*Silv.* 1.3).

North of the Rocca Pia is the **amphitheater**, attested by an inscription found in the sanctuary of Hercules (FIG. 143:10). Its foundations, in fact, had been seen in 1491 during the construction of the Rocca Pia. They were rediscovered by chance in 1948 in the area north of the Rocca and excavated beginning in 1957. The visible remains, belonging to the northern half, are in *opus mixtum*; they allow us to reconstruct a rather small building, 85 meters on its major axis, 65 meters on the shorter.

The whole area between the Rocca Pia and the regional hospital was once occupied by an important **Iron Age necropolis**, which was excavated between 1953 and 1954 and then again in 1964 (FIG. 143:11).

The street of Quintiliolo, with beautiful views of the waterfall and the old city of Tivoli, runs from the square in front of Villa Gregoriana to what was formerly the convent of Sant'Antonio, now a private villa (not on the map); the latter corresponds to the site of an important **Republican villa**, once identified as that of Horace. The modern building rests upon the upper terrace of the villa, which is oriented differently from the two lower ones. At the lower level there are three rooms, those on the sides being cisterns, while that in the center is a large nymphaeum facing the south, in perfect line with the splendid panorama of the waterfall and the two small temples. The nymphaeum, in *opus incertum* tending toward *quasi reticulatum*, is rectangular and roofed with a barrel vault. At the back is an apse, while the sides are occupied by two narrow aisles. The apse has a concrete base, and the fountain preserves traces of stucco decoration. The building technique, along with architectural and decorative details, dates the nymphaeum and the complex as a whole to the second quarter of the first century BC.

Farther along on the same street is the little church of the Madonna di Quintiliolo, beyond which appear the foundations of an enormous **villa**, the largest known in the area of Tivoli. The terrace, at its widest, measures 270 × 152 meters; the total land surface occupied is a little less than six hectares. The building dominates the plain facing Rome on one side and the valley of the Anio, the Temple of Hercules, and the old city of Tivoli on the other. The huge podium was built in a rather coarse *opus incertum* of limestone and in *opus reticulatum*.

The toponym "Quintiliolo" allows us to associate the building, with some confidence, with the important senatorial family of the *Quintilii Vari*, and in particular with Quintilius Varus of Cremona, the friend of Vergil and Horace. After his death in 23 BC, the villa may have passed to the consul of 13 BC of the same name, made famous by the Romans' terrible defeat in the Teutoburg Forest (the *clades Variana*), in which he lost his life.

A large necropolis was discovered near the ancient bridge opposite Villa Gregoriana, on the right bank of the Anio (FIG. 143:12). The approach to the area was partly by way of a ramp in polychrome *opus reticulatum*, a section of which is still visible beside the older bridge. The most interesting find here occurred in 1929, when a landslide exposed a **tomb**, still intact (visible *in situ*), belonging to Cossinia, one of Tivoli's Vestal Virgins. The monument has two parts. That in front is a raised platform with five travertine steps, on which sits a marble altar with pulvini. In the center of the altar, within a frame, is the following inscription: "Because she gave obedience to Vesta for eleven-times-six years, the virgin is buried here and rests after being carried to this spot by the people, a burial granted by decision of the Senate."

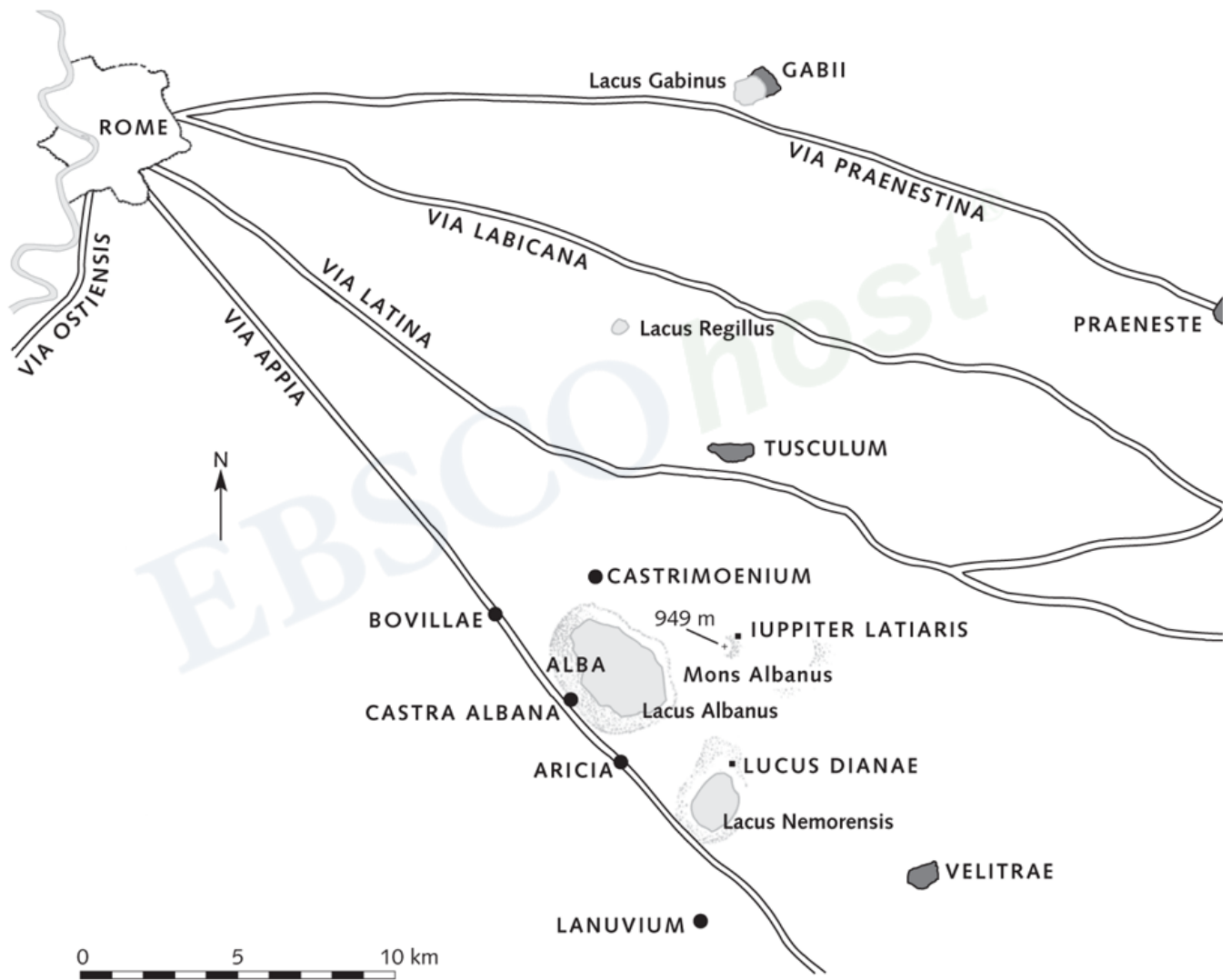


FIGURE 146. Rome's southeastern environs.

THE ALBAN HILLS AND PRAENESTE

THE ALBAN HILLS

HISTORICAL NOTES

The massif of the Alban Hills consists of a group of volcanic craters, about 10 kilometers in diameter, that culminates in the two summits of Monte Cavo (949 meters above sea level), the *Mons Albanus* of antiquity, and Monte Faete (956 meters). The activity of these volcanoes, extinct for about 25,000 years, and the fluvial erosion that followed largely shaped the territory of *Latium Vetus*. The Alban Lake and the Lake of Nemi occupy the cavities of ancient craters (FIG. 146).

Roman tradition connected the birth of Latium's most ancient centers with Aeneas and his descendants. Aeneas is supposed to have founded Lavinium, and his son, Ascanius-Iulus, is the mythic founder of Alba Longa, from which in turn Rome was founded. The same foundation myth, moreover, must have been common to all the other cities of primitive Latium, which according to tradition were almost all colonies of Alba Longa. Archaeological research has not yet confirmed the priority of Alba Longa; its status is probably best understood as a politico-religious hegemony centered in the common sanctuary of Mons Albanus that was sacred to *Iuppiter Latiaris*. In reality, the oldest evidence of Latial culture appears not only in the Alban Hills but also at Rome.

The prevalence of necropolises in the western belt of the hills confirms that the dominant center—i.e., Alba Longa—occupied the area that corresponds to Castelgandolfo. The early disappearance of Alba Longa, however, is confirmed by archaeological discoveries. The most important necropolises discovered so far are those of the Villa Cavalletti and Boschetto near Grottaferrata, Campofattore and Riserva del Truglio near Marino, and S. Lorenzo Vecchio near Rocca di Papa.

The disappearance of Alba Longa at an early stage favored the growth of certain other cities (Tusculum, Aricia, and Bovillae), but the ancient city left traces, especially in religion, where practices are more difficult to eradicate. Proof of this is the persistence of the cult of Jupiter Latiaris on Monte Cavo as a federal institution, and, from a later age, the cult of Diana Nemorensis. The “Alban families” in Rome, such as the Julii, among whom the memory of the mythic origins was cherished, were living witnesses to ancestral traditions at Rome.

The four centuries between the destruction of Alba Longa and the Latin war constitute the history of Rome's progressive emergence and final hegemony over Latium. With its definitive victory over the coalition of Latium's cities in 338 BC, Rome assumed the leadership of the region. From that moment on, Latium Vetus became a kind of appendage to Rome. The picturesque Alban Hills, about a day's journey from Rome, became the country residence of choice for the Roman aristocracy. From the end of the second century BC, and especially in the Ciceronian period, large luxurious villas arose; their remains are still visible today, scattered over the slopes of the hills. Many of these properties eventually passed into the hands of the emperors, either through inheritance or more often by expropriation, until most of the area became part of the Imperial domain.

The villa of Pompey (and perhaps that of Clodius as well) formed the nucleus of the Imperial possessions in the area. It was here that Domitian spent most of his youth, which explains the emperor's special love of the region and the desire to enlarge his villa as his need for space grew. Part of Domitian's villa is believed to have occupied the site of Alba Longa, as several ancient authors attest. The Alban Lake was for all practical purposes included among the Imperial possessions, and Domitian used it for holidays aboard his barges, as Caligula did on nearby Lake Nemi and Nero on the Stagnum of Agrippa in the Campus Martius.

ITINERARY

Bovillae

At the twelfth milestone, on the left side of Via Appia Nuova, stands the cement core of a large tomb called “il Torraccio.” The

little city of Bovillae, of which very few remains are still visible, began at this point on the other side of the road (FIG. 146). According to ancient tradition, Bovillae was a colony of Alba Longa, founded under the latter city's second king, Latinus Silvius. After the destruction of the mother city, Bovillae must have inherited its cultic functions, which—as we know from other sources—continued without interruption. Even those Roman families, like the Julii, who boasted an Alban origin preserved their sacral ties with Bovillae.

The “Alban” traditions of Bovillae were evidently revitalized in the propaganda of the Julio-Claudian emperors. In AD 14, Tiberius established the *Sodales Augustales*, who had responsibility for the cult of the *gens Julia* in a shrine that was also founded by the emperor. He probably inaugurated the games in honor of Augustus, and it was for these that the theater and circus at Bovillae must have been built, probably also by Tiberius. With the exception of a large brick cistern, the circus, measuring 337.50 meters long and 68.60 wide, is the only one of several monuments excavated during the nineteenth century that is still partially visible. Part of it makes use of the hillside, and part of it is an independent structure.

Today only several arches of the *carceres*, which belong to the short northwest side, are still standing. Three of the original twelve arches are visible, in addition to a fourth that is now within the neighboring farmland. Nothing of the theater remains visible, nor of a curious octagonal building to its northwest.

The Albanum of Domitian

Beyond Bovillae, Via Appia rises noticeably as it skirts the lower reaches of the Alban Hills. On the right side, just before the 22nd kilometer of Via Appia Nuova, is a large stretch of wall in *opus quadratum* of peperino, which formed the side support of the ancient street.

On the left side of Via Appia at Ercolano, at the fourteenth milestone (within the Villa S. Caterina, formerly the Villa Orsini), are the remains of a Republican villa, identified—probably erroneously—as that of Clodius.

South of Castelgandolfo, on the slope leading up to the modern town, lies the central part of Domitian's villa, which is preserved within the papal gardens, the former Villa Barberini, and to a lesser extent under the Palazzo of the Propagation of the Faith. The building was laid out upon three large, narrow terraces, about 500 meters long. The first of these, beginning from the top, was on the summit of the hill and contained the service quarters, the cemetery of the Imperial slaves, and, most important, the large cisterns, in which water from the Malaffitto and Palazzolo aqueducts was collected.

The second terrace was occupied on the southeast by the residential quarters, of which only scattered remains are visible today; maps drawn in the nineteenth century indicate that the rooms were grouped around three courtyards, all aligned with one another. A long road led from the residential area to the theater. The southeastern section of this road is bordered by a long high wall along the upper terrace, near the middle of which a passageway (no longer open) was carved into the rock. This gave access to a terrace with a panoramic view of the lake that was built on large foundations in *opus reticulatum*, possibly dating to an earlier phase of the villa. Four large recesses that open to the northeast in the support wall for the upper terrace belong to the same phase (perhaps that of Pompey's villa). These constitute four nymphaea, whose plans were alternately rectangular and semicircular and which contained niches for statues and for water displays. The construction technique, *opus reticulatum* with projecting stones in blocks of peperino, suggests a late Republican date even for this monumental complex. It was restored in the Imperial period, as some additions in brick show.

The theater, resting on the slope of a hill (but with its own masonry foundations), connects the second and third terraces. Behind the scaena, in the area that is now a garden, was a large porticus, of which few remains (mostly columns) are extant. The porticus rested on foundations rising from the level of the first terrace in which there are six rooms facing north. At least two building phases can be documented here, one in *opus reticulatum* dating to the Republican period, and another, in *opus latericium*, evidently from the reign of Domitian.

Of the theater, only scattered remains of three cunei and of the staircases, now stripped of their marble veneer, can still be seen. The diameter of the structure must have been around 50 meters. The most interesting and best-preserved section is the corridor (*crypta*) that runs below the cavea. A portion of this has been excavated and is accessible. The right wall is covered by fine stucco decoration, which has the appearance of a three-dimensional aedicula, rather like Fourth Style painting. The aptly theatrical subjects represented include Dionysus, Medea, the Muses, a satyr, and a hermaphrodite.

The most interesting feature of the first terrace is the huge cryptoporticus in *opus latericium*, the largest of any known private residence (including Imperial residences). The length of what now remains—only a part of the original—is about 120

meters, and its width is 7.45 meters. The second terrace rests in part on the cryptoporticus's round vault. The northernmost part of the vault is decorated with large, square coffered panels, which still preserve some of their stucco, originally painted and gilded. Nearly all traces of the circus have disappeared. It was probably a garden, a feature of many villas.

An interesting equestrian statue stands at the lowest level, near the exit of the pontifical villa. The head, although ancient, is not original, and almost all the statue's upper part is a modern restoration. It might well have been a statue of Domitian. Close to the entrance is the Antiquarium, where sculptures from the villa and from the nymphaeum of Bergantino are on display.

At the foot of Castelgandolfo, along the western bank of the lake, several interesting monuments have been preserved, some associated with the villa of Domitian, others predating it. The so-called **Doric nymphaeum**, datable to the first half of the first century BC, stands on the left at the end of the street that descends to the lake, just before it meets the bank. The fountain consists of a rectangular room cut into the rock with two series of niches on two levels, surmounted by a Doric frieze. On the short side at the rear is an exedra, flanked by two semicircular niches, crowned by two half-pediments. Behind the exedra is a small room where the water arrived through a channel cut into the rock.

About two kilometers away, the **Bergantino nymphaeum**, fashioned out of a grotto faced with walls in *opus mixtum*, stands on the western bank of the lake. In the front section, which is almost circular, about 17 meters in diameter, sits a round basin, now filled in, in the middle of which is a base, placed slightly off-center. To its left is a circular room with a bench along the walls, preceded by a rectangular antechamber. The grotto ends at the back with a podium, reached by steps on the right, onto which two other rooms open. A polychrome mosaic depicting a marine cortège (of which fragments remain) covered the pavement around the basin.

Several sculptures have been recovered from this nymphaeum, which were certainly part of Domitian's villa. Among these are the fragments of a group portraying the blinding of Polyphemus and of another depicting Scylla, now displayed in the Antiquarium of the pontifical villa at Castelgandolfo. The presence of these sculptures in this particular kind of nymphaeum strongly suggests that it was a copy of the grotto-nymphaeum in Tiberius's villa at Sperlonga.

A little more than a kilometer farther lies the entrance to the lake's outlet, which was probably made during the siege of Veii (before 396 BC) on the advice of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. The physical appearance of this outlet, about 1.80 meters long, resembles that at Nemi and seems to confirm the early date.

Albano

The modern center of Albano includes the site occupied from the time of Septimius Severus by the camp of the Second Parthian Legion. Before that, the area was occupied by villas. In the Imperial period, the entire district gravitated toward the emperor's villa, the *Albanum*, which, at least by Domitian's age, extended to this point.

The whole area was transformed with the building of the *Castra Albana* (FIG. 147). After the disbanding of the Praetorian guards according to the wishes of Septimius Severus, the Second Parthian Legion was transferred to Italy. The camp, built at the edge of the Imperial villa, was already finished by AD 212, when the legion mutinied after the murder of Geta; Caracalla must have personally calmed the soldiers with promises of gifts.

The encampment was on a steep slope, between the lake and Via Appia. The legionaries' necropolis was east of the camp (FIG. 147:9); numerous tombs comprising a trench cut into the natural tufa with a cover in the shape of a heavy trunk lid have been discovered here on various occasions. We do not know how long the legion continued to be stationed in the *Castra Albana*; some have argued that its presence there lasted until the middle of the third century AD. In any case, the camp was already abandoned when Constantine made a gift of it to the local church.

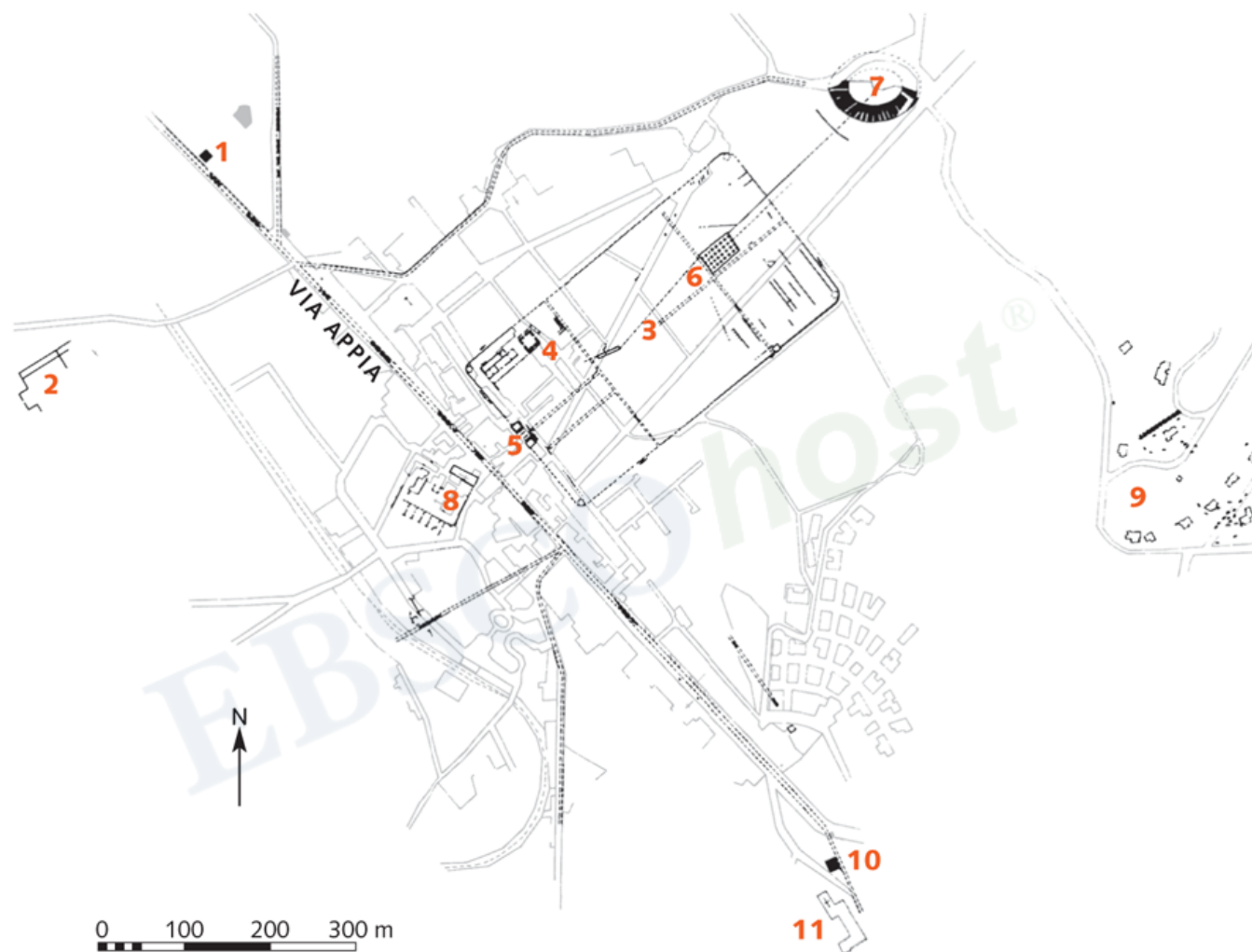


FIGURE 147. Area around Castra Albana (modern Albano). 1 “Tomb of Pompey.” 2 “Villa of Pompey.” 3 Castra Albana. 4 Rotunda. 5 Porta Praetoria. 6 Cistern. 7 Amphitheater. 8 Baths of Cellomaio. 9 Necropolis of the Legionaries. 10 “Tomb of the Horatii and Curii.” 11 Catacombs of S. Senatore. (After Tortorici)

A little before Albano, on the left side of the street, is the cement core of a large **tower-shaped tomb**, which was set in the triangle between Via Appia and the side road that leads to the villa of Domitian (FIG. 147:1). It is an imposing structure, with four successive levels, probably crowned by a pyramidal top with a total height of perhaps about 45 meters. The old hypothesis that identifies this exceptional monument as the tomb of Pompey may well be correct.

The **villa**, which is usually (though incorrectly) identified as that of Pompey, lies inside the Villa Comunale di Albano, formerly the Villa Doria Pamphili (FIG. 147:2). This terraced complex, measuring about 340 × 260 meters, was fully excavated in 1923–24, but a large part of it is now reburied.

At the center of the southwest facade (FIG. 148:A), facing the sea, is a projecting square with six semicircular exedras on the

front, at the center of which is a nymphaeum. Identical exedras decorate the rest of the facade as well. Entrances to two symmetrical cryptoporticoes (**D, E**) stood at the back of two of the exedras; these led up at a slightly oblique angle to the level of the residences. The northwestern side consists of a long wall with pilasters (**P1-P2**), behind which is a vaulted corridor. Behind this corridor runs another corridor, at a higher level, flanked by a porticus (**N**), in which a masonry column drum is still visible.

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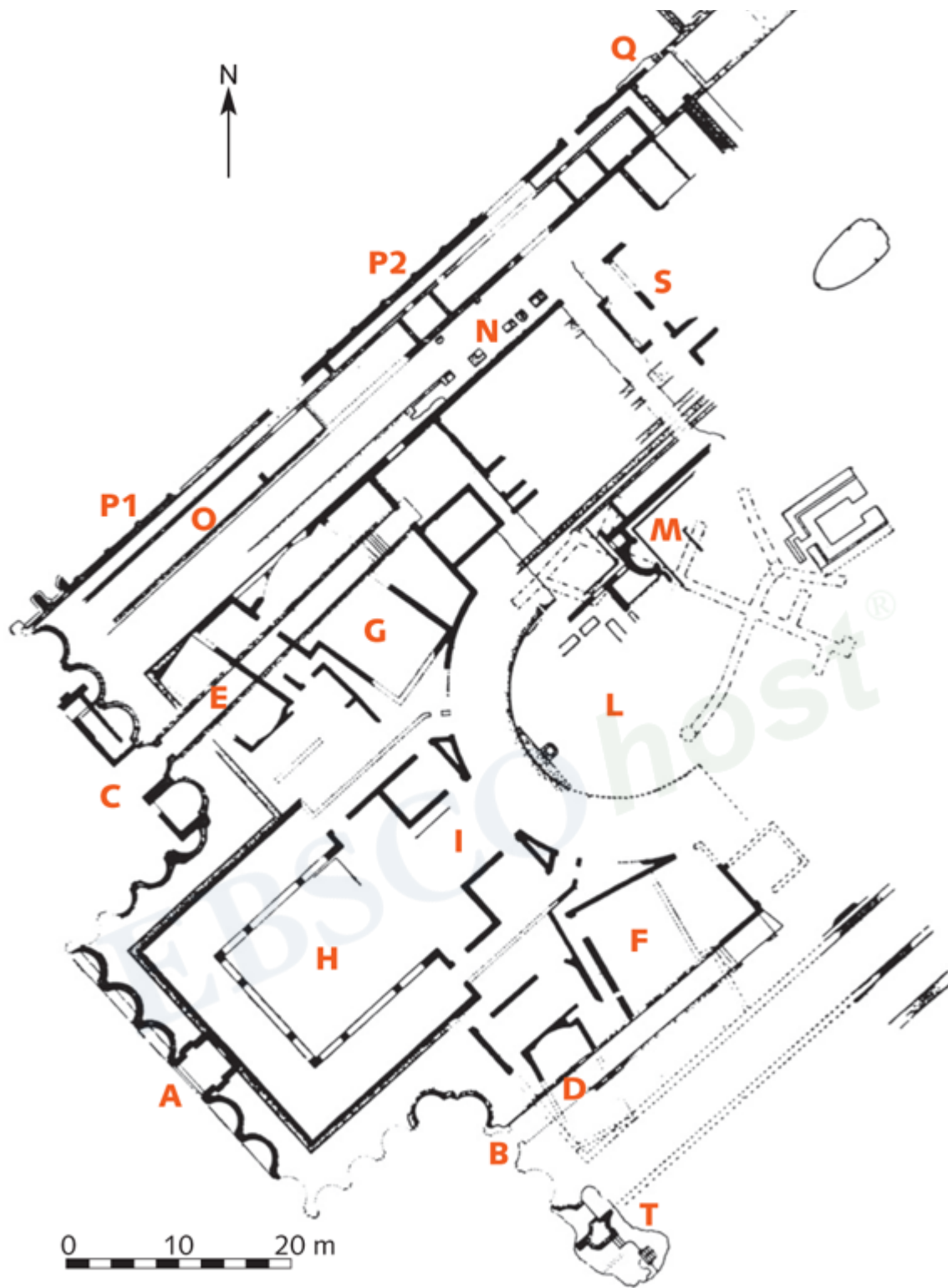


FIGURE 148. "Villa of Pompey." Plan. (After Lugli)

Farther along, on the left of Via Appia, the heart of Albano occupies the *castra* of the Second Parthian Legion (FIG. 149). The fortification walls form an elongated rectangle, with maximum dimensions of 240×438 meters, oriented southwest-northeast and descending gradually by terraces. The walls, in *opus quadratum* of peperino (ranging between 0.80 and 1.20 meters thick), were certainly designed by craftsmen of the same legion. Numerous stretches of the walls are still visible.

The most imposing section of the fortification is the **Porta Praetoria**, which is in the center on the southwest (cf. FIG. 147:5

). It formed the monumental entrance on the side facing Via Appia. The gate, enclosed within modern structures until World War II, is now visible as a result of the bombing that destroyed the quarter. It is entirely in *opus quadratum*, with three arched passages of varying size; the largest, at 6.40 meters, is in the center and was reserved for vehicles. The best-preserved passage is that on the right, whose arch with radial voussoirs is still standing. From the side passageways, one entered two small rooms through small side doors, which led in turn into two large halls with walls extending outward. These probably formed part of the towers flanking the entrance.

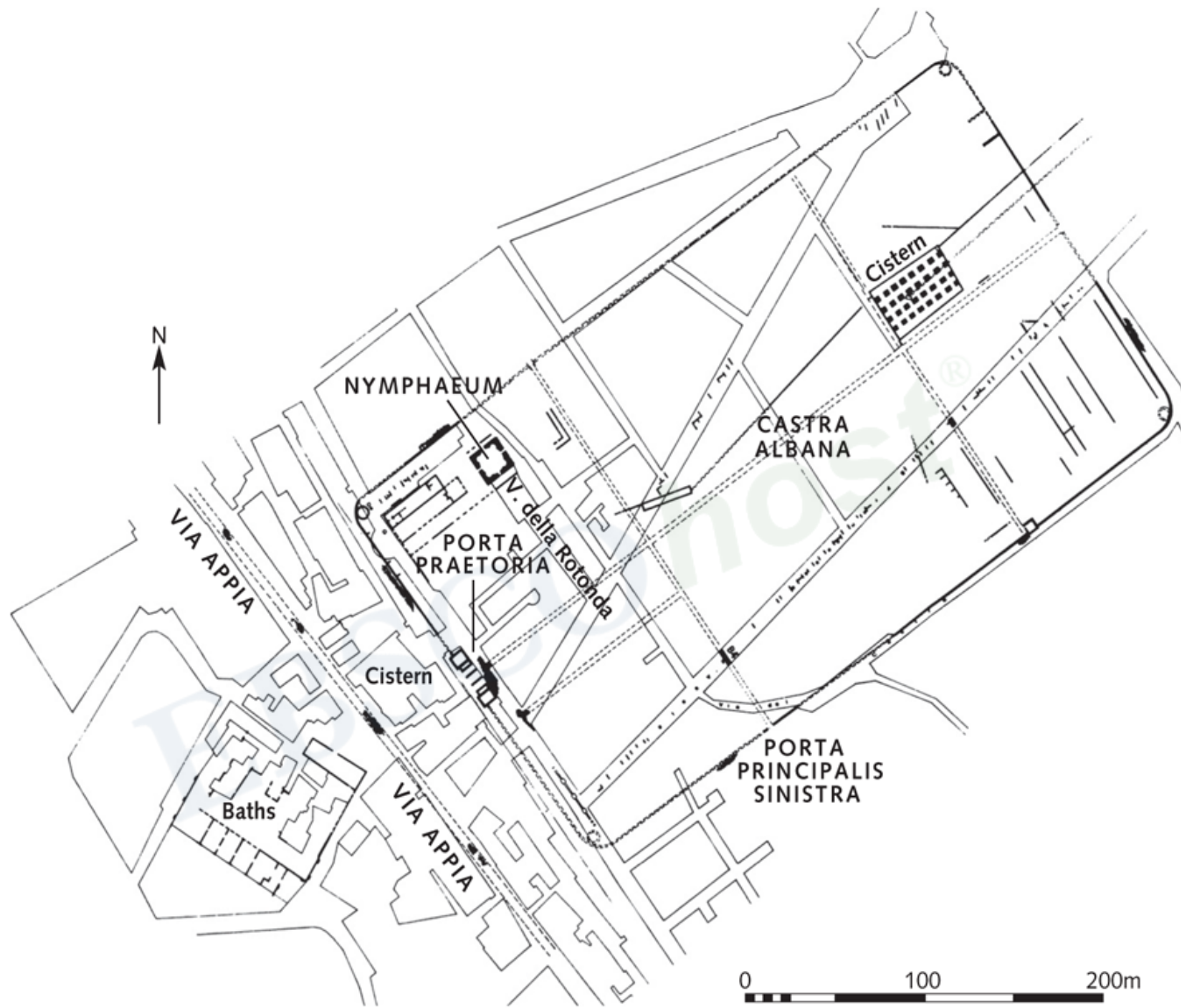


FIGURE 149. Castra Albana. Plan. (After Tortorici)

Remains discovered at various points during periodic work give an idea of the installation's layout. This was quite regular and subdivided, according to normal practice for Roman camps, with transverse blocks of houses in the upper level, and longitudinal blocks in the lower level.

S. Maria della Rotonda, the large building facing Via della Rotonda, predates the *castra*, and must have originally been a monumental nymphaeum of Domitian's Albanum, toward which the plan of the *castra* in its entirety was probably oriented (FIG. 147:4). Its construction, heavily restored between 1935 and 1938, is completely of *opus mixtum*. Square-shaped on the outside, it is almost fully circular (16.10 meters in diameter) within (FIG. 150). Large semicircular niches on the diagonals with basins, possibly originally elements of fountains, were carved out of the massive walls. Its walls are pierced by four arched doors, one at the center of each side.

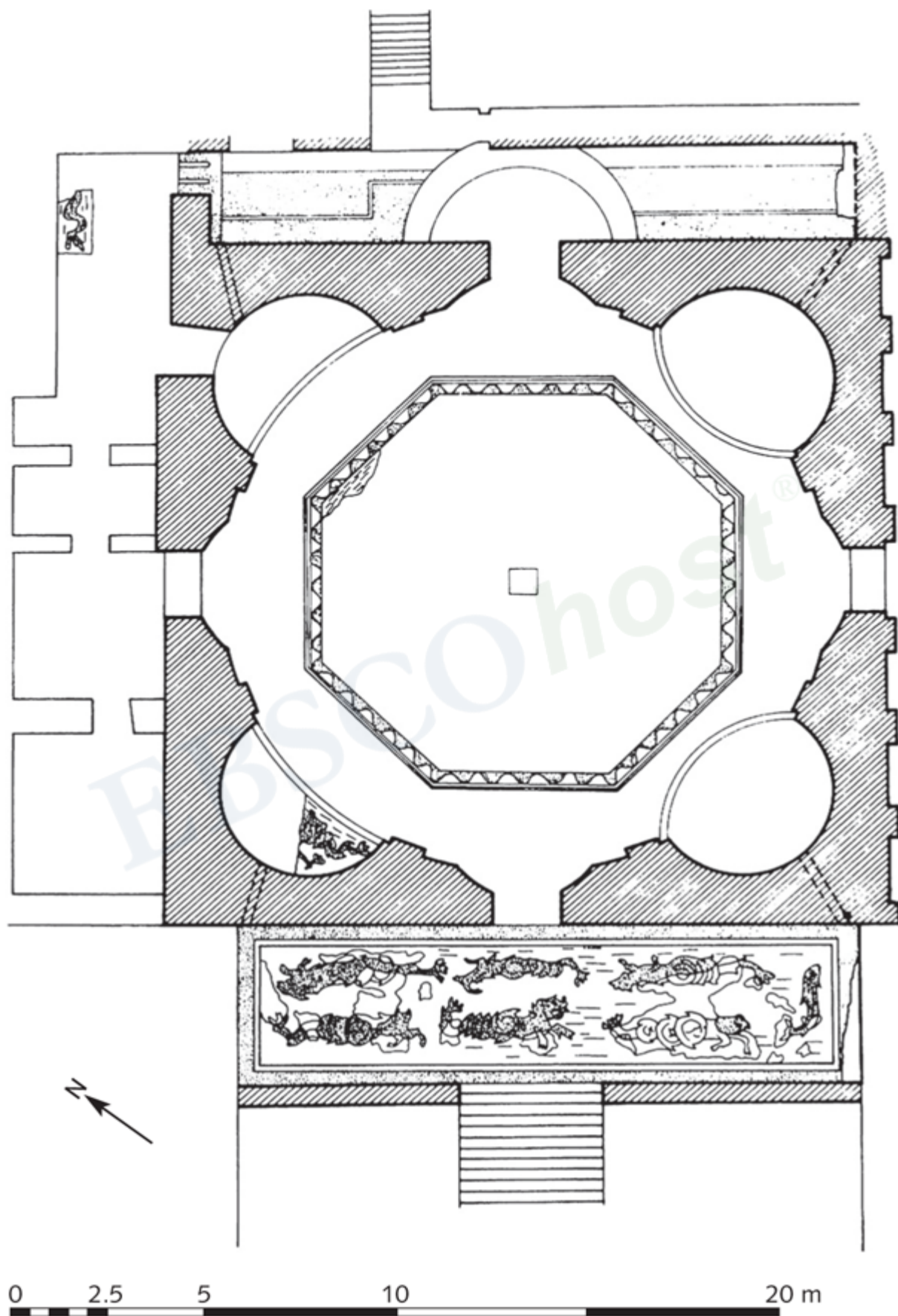


FIGURE 150. Albano. S. Maria della Rotonda. Plan. (After Tortorici)

In the Severan period, the main entrance was moved to the southwestern side, where a kind of rectangular antechamber was built. The original pavement, with its black-and-white mosaic of sea monsters, is still intact. The building is roofed with a hemispherical dome, which originally had a circular oculus at the center. The large octagon at the center of the hall, with its zigzag mosaic, belongs to the Severan restoration. A small *antiquarium* has been set up in the sacristy of the rotunda, where fragments of sarcophagi, inscriptions, and a collection of brick stamps are on display.

In the upper part of the *castra* is the large **cistern**, where the aqueducts of the Centro Bocche and Malaffitto converge (FIG. 147:6). The large construction is trapezoidal, with a maximum measurement of 31.90 × 47.90 meters, and is divided into five compartments. It is inaccessible, having been put back into use in 1884.

The **amphitheater** sits upon an extensive artificial terrace along the western slope of the hill of the Capuchin monks, northeast of the *castra* (FIG. 147:7). The part still extant is built of masonry and faces the south, while the other half—which has now totally disappeared—must have been carved into the slopes of the hill. The principal axis measured around 113 meters, and the arena, enclosed by a canal (*euripus*), was 67.50 × 45 meters. The structure has been dated to the Severan period and may have been built several years after the camp.

The *castra* contained a bath complex, centered around the rotunda; another, situated outside the walls beyond Via Appia in the modern quarter of Cellomaio (from *cella maior?*), was known from the Middle Ages as the **Palace of Ascanius** (FIG. 147:8). Toward the southwest, where the slope was greater, the building, constructed by Caracalla (as brick stamps indicate), occupied two levels. Toward the street, it was on a single level. One of the best-preserved rooms forms the Church of S. Pietro, facing Via Appia.

Beyond Albano, Via Borgo Garibaldi turns abruptly to the left, leaving the route of the ancient Via Appia, which bends to the right. Here, at a level below and concealed by the modern street, is the so-called **Tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii** (FIG. 147:10). The monument originally stood on the left side of the street; on the right, somewhat behind it, there was another small Republican tomb. The tomb is square in plan (approximately 15 meters on each side), with a cement podium dressed in peperino blocks, much of which is a nineteenth-century restoration. At each of the four corners of the base there is a truncated cone, again of peperino. At the center a fourth element, much larger than the others, is preserved, but only minimally. The monument, late Republican or early Augustan, is unique. The only structures at all comparable are some tombs depicted on Etruscan urns from the Hellenistic period. Pliny the Elder's description of the tomb of Porsenna (*NH* 36.91–93) also calls this unusual building to mind.

Near the Chiesa della Stella, immediately opposite the Tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii, is one of the most important **catacombs** of the more remote environs of Rome, that of S. Senatore—proof of the importance of the early church in Albano (FIG. 147:11). A stairway leads down from the entrance to a wide and somewhat irregularly shaped crypt. Farther along on the left, a fifth-century fresco depicts Christ at the center, flanked by Sts. Peter and Paul, along with four local martyrs. A little beyond there is a Byzantine fresco, probably from the ninth century, with Christ, the Virgin, and St. Smaragdus. In the cubicle beyond is an arcosolium that depicts Christ and four saints, among whom Sts. Peter, Paul, and Laurence (sixth century) are recognizable.

The **Museum of Albano** is housed in the Villa Ferraioli. Materials on display illustrate local history from prehistoric times to the late Roman period.

Ariccia

At the sixteenth milestone of Via Appia lies the site of the ancient community of Aricia (modern Ariccia). A viaduct of Via Appia Nuova leads across the valley directly into the modern village, where the acropolis once stood. The ancient road, however, goes through the lower part of the old city; during the Middle Ages the village's inhabitants resided on the acropolis. The first rest stop (*mansio*) for those traveling from Rome toward the south was established here. A famous battle between the Etruscans led by Arruns, son of Porsenna, and the Greeks led by Aristodemos at the end of the sixth century BC was supposed to have taken place before the walls. The city owed its fame above all to the sanctuary dedicated to Diana of Aricia, which was in its territory near Lake Nemi. Only a few traces of the walls, constructed of parallelepiped blocks of peperino, are still visible on the acropolis.

The street that must have formed the central axis of the acropolis, corresponding to the modern Corso, ran downhill across

the lower city in a direction perpendicular to Via Appia, and then continued on to Ardea. The Republican city most likely developed around the intersection of these two roads.

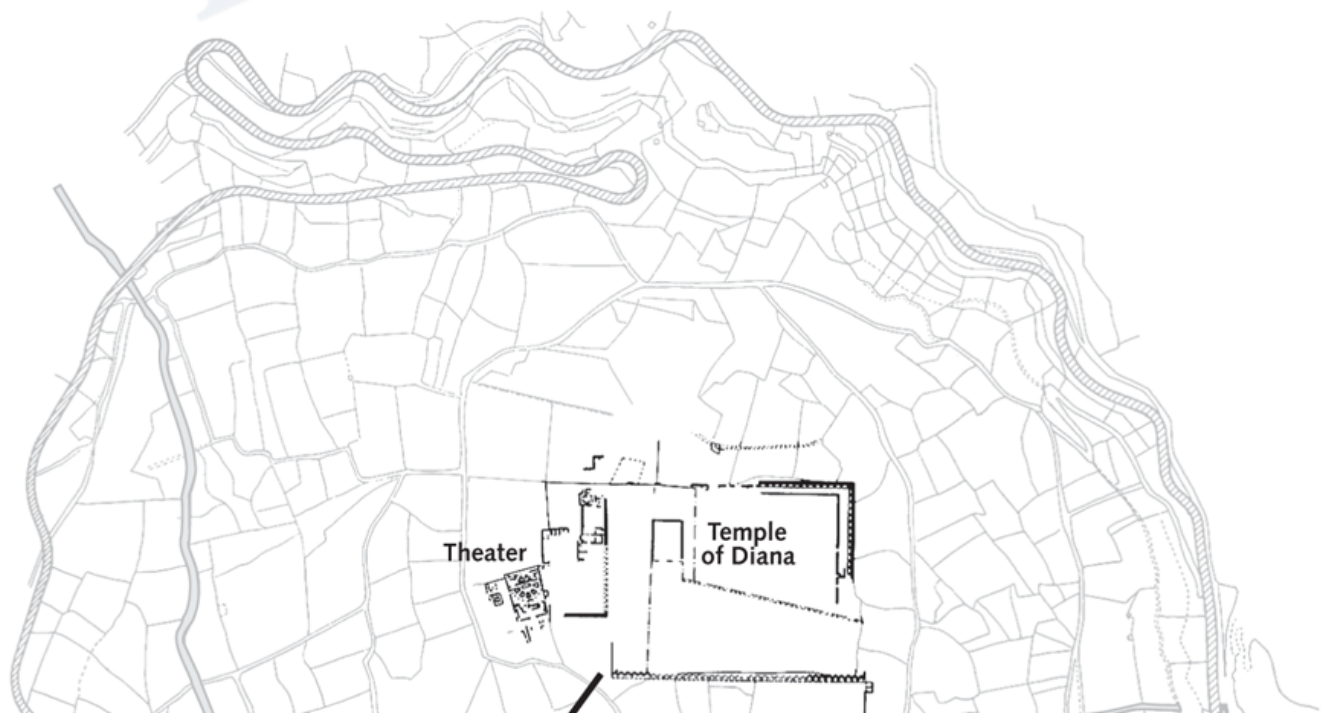
Near the center of the residential area, part of a **small Republican temple** survives, located about 60 meters from Via Appia. The walls of its cella are still in place, in very exacting *opus quadratum* of peperino. An arched gate from the Republican walls still stands southeast of the city.

The most remarkable monument near Ariccia is the large **viaduct of Via Appia**, which carried the street across the cliff of the hill toward the southeast. Today, only the valley side of this construction in *opus quadratum* can be seen, for a length of 198 meters and a maximum height of 11.56 meters. The original structure may well date to the time of the Gracchi, who according to Plutarch restored Via Appia.

The Sanctuary of Diana at Nemi

The famous Sanctuary of Diana was located slightly to the north of the small volcanic Lake of Nemi in the ancient territory of Aricia (FIG. 151). An archaic custom demanded that the priest of the goddess, who had the title of king (the *rex nemorensis*), be a runaway slave. Succession to this priesthood followed a savage ritual in which the contender who succeeded in killing the reigning king in a duel became the new *rex*. Two other divinities were worshiped with Diana at Nemi: Egeria, the nymph associated with King Numa, and Virbius. The sanctuary apparently became a center for the league of the Latin peoples after the destruction of Alba Longa. Cato the Censor records the dedication of the sanctuary by Egerius Baebius, a dictator of Tusculum.

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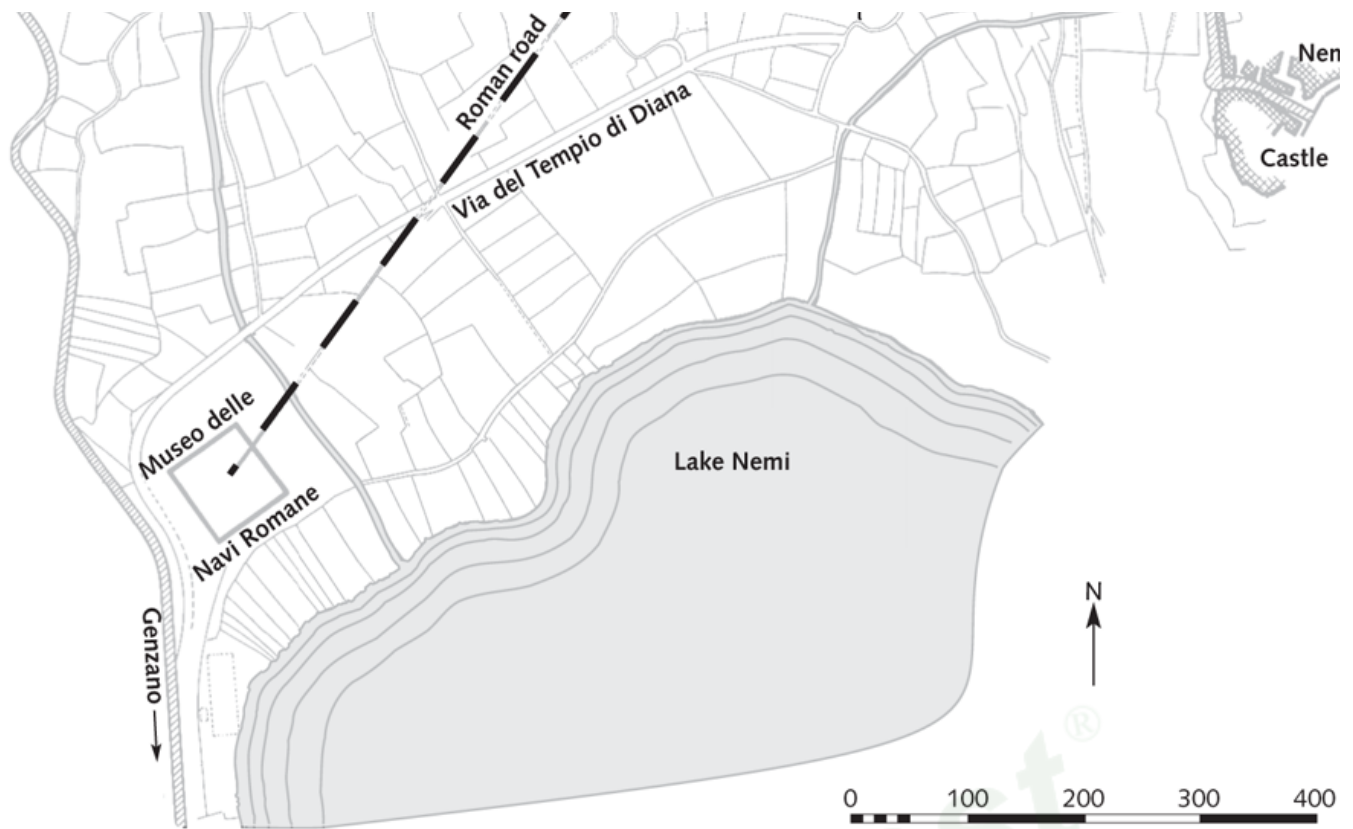


FIGURE 151. Nemi. The Sanctuary of Diana and the Museum of the Ships. (After Ucelli)

The street that joined Aricia to the sanctuary passed along the western bank of the lake. The best-preserved stretch of the ancient road lies between the modern Museo delle Navi and the sanctuary (FIG. 151). From the museum, it followed a direct line to the southwestern corner of the **temple**. The complex as rebuilt at the end of the second century BC consisted of a large platform, resting partly on structures that were formed on the south by a massive wall with buttresses that create triangular niches. The part of the sanctuary that was carved out of the hill was supported by other walls, which had semicircular niches, visible on the northern and eastern sides (FIG. 152). The area, about 45,000 square meters, was surrounded by a colonnaded porticus, at least on its north and east. On the north it was divided by rectangular walls in *opus reticulatum* into a series of rooms that were one to three steps higher than the rest of the area.

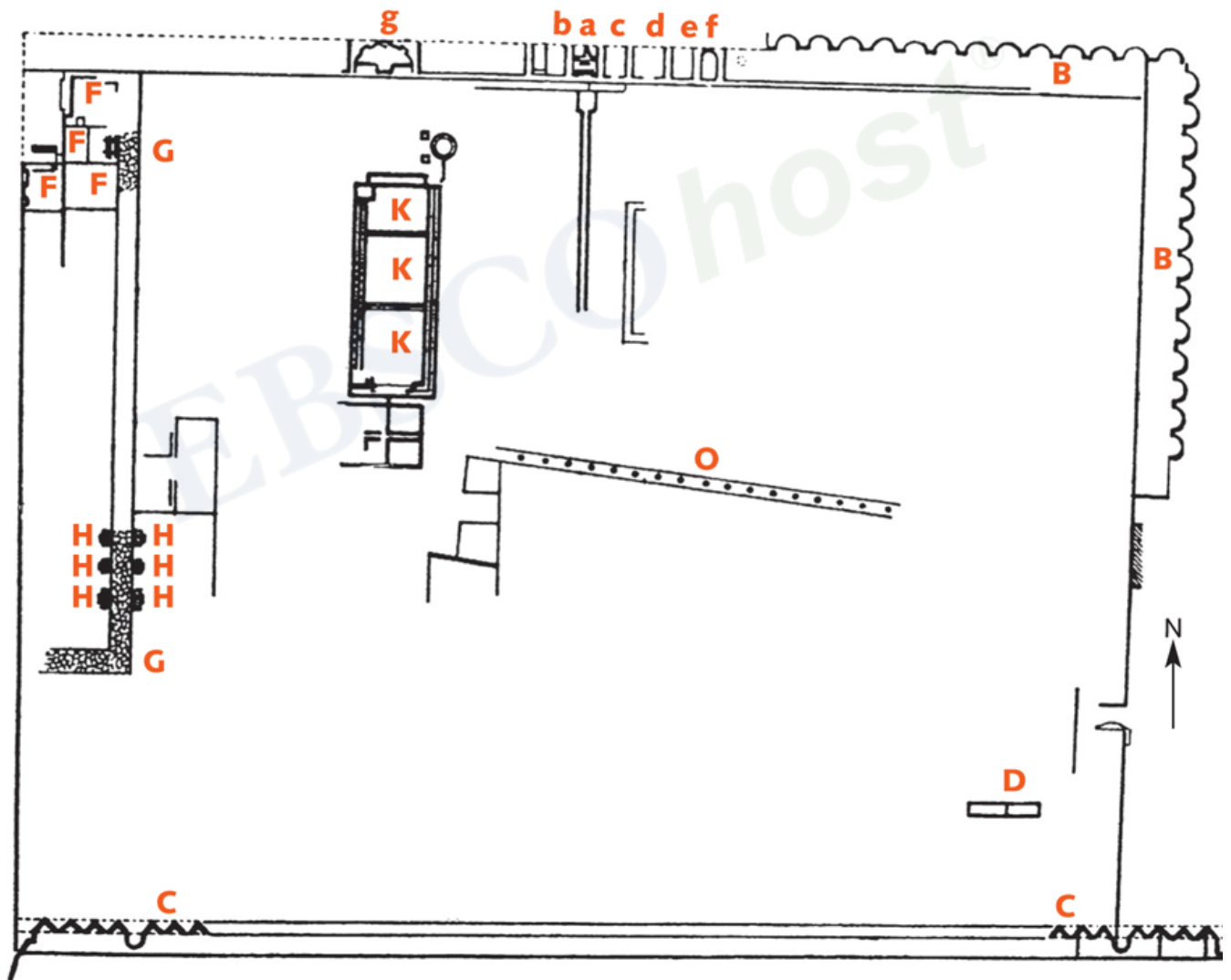


FIGURE 152. Nemi. The Sanctuary of Diana. Plan of the ruins: **C** Lower terrace. **B** Upper terrace with niches. **F** Residences of the priests? **G, H** Porticoed street? **K** Temple cella? **D** Altar. **O** Porticoed street. **a-f** Exedras. **g** Exedra with statues of the Julio-Claudian gens.

A building (30 × 15.90 meters) consisting of a row of three rooms, deliberately set off to the west with respect to the axis of the sanctuary (FIG. 152:K), cannot be the temple, which—to judge from a design by Pietro Rosa—must have stood on a higher terrace and with a floor plan in the form of a transverse cella, as described by Vitruvius (4.8.4).

Caesar owned a villa near the lake, probably along its west and south, which must have formed the core of the Imperial property that spread over much of the area. Within the villa, immediately below Genzano, is the opening of the lake's emissary or outlet, an enormous project that was probably undertaken to drain the area of the sanctuary, which was recurrently subject to stagnant water resulting from changes in the lake's level. The drainage channel that discharges into the valley of Ariccia extends over a length of 1,653 meters and was created by digging simultaneously at both ends.

Our most tangible evidence of the Imperial villa consists of the two large ships that sank a short distance from the bank on the northwestern side of the lake. The ships, which were recovered between 1927 and 1932 by a partial draining of the lake, were housed with all the material found with them in a museum designed specially for their display; they were completely destroyed on the night between 31 May and 1 June 1944 in a fire deliberately set by occupying German forces. The two ships, measuring 71.30 × 20 meters and 73 × 24 meters were constructed of several types of wood and covered with lead sheets padded with wool. Inscribed pipes and stamped bricks securely attribute the ships to Caligula (AD 37–41). The vessels were luxurious rafts intended for recreation and parties on the lake.

The materials that were saved from the fire, as well as two models one-fifth the size of the original ships, are displayed in the museum, which has been reopened to the public.

The Sanctuary of the Alban Mount and Palazzolo

From its height of 949 meters above sea level, the summit of Monte Cavo (the ancient Mons Albanus) dominates the volcanic mass of the Alban Hills, occupying the eastern edge of the highest crater. The ancient federal sanctuary of *Iuppiter Latiaris*, which constituted the sacred center of the Latin peoples, once stood here. The *Feriae Latinae*, celebrated in the sanctuary, preserved the memory of the primitive festival, during which meat from a white bull, sacrificed to Jupiter, was distributed to each of the Latin peoples taking part in the rite. The close tie between the Capitoline cult and that of the Alban Mount is clear from the triumphal ritual. Some generals, who were not authorized by the Senate to celebrate a triumph in Rome, celebrated their triumph *in monte Albano* instead. Indeed, the custom of the triumph probably had its origin here and was then later instituted on the Capitoline Hill at Rome.

With the exception of some tufa blocks, moved from their original locations, nothing survives of the ancient sanctuary. Excavations carried out in 1929 did not even settle the question of whether a temple ever existed here, although they brought to light structures of minor importance, albeit in very poor condition.

On the other hand, the ancient street, which led to the summit at a steep incline, is well preserved. It began its course from Via Appia at Aricia, then followed the eastern edge of the Alban Lake, passing near Palazzolo. Some interesting monuments are still extant in this area. The most important of these is a large rock tomb, which can be seen near the convent of Palazzolo. The tomb's monumental facade was sculpted from a rock wall that rose above a terrace, about 40 meters wide, which in turn lay on a steep slope above the lake. The monument comprises a base with a sculptured band above, surmounted in turn by a stepped pyramid. The sculptures of the tomb depict a *sella curulis* (magistrate's chair) with a cushion, on which lie a scepter with eagle (*scipio eburneus*) and a cap. Two cupids carry drapery above the chair. On each side of the *sella* are six fasces (bundles of rods and axes), a clear indication that the tomb belonged to a consul. Entry to the tomb, over seven steps and through a corridor, was from the base of the pyramid. The cross-vaulted crypt was rectangular (2.60 × 2.26 meters). The structure, style, and typology of the reliefs date the monument to the first half of the first century AD. The remains of a Republican villa, or perhaps a sanctuary, are still partially visible near the east bank of the Alban Lake.

Marino and Grottaferrata

The ancient municipality of *Castrimoenium*, probably founded during the reign of Sulla, was in the territory of present-day Marino, somewhat to the north of the modern city. Though its exact location is not known, everything points to the area near Villa Galassini on Colle Cimino.

The most important ancient monument still to be seen in the area is a **Mithraeum** discovered by chance at the foot of the

town near the railroad station in 1926. The sanctuary consists of a very long room (20 × 3 meters) on an incline, probably a reused cistern carved into the rock of the hill. At the entryway, two small square panels at the sides are painted with figures of the *dadophoroi*—the torch carriers, Cautes on the right, with his torch held erect, and Cautopates on the left, with his torch lowered toward the earth. The most important painting, the depiction of Mithras slaying the bull, is on the rear wall and flanked by two series of small paintings arranged vertically. Their scenes should be read beginning from the top on the left. The first represents the giants struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt. The figure of Ocean follows; then the birth of Mithras from the rock; and finally Mithras taming and riding the bull. The panels on the right, again starting from the top, show Mithras carrying the bull into the cave; Mithras about to strike the shoulder of the Sun, who kneels before him to be initiated into his cult; next, the alliance between Mithras and the Sun, who are about to shake hands in friendship; and, finally, Mithras with bow and arrow aimed at a rock to make water flow from it. This is one of the very rare examples of Mithraic painting in Italy, of which only two others are known, both contemporaneous with this example (which dates to the second half of the second century AD): at Capua and at Rome (the Barberini Mithraeum). The quality of the painting from Marino is much superior to that of the other two.

The nearby **peperino quarries**, which are still in use today, can be seen after visiting the Mithraeum.

The **Abbey of Grottaferrata** probably owes its name to the cryptoporticus on which it is in part built. The abbey was constructed, together with the Church of S. Maria, on the site of a large Roman villa, which some identify as the famous Tusculan home of Cicero. (It is more likely, however, that Cicero's villa was located around the Villa della Rufinella, between Frascati and Tusculum.) Visible remains of the villa include the foundations and a well-preserved cryptoporticus with two aisles. The *opus reticulatum* and the parallelepiped blocks date the villa to the end of the Republican age.

The abbey contains a small **museum**.

Room 1. On display here is the most important monument in the museum, an Attic funerary stele with a seated young man reading (430–420 BC).

Room 2. Herms with portraits of Homer and Euripides, which are thought to have adorned the library of a Roman villa; reliefs from funeral monuments dating to the beginning of the Empire.

Room 3. A large collection of cinerary urns and Roman sarcophagi from the middle and late Empire.

Room 4. Excavation material, which traces the historical development of the area from protohistory to late antiquity.

Tusculum

Tusculum was one of the oldest and most important centers of Latium Vetus. The city's foundation was attributed to Telegonus, son of Odysseus and Circe, and it was also thought to have been a colony of Alba Longa, founded by Latinus Silvius. That the area was settled from a very early period is clear from Neolithic and Aeneolithic remains, but above all from the first Iron Age materials. The necropolis at Vigna Cavalletti, halfway between Frascati and Grottaferrata, is especially important because it dates to the two earliest phases of Latial culture. The name *Tusculum*, clearly derived from the name of the Etruscans, is in itself interesting. Direct Etruscan intervention in Latium began early in the seventh century BC, when Etruscans evidently besieged the city. Octavius Mamilius of Tusculum was supposed to have married a daughter of Tarquinius Superbus, who took refuge in Tusculum when he was driven out of Rome. This was the start of conflict between Rome and the Latins, which ended in 499 BC with the famous Roman victory at Lake Regillus (perhaps to be identified as Pantano Secco, north of Tusculum), and with the stipulations of the Treaty of Cassius (*Foedus Cassianum*), which accorded Rome preeminence within the Latin league. From then on, Tusculum was on the whole faithful to Rome and must have been the first among the cities of Latium to obtain Roman citizenship (around 380 BC).

Loss of autonomy, however, diminished Tusculum's importance as an urban center, and the city and its territory became a summer residence for wealthy Romans. We know from numerous references in Latin literature of the Tusculan villas of Sulla, Lucullus, Catulus, Gabinius, Cato Uticensis, and Asinius Pollio. During the Imperial period, Tiberius, Agrippina, Nero, Galba, Marciana, and Matidia had villas there.

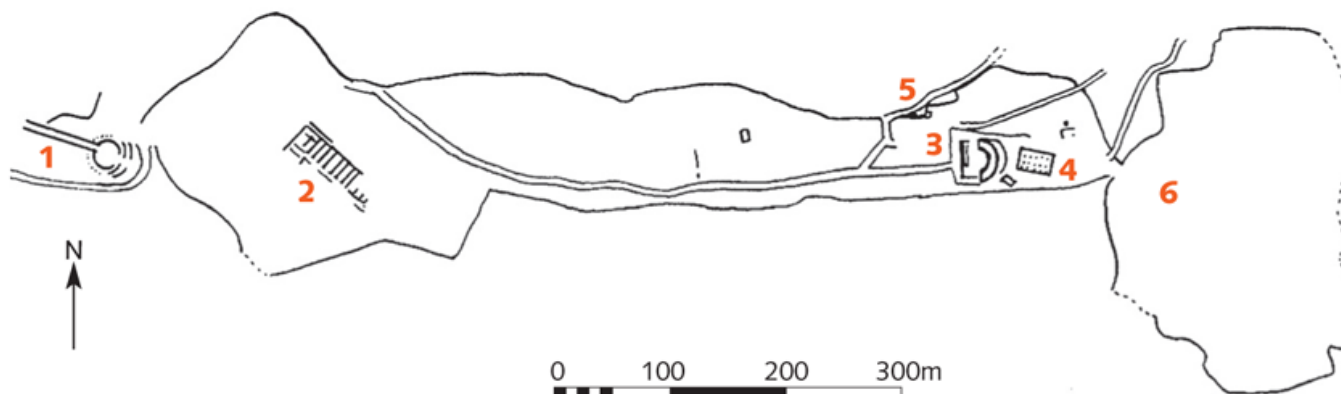


FIGURE 153. Tusculum, plan of the ancient city. 1 Amphitheater. 2 “Villa of Cicero.” 3 Forum and theater. 4 Cistern. 5 Fountain. 6 Acropolis.

But the villa that has become almost the symbol of an entire historical period is that of Cicero. This can be located either on the Colle delle Ginestre, northeast of Grottaferrata, or near the present-day Villa della Rufinella, on a hill east of Tusculum (about 600 meters from the amphitheater). From Cicero’s writings, we know various particulars about his villa in Tusculum. It had once been the property of Q. Lutatius Catulus (the consul of 78 BC) and had become the property of the orator as early as 68 BC. Part of it was laid out to resemble a Greek gymnasium, with two porticoes, rather pompously called the Academy and the Lycaeum (the latter also housed the library). Atticus, Cicero’s close friend, had purchased a number of statues in Athens to decorate this section of the villa. We are told that these included herms in Pentelic marble with bronze heads representing Athena and Hercules. The *Tusculanum*, which was only a short distance from Rome, was the orator’s preferred area of respite between one political battle and the next.

The ancient city, which can be reached by a road from Frascati, occupies a long crest that peaks at 670 meters above sea level at the acropolis. The main excavations took place in the first half of the nineteenth century. The earliest campaigns were undertaken between 1804 and 1820 under Lucien Bonaparte, the brother of Napoleon, who had taken possession of the area. The property next passed to Maria Cristina of Sardinia, the wife of King Carlo Felice, who had the excavations carried forward between 1825 and 1840 under the direction first of Luigi Biondi and then of Luigi Canina. Further exploration took place in 1859 (at the so-called Villa of Tiberius) and in 1867 (the amphitheater); and finally, more recently, between 1952 and 1957.

The present-day Via Tuscolana is probably not an ancient road; the main routes that gave access to Tusculum were Via Latina and Via Labicana, from which various side roads led to the city. The **amphitheater** stands at the city’s western end, outside the ancient walls (FIG. 153:1). Today the structure is hardly visible and half buried, covered with vegetation. Its lower section was built in *opus quadratum* of peperino, while the cavea’s supporting walls are in *opus mixtum* of reticulate and brick. The building, which measures 80 meters by 53 meters, can be dated, on the basis of brick stamps, to the middle of the second century AD.

East of the amphitheater is an impressive building in *opus reticulatum* and *opus mixtum*, of which only the foundations are now visible. The rooms that are accessible are on the southwest. Brick stamps found in the construction seem to belong to at least two phases, one in the first century AD and a later phase in the second century. The large building, known since the sixteenth century as the Villa of Cicero, was later associated with Tiberius, but it might well in fact be a large sanctuary (FIG. 153:2).

The motor road ends in a large square, where there is a small contemporary building (known as the guard’s house), made partly of ancient materials. At this point the ancient road, which follows the axis of the hill, leads to the site. A little before the forum, the road splits in two. The left branch leads almost immediately to a tract of the ancient walls in *opus quadratum*, built of no fewer than eleven rows of large peperino ashlar. This was probably a gate through which the road coming from Via Labicana passed. The basalt pavement along the wall is still in rather good condition. A little farther on, the wall rests against a structure with a crudely executed polygonal facing, which sits on another structure fashioned of very large blocks in *opus*

quadratum. A door leads to a cistern, a rectangular room roofed with a false corbelled vault; water entered through a channel, whose opening is visible toward the bottom of the back wall. One of the purposes of the cistern was to feed a fountain, which bears the following inscription: “Quintus Coelius Latiniensis, son of Quintus, and Marcus Decumius, aediles, (had this constructed) in compliance with a decree of the Senate” (FIG. 153:5).

Turning back to the fork in the road and proceeding along the right branch, we come to the **forum**. The eastern side of the square abuts the stage of the **theater**, an arrangement that suggests that this is not a forum but rather a porticus *post scaenam* (FIG. 153:3). The large inscription at the top of the cavea commemorates the visit of Pope Gregory XVI to Queen Maria Cristina of Sardinia on 7 October 1839. The cavea, now heavily restored, is set directly against the hill behind it. Traces of a porticus at the top were seen during excavation. A parapet (*pluteus*) divides the cavea from the orchestra. The scene building, rectangular in plan, lacks the curvilinear niches typically found in stage facades of Imperial theaters, indicating an early date, probably around the first half of the first century BC.

Beyond the theater, on the right, the sparse remains of a large stepped semicircular fountain can be seen. This was fed by a rectangular cistern, located behind the cavea of the theater, divided into four chambers by three rows of five piers (FIG. 153:4). From this point the street leads up to the **acropolis**, where there are no visible remains (FIG. 153:6). It is here that the temple dedicated to Castor and Pollux, the main cult of the city, must have stood, along perhaps with that of Jupiter.

Turning back the way we came, we can follow the **Street of Tombs**, which descends to the south toward the Valle della Molara from the so-called Villa of Tiberius. Particularly interesting is the core of a large circular tomb, whose inscription (preserved nearby) identifies the monument as the tomb of Marcus Caelius Vinicianus, tribune of the plebs in 53 BC.

Gabii

The very old city of Gabii stood at the twelfth mile of the road originally called Via Gabina and only later Via Praenestina. It occupied a strip of land between the road and a lake (Lago di Castiglione), which is now dried up (FIG. 154). The earliest remains of the city have vanished almost entirely, having been eaten away by the quarrying of its famous local stone (*lapis Gabinus*, or sperone), which was in use until the Imperial period. The origins of Gabii were traced by ancient writers to the Siculi or even to Alba Longa, of which it was supposed to have been a colony. Recent excavations on the site of Osteria dell’Osa, about two kilometers west of the ancient site, have uncovered an important Iron Age necropolis that sheds light on the period before the area’s urbanization.

At the end of the sixth century BC, the city apparently entered the orbit of Rome, as suggested by the tradition of its occupation by Tarquinius Superbus. At that time, a treaty, the *Foedus Gabinum*, was supposed to have been signed between Gabii and Rome. The original text of this treaty, written on a leather shield, was preserved in the Temple of Semo Sancus on the Quirinal at Rome as late as the early Empire. During the late Republic, Gabii, like many other centers in the same situation, must have already been half-deserted. Augustus and the early Julio-Claudian emperors intervened to help restore a semblance of life to this moribund center, though this renewed vitality was due almost exclusively to the affluent inhabitants of the nearby villas.

Early Christians left a visible sign of their presence in the Church of S. Primitivo, a local martyr; traces of the church are visible in the area once occupied by the forum of the Roman city.

The most convenient way to reach Gabii and its ruins is from the gas station located 1.50 kilometers beyond the cross street to Poli. From here one can reach the ancient Via Praenestina, whose course is easy to discern, and the nearby **Temple of Juno**, the most important monument on the site. The temple’s large sacral area, oriented almost exactly north-south, is partially cut into the rock and rests in part on artificial foundations. A Doric porticus, with shops on the eastern and western sides (only those on the east are now visible), lines three sides of the sanctuary’s northern end (FIG. 155:3). The southern end was intended to include a theater, the cavea of which, though no longer visible, must have been carved into the rock (FIG. 155:5).



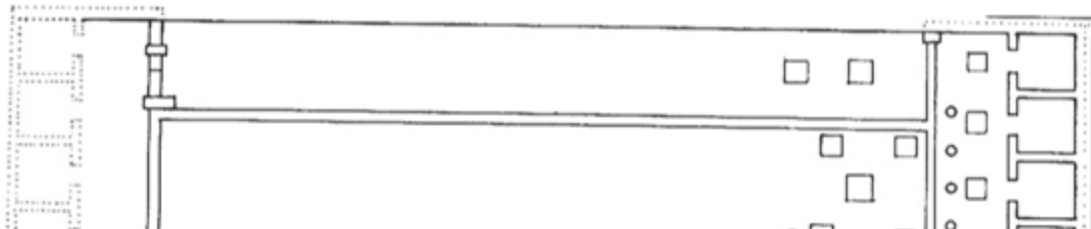
FIGURE 154. Gabii. General plan. (After Quilici 1977)

The temple, generally identified with the worship of Juno, occupied the center of the area, and its cella still rises to a considerable height (FIG. 155:1). The building, *peripteros sine postico* (i.e., with colonnades only on the front and on its long sides), was preceded by a stairway and large altar. The podium is preserved only at the back. The elevation is constructed in

blocks of local stone on only one course. Excavations have brought to light a basement, which was entered by a stairway at the southeastern corner of the cella.

An interesting system of channels, connected to a cistern hollowed out of the rock, ensured that the square was properly drained (FIG. 155:2). The northeastern corner, which is the best preserved, reveals a number of large holes, which have been interpreted as receptacles that once held trees (FIG. 155:4). The configuration suggests that this was a sort of ritual reconstruction of the sacred groves (*luci*) from which many rural sanctuaries originated.

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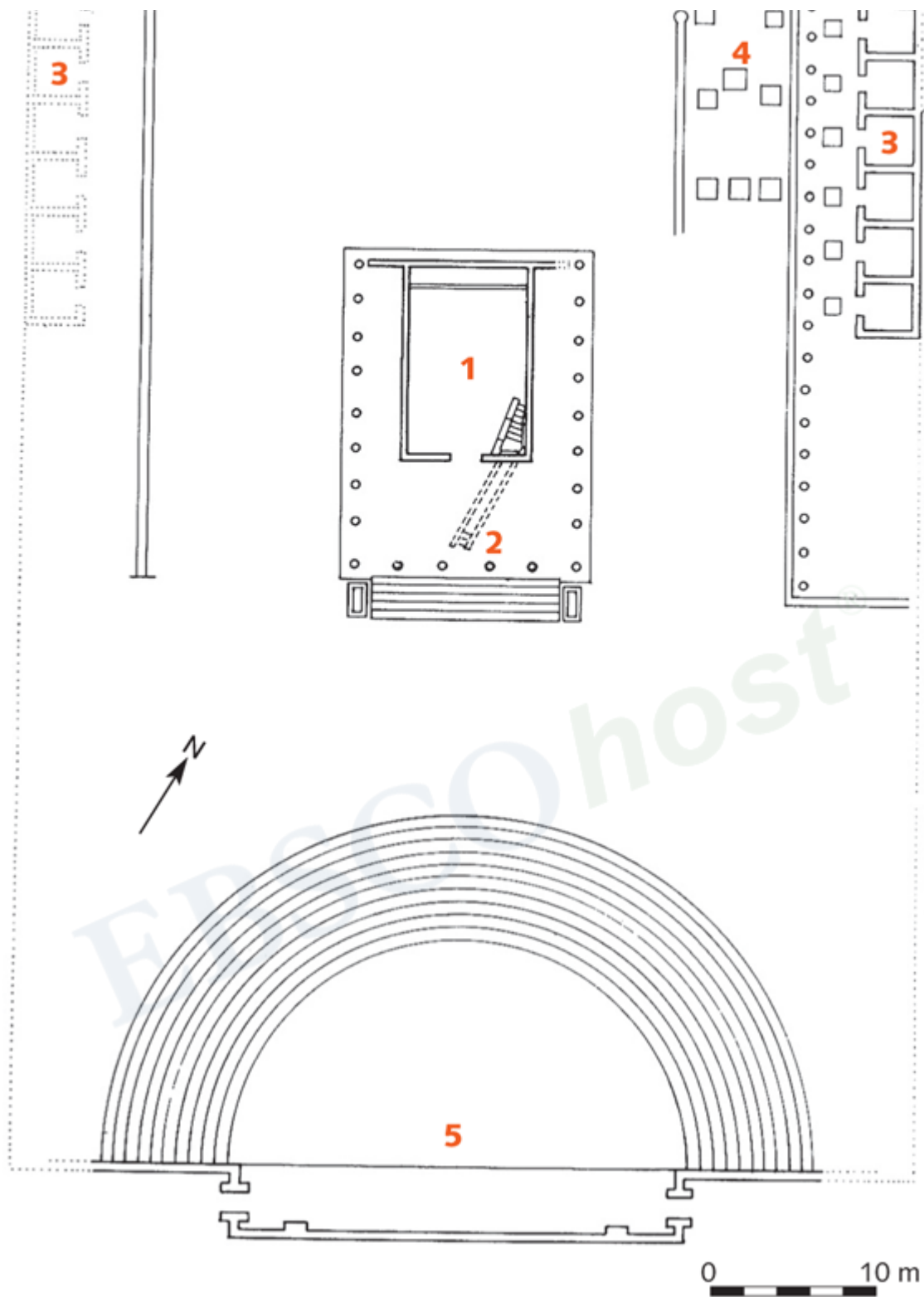


FIGURE 155. Gubbio. Temple of Juno. 1 Temple. 2 Underground channels. 3 Porticoes. 4 Holes for trees. 5 Theater cavea.

Fragments of inscriptions pertaining to the temple and the porticus have been found in recent excavations. One of these, on part of a Doric frieze from the altar, carries the name *Cethegus*. The consul of 160 BC comes to mind, and the date accords with the absence of cement in the sanctuary's construction. If so, this is one of the earliest datable examples of a temple associated with a theater, an arrangement that came to be quite characteristic of Hellenistic-Italic architecture.

Nothing remains to be seen of the forum (excavated in 1792), which lay in the area east of the sanctuary. In fact, very little

of the ancient city is visible. Signs of the old quarries, however, are evident almost everywhere, especially along the road that skirts the bank of the now-vanished lake toward the east. South of the city, between the quarries and the Church of S. Primitivo, recent excavations have revealed the presence of a sanctuary and of an archaic necropolis with chamber tombs.

PRAENESTE (PALESTRINA)

HISTORICAL NOTES

Praeneste lies 23 miles east of Rome on Via Praenestina (FIG. 146). Rising on the slopes of Monte Ginestro, the last projecting spur south of the Praenestine mountains, the city dominates the narrow expanse of land between the mountains and the Alban Hills, and along with it the natural roadways at the bottom of the valley: Via Labicana and Via Latina. The saddle between the Colli Albani and the Monti Lepini allows easy communication between Praeneste, Velletri, and Anzio; this strategic position explains the importance of Praeneste as early as the seventh century BC.

The territory of Praeneste must have largely coincided with that of the medieval diocese, thus enclosing an area of about 250 square kilometers. The ancient population would never have exceeded fifteen thousand, about half of whom resided in the main center of the city; the rest were distributed among the nine towns (*oppida*) spread over the whole territory.

Various traditions have come down to us about the foundation of the city, which connect it alternatively with Telegonos, the son of Odysseus and Circe, with Praenestos, a son of Latinus, or with Caeculus, the son of Vulcan. The latter legend has striking points of contact with the traditions surrounding Romulus and Servius Tullius. Remains of tombs date the site's occupation as far back as the first quarter of the eighth century BC. The importance of Praeneste in the orientalizing period is clear from an important group of princely tombs (Bernardini, Barberini, and Castellani), material from which is displayed in the Villa Giulia and the Capitoline Museums.

The first references to the city among the ancient historians date to the beginning of the Republic. There is evidence that by the end of the fifth century BC, Praenestine families like the Anicii had gained entry to the Roman senate. During these years, the city was in frequent conflict with Rome, and in 380 it was conquered by Cincinnatus. More revolts followed, however, in subsequent decades; there is mention of an alliance between Praeneste and the Gauls in 358. Praeneste, of course, took part in the Latin War and after 338, along with Tivoli, it was deprived of part of its territory. From that time forward, with the dissolution of the Latin League, Praeneste's political importance, along with that of other cities in Latium, declined drastically.

A period of great prosperity, resulting in part from trade with the East, is evident in the last decades of the second century BC, to judge at least from the grandeur of the constructions that transformed the appearance of the city during that period. After the Social War, the city must have received Roman citizenship and become a *municipium*. The outbreak of the Civil War saw Praeneste aligned with the followers of Marius, and it was here that the younger Marius took refuge after his defeat at the hands of Sulla at Sacriportum (82 BC). The destruction of two armies that came to his aid induced his defenders to capitulate, and Marius committed suicide. Sulla's retribution was terrifying: the Romans were spared, but the Samnites and Praenestines were massacred, except for women and children and a few friends of Sulla. The city was commandeered to house a military colony installed by Sulla. In 41 BC Praeneste once again served as a refuge, this time for the army of Fulvia, Antony's wife, during the War of Perugia.

During Aurelian's persecutions, St. Agapito, the city's patron, was probably martyred in Praeneste's amphitheater, whose existence is attested in an inscription of the Claudian age.

The free city was governed, until its transformation into a *municipium*, by a senate, two *praetores*, *aediles*, and *quaestores*, and two censors were elected every five years. We have no information about the magistrates of the *municipium*, but the colony's magistrates, which included *duumviri*, *duumviri quinquennales*, *aediles*, and *quaestores*, are well documented.

The principal divinity of Praeneste was Fortuna Primigenia, whose sanctuary was among the most important in Latium.

ITINERARY

Via Praenestina beyond Gabii

The stretch of **Via Praenestina** beyond S. Maria di Cavamonte is one of the best preserved in the Roman Campagna. The basalt pavement continues for almost its whole course alongside the modern street and is lined by the remains of tombs from the late Republic and the early Empire. At S. Maria di Cavamonte an impressive ancient cutting in the tufa allows the street to cross a hill. The remains of a **Republican bridge**, the Ponte Amato, can be seen farther along, on the right. A narrow path leads from here to the **Tondo**, a very small amphitheater in *opus reticulatum* that lies on the hill halfway along the road between S. Maria di Cavamonte and Zagarolo.

The most striking features in the landscape around Praeneste are the monumental remains of four **aqueducts**, the Anio Vetus, Aqua Marcia, Anio Novus, and Aqua Claudia. The most interesting of these viaducts cross the Fosso dell'Acqua Rossa (parallel to the modern Via di Poli), Fosso della Mola, and Fosso dell'Acqua Raminga (between Via di Poli and Via S. Vittorino-Gericomio).

From Via di Poli (at 32 kilometers), a path leads to **Ponte S. Pietro**, on which the Aqua Marcia crosses the Fosso della Mola. This is more than 90 meters long, almost 19 meters high, and (including its buttresses) about 12 meters wide. The original construction of 144 BC, in *opus quadratum* of limestone, is entirely faced with masonry of a later date. The restorations in *opus mixtum* can be dated between the end of the first and the beginning of the second century AD. The revetment of the northwestern part of the bridge, with its buttresses in brick, was probably installed under Septimius Severus.

The **Ponte della Mola** is somewhat farther downstream along the same channel. It is part of the Anio Vetus, consisting of a long viaduct (136 meters) on two levels of superimposed arches in *opus reticulatum* and brick, datable probably to the reign of Hadrian. The central arches collapsed in 1965.

At kilometer 31 along Via di Poli, a path to the left leads to **Ponte Lupo** (27 meters high and about 80 meters long), the largest and most picturesque of the bridges, which allowed the Aqua Marcia to cross over the Fosso dell'Acqua Rossa. The original arches, in *opus quadratum* of tufa, were partially covered by a massive reticulate construction—a restoration by Agrippa. Many other restorations can be distinguished, making this work a veritable palimpsest. The most extensive date from the reign of Septimius Severus.

The **Ponte di S. Antonio** can be reached from the S. Vittorino-Gericomio road, by turning just before this village onto a path on the right. The bridge, which passes over the Fosso dell'Acqua Raminga, is part of the Anio Novus. It is around 125 meters long and about 30 meters high. A very high arch, spanning the stream, is flanked on each side by small arches on two levels. The original phase, from the Claudian period, is in *opus quadratum* of tufa with reinforcing piers in reticulate. Somewhat later, during the third or fourth century, the bridge was incorporated into a large brick reinforcement.

The Center of Praeneste

Via Praenestina runs into the modern Viale Pio XII. A left turn onto this street leads to the intersection with Via degli Arcioni at the Church of S. Lucia. This street follows the southern side of the oldest part of the city. The first monument encountered is a large trapezoidal cistern in brick, from the Imperial period, that is decorated with niches and set against the southwestern corner of the walls (FIG. 156:1).

A large wall in *opus quadratum* of tufa with a cement core follows along Via degli Arcioni (FIG. 156:2). At the center of the network of walls are the remains of a large **monumental propylon**, with a vaulted ceiling and niches for fountains (FIG. 156:3); a second propylon, some traces of which are extant, forms a matched pair. This monumental entrance, like the walls leading up to it, is in *opus caementicium* with *opus incertum* facing. The use of this technique and the structure's perfectly axial relation to the Sanctuary of Fortuna prove that there was a monumental redesign of the sanctuary at the end of the second century BC. The wall in *opus quadratum* eventually replaced the original fortification in polygonal masonry, which is still preserved on the other sides. The use of coarse rubble filling dates this phase of construction to the second century BC, perhaps a few decades before the large-scale remodeling of the walls in *opus incertum*.

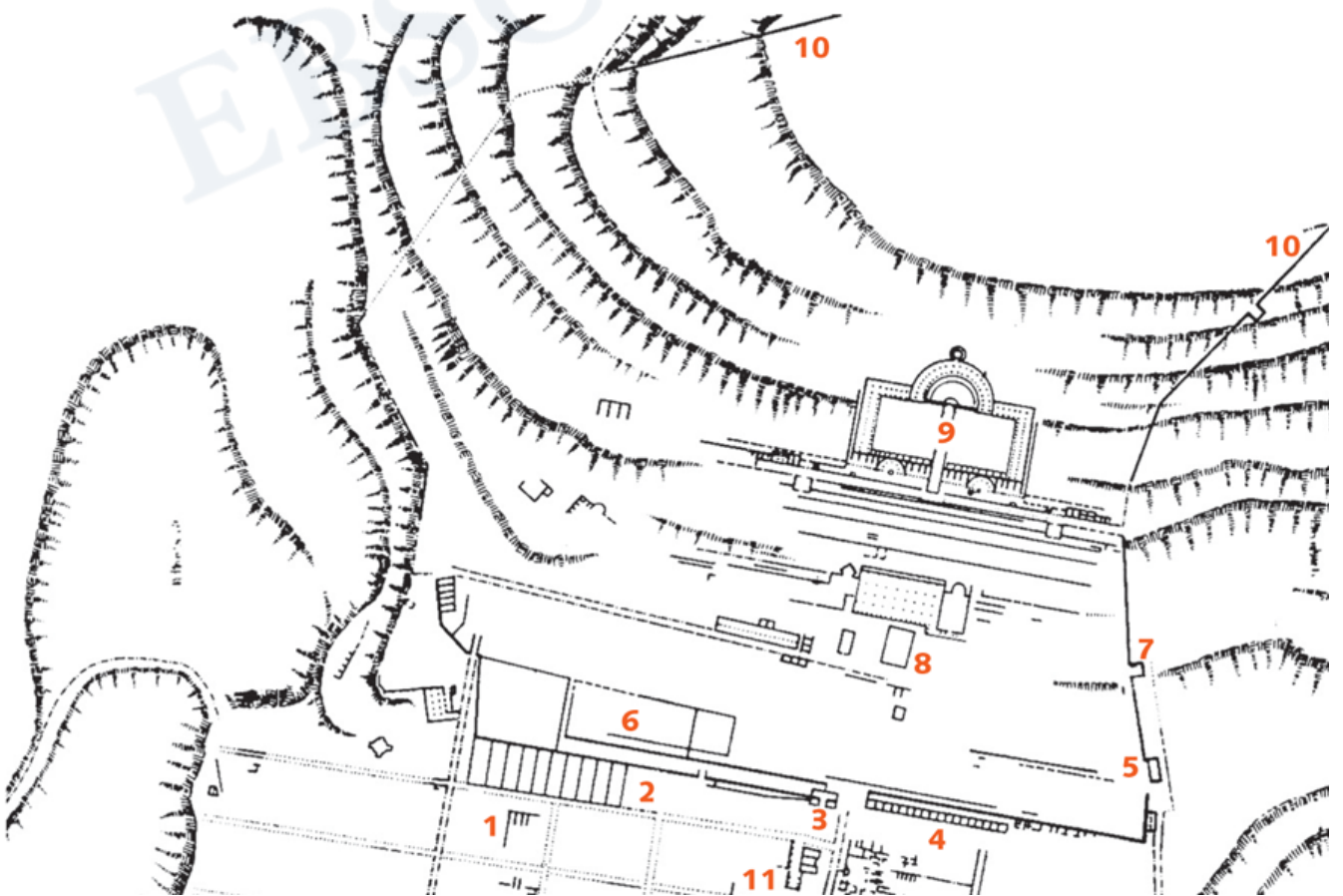
Beyond the propylon, we find a row of eleven **vaulted rooms** in *opus incertum* (which gave rise to the modern name Via degli Arcioni), with arched openings consisting of tufa voussoirs in the facade (FIG. 156:4). The wall continues and, turning sharply, reaches the sixteenth-century Porta del Sole, which projects outward with a bastion constructed partly in *opus quadratum* and partly in *opus incertum* (FIG. 156:5). From here on the walls that follow preserve their original polygonal construction. This large monumental structure, corresponding to the walls and to the *pomerium*, supported the first large terrace of the city.

In Piazza S. Maria degli Angeli a gate in the polygonal walls corresponds to the most important east-west street, the present-day Via Anicia, which led to the forum (FIG. 156:7). Piazza Regina Margherita corresponds to the ancient **forum**, originally larger than the modern square, which occupied part of the second terrace of the city (FIG. 156:8). The Cathedral of S. Agapito corresponds to a **temple** of considerable antiquity, certainly predating (perhaps by two centuries) the urban reorganization of the second century BC, as is clear from its different orientation. Structural remains in *opus quadratum* of tufa can be seen inside and on the facade. This might well be the Temple of Jupiter Imperator whose statue was carried off to Rome and installed on the Capitoline in 388 BC after the defeat of Praeneste.

On the right side of the cathedral at the ancient level, considerably below the present surface, are remains of a flagstone pavement and of some steps parallel to the church (revealed during the excavations of 1907). The main buildings of the forum occupied the far end of the square, but at a higher level. A two-story colonnade closed the forum's northern end (see FIG. 157). The lower story corresponded to the level of the terrace, while the upper story contained an internal colonnade parallel to the lower. Two superimposed limestone **colonnades** can be seen within the courtyard of the former seminary (behind the cathedral), in a gap that opens to the south. The lower colonnade is in the Doric order, while the upper one was probably Corinthian.

The large facade of the **apsidal hall**, which dominates the square on the north (incorporated into the former seminary), provides further evidence of the sophisticated technical solution to the terrain's unevenness. The lower part of the hall, which is in *opus reticulatum* of tufa, corresponds to the lower colonnade of the forum, for which it served as the back wall. The higher level consisted of a large facade in *opus incertum*, originally stuccoed, with two pairs of semicolumns made of tufa blocks, topped by rich Corinthian capitals with flowering acanthus. This corresponded to the second level of the porticus. At the center was a grand entrance surmounted by a large arch, evidently accessible from the second level, while two statue niches occupied the spaces between the two sets of columns. The technique used, and the type of capital—identical to that of the small *tholos* in the sanctuary—allow us to date the building to the same period as that of the sanctuary itself: the last decades of the second century BC.

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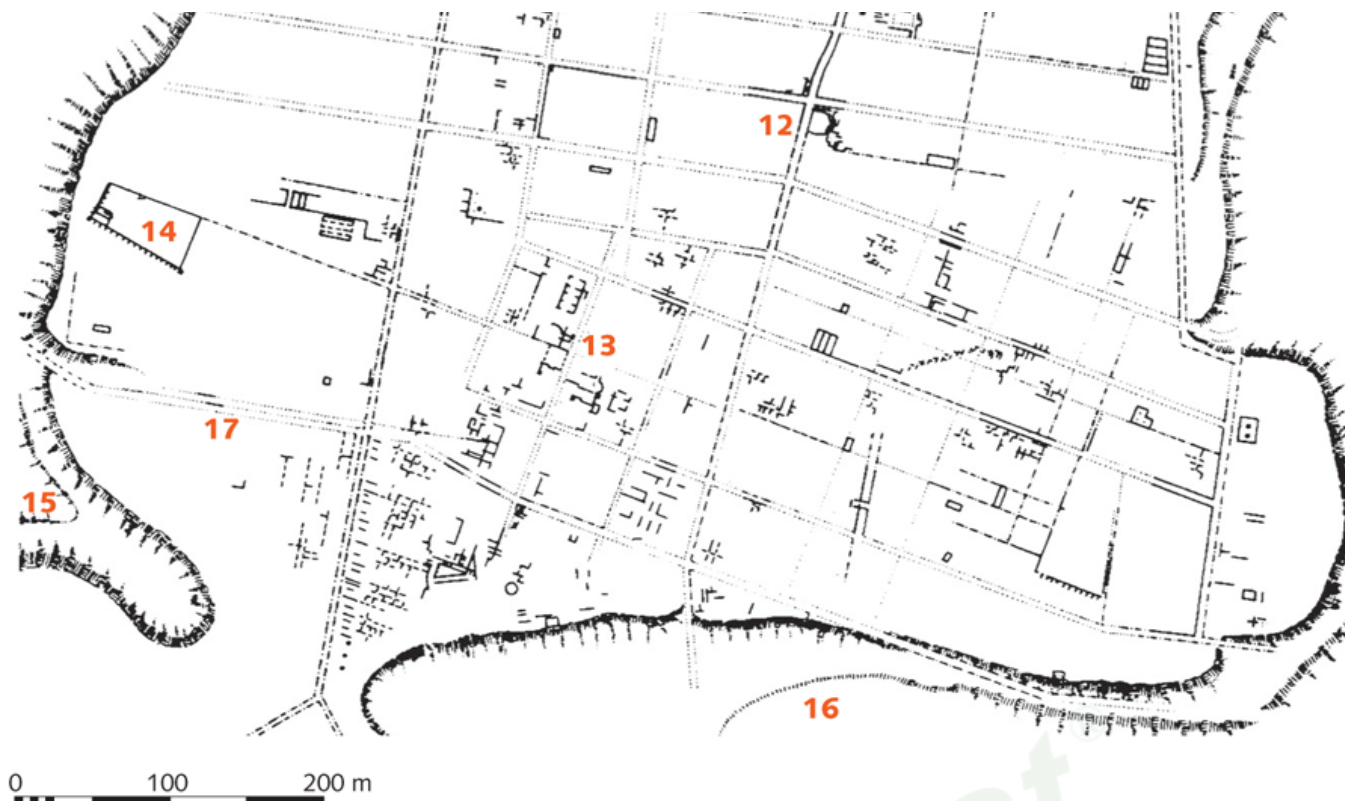


FIGURE 156. Praeneste. Plan of the lower and upper city. 1 Cistern of Via degli Arcioni. 2 Wall in *opus quadratum*. 3 Monumental propylon. 4 Vaulted rooms. 5 Porta del Sole. 6 Cistern. 7 Gate. 8 Forum. 9 Sanctuary of Fortuna. 10 Polygonal walls. 11 Public buildings and baths. 12 Exedra. 13 Madonna dell'Aquila. 14 Cistern. 15 Sanctuary of Hercules. 16 Necropolis of the Colombella. 17 Via Praenestina. (After Quilici 1989)

A gate with a flat arch, largely modern, opens onto the left side of the lower wall. This allowed access to a small room with a barrel-vaulted ceiling (6.80 × 4.37 meters), constructed entirely in *opus quadratum*, that rests against the stepped rock. The hall reveals three phases of construction. The vaulting was built in the third phase, when an important inscription was cut into the back wall. The inscription identifies the building's function: "Marcus Anicius Basus, son of Lucius, and Marcus Mersieius, son of Gaius, aediles, had this *Aerarium* [Treasury] built." The presence of the city's public treasury confirms that the square in front of the building was in fact the forum.

From the area in front of the *Aerarium* come the fragments of two Egyptian granite obelisks in the Museum of Palestrina and in the Naples Archaeological Museum. The name of Claudius appears among the hieroglyphs. A door at the back of the square gives access to the courtyard of the former seminary. This area was once thought to be part of the Sanctuary of Fortuna—the so-called Lower Sanctuary—but it is now clear that this was part of a complex of public buildings annexed to the forum.

The courtyard behind S. Agapito, known as the **Area Sacra**, lies at a level significantly higher than the forum and is screened by the two-story colonnade whose remains can be seen on the south. The area was originally roofed and divided into four aisles by rows of columns, of which there are occasional traces in the pavement. Fragments of Italo-Corinthian capitals have also been recovered. The building, a typical hypostyle hall (a hall with a roof supported by rows of columns), is probably the **basilica**. This too dates to the overall redesign of the forum, during the last decades of the second century BC.

The basilica, positioned with its broad side fronting the northern end of the forum, was framed by two other structures, the so-called Cave of the Lots (on the west) and the apsidal hall (on the east). The hall also rested against a cutting in the natural rock and, in part, the vault of the *Aerarium*. Its interior, later divided into several rooms that were once used as a kitchen for the seminary, was a large rectangular room, originally with a trussed roof, whose northern end terminated in an apse surmounted by a half dome that contained five niches. The large floor mosaic featuring an Egyptian landscape, now displayed in the museum, came from this apse.

The side walls, of which only the northern section is still in place, are decorated by a series of engaged semicolumns and

Ionic pilasters in tufa and limestone, with niches for statues in between. The lower part of the walls has a projecting podium, now visible only on the eastern side, carrying a Doric frieze surmounted by an Ionic cornice with egg-and-dart molding and denticulation. The metopes are decorated with *paterae* and rosettes. Remains of a fine white mosaic are still on the floor. There has been much difference of opinion about the purpose of the hall. Recently it has been suggested that it was a sanctuary dedicated to Isis.

On the opposite side of the basilica is the so-called **Cave of the Lots**, possibly a natural grotto that was widened; it occupied a position exactly symmetrical to the apse of the presumed Isis sanctuary. The space in front of the grotto, paved in fine white mosaic, has never been excavated, but it is likely that this too was a roofed hall, symmetrical to the apsidal hall. There is an arch of tufa voussoirs in front of the grotto with three deep niches on the sides and at the back.

The flooring consisted of a very elegant polychrome mosaic, of which some traces remain. Its extremely small tesserae formed a seascape, depicting a large variety of fish and marine creatures. This is one of the most striking surviving examples of Hellenistic mosaic, a style found in Rome, Pompeii, and elsewhere. Like the other examples, this too can be dated to the end of the second century BC and must have been the creation of a workshop of Hellenistic artists from Alexandria.

The Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia

The most important document concerning the Sanctuary of Fortuna comes from Cicero (*De Div.* 2.41), which may be derived from the archives of Praeneste itself:

The official records of Praeneste affirm that Numerius Suffustius, a man of a distinguished noble family, was directed by recurring and ultimately threatening dreams to split open a flint rock in a specified place. Terrified by these visions and ignoring the ridicule of his fellow citizens, he began to cut. The instant he broke open the rock, *sortes* (lots) carved from oak and inscribed with archaic letters fell out. Even to this day, the spot where the rock was found is walled off and treated as sacred. It is right near the statue of Jupiter as a young boy, who is seated in the lap of Fortuna and is being nursed together with Juno. The cult is devoutly revered by mothers. The Praenestine records go on to tell us that at the same time honey oozed from an olive tree where the temple of Fortuna now stands. The *haruspices* declared that these *sortes* would without question become well known. On their advice, a chest was made from the wood of the olive tree as a receptacle for the lots, which are drawn even now whenever Fortuna dictates. What credence should we place in these lots, which are shaken up in their box under the supposed inspiration of Fortuna and drawn by the hand of a little boy? . . . Divination of this kind is in disrepute nowadays but the beauty and hoary antiquity of the temple keep the fame of Praeneste's *sortes* alive—among the common people, that is. What self-respecting magistrate or man concerned about his reputation would be caught consulting the lots?

From this very important passage, we learn of the foundation myth for the sanctuary (dated by Cicero to a very early period), its decline (which had already begun by the middle of the first century BC), and finally its appearance, as well as the technique of consulting the oracle. Especially important is the indication of a double cult, that of Fortuna, as mother of the young Jupiter and Juno, and the other—located at a different site—corresponding to the temple itself. The first was strictly connected with the consultation of the *sortes*.

As far as cult is concerned, the most important part of the sanctuary seems to correspond not so much to the temple itself, the last and highest element of the sanctuary (FIG. 158:8), but rather to the so-called Terrace of the Hemicycles, and in particular to the eastern hemicycle (FIG. 158:4). It has thus been possible to reconstruct an older phase, in which there were two principal centers of cult activity, corresponding to the eastern hemicycle and to the temple. Cicero's text, which makes reference to two cult centers, could not offer a better confirmation of this hypothesis. We read about a statue of Fortuna with Jupiter and Juno as children that was next to the spot where the *sortes* were discovered, and about the temple proper at the place—evidently different—where an olive tree oozed honey. The Terrace of the Hemicycles is thus to be identified as the first. The second corresponds to the group consisting of the Terrazza della Cortina, together with the theater area and the temple above it.

The complex is laid out in a series of superimposed terraces, connected by ramps and stairways in a perfectly axial alignment converging at the temple above. The cult statue was the point of focus that unified the sanctuary. The prevailing construction technique employed is coarse rubble concrete dressed in limestone *opus incertum*, while the use of cut stone, mainly tufa, is limited to the exterior arches and columns that mask the vaulted concrete structures within. The external appearance thus largely creates the impression of traditional architrave architecture.

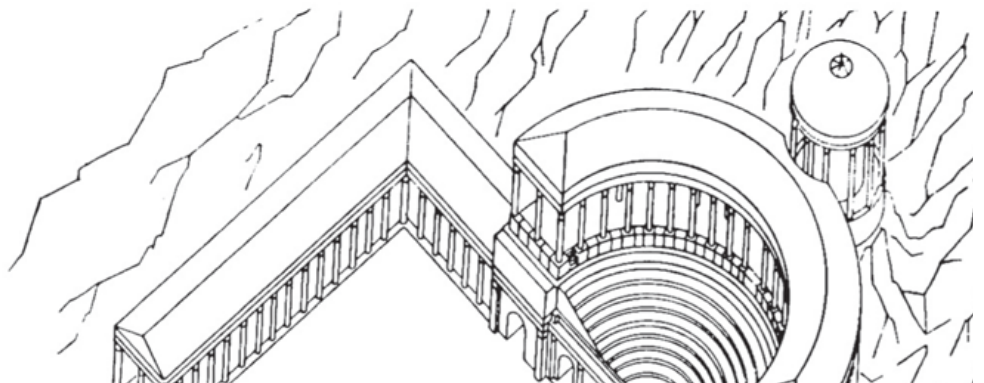
The excavation of the sanctuary was carried out following World War II, after heavy bombing in 1944 destroyed the medieval part of the city that had been constructed over it.

The first structure that can be considered a part of the sanctuary is the large polygonal wall, on top of which the double ramp was built. Two large side stairways gave access to the level above the polygonal wall. These ended in front of the two tetrastyle exedras enclosing fountains, which were in fact lustral basins placed at the entrance to the sanctuary (FIG. 158:1). Various rooms adjoined the exedras, but only those on the west survive.

The principal approach was by a gigantic double ramp, forming a triangular facade, with two large superimposed niches in the center (FIG. 158:3). Along their length, the two ramps divided into two sections; the one on the inside was uncovered and paved with stones, while the other on the outside was vaulted and closed, with a Doric colonnade whose capitals were angled to accommodate the slope of the epistyle.

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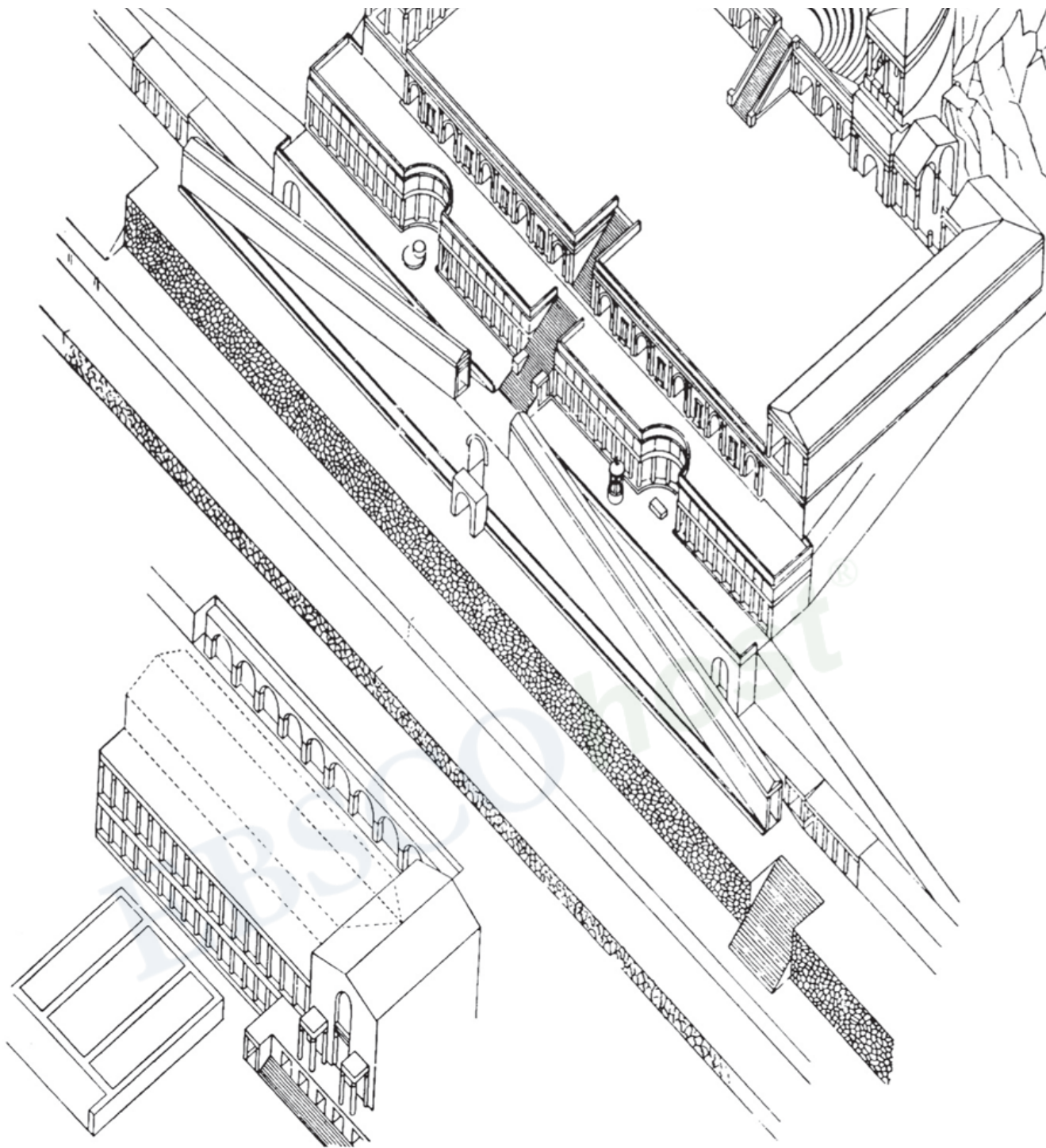


FIGURE 157. Praeneste. The Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia. Perspective. (After Kähler)

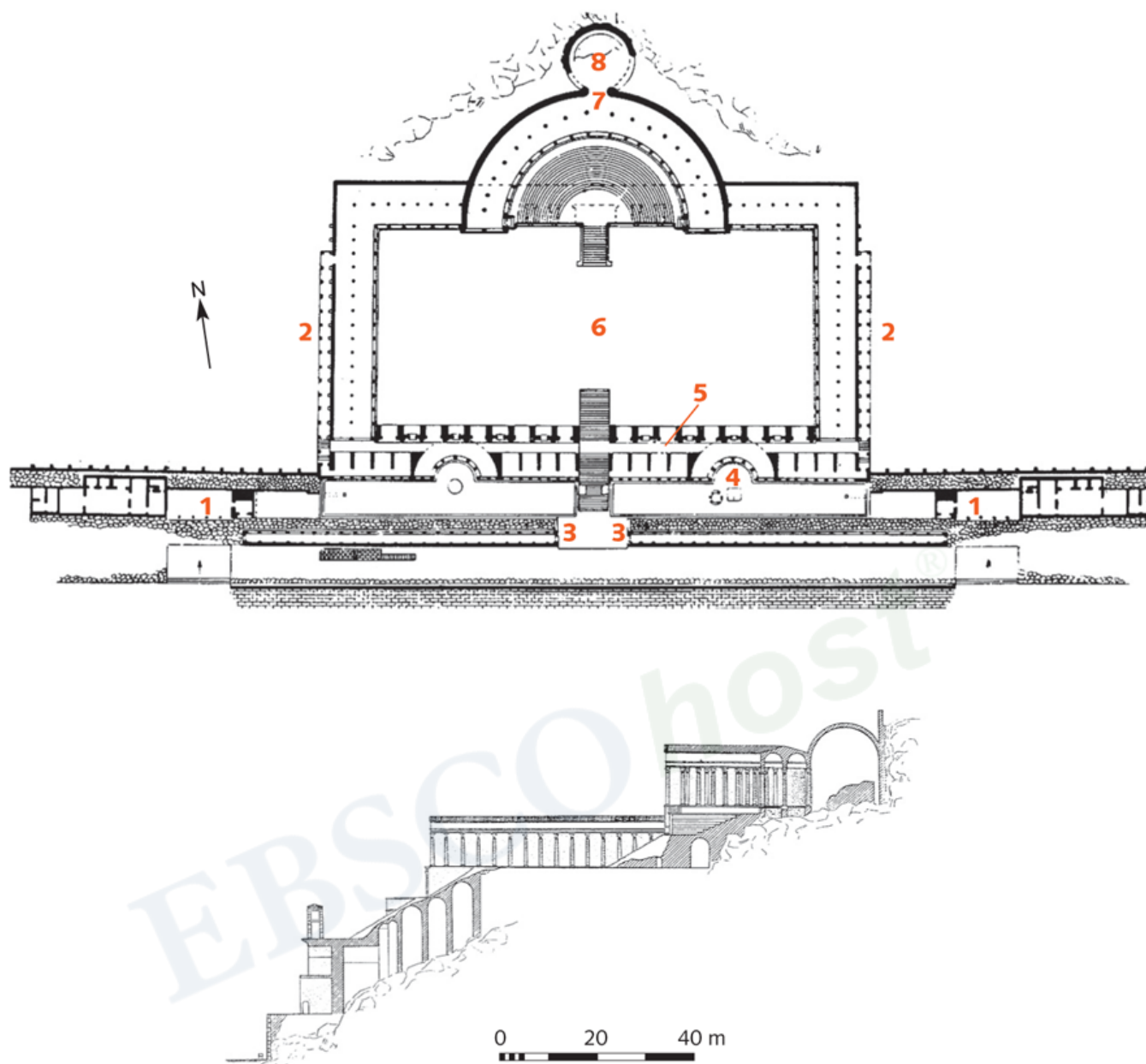


FIGURE 158. Praeneste. The Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia. *Top*, plan (after Kähler): 1 Fountains. 2 External ramps. 3 Frontal ramps. 4 Sanctuary of the *sortes*. 5 Terrace of the arches with semicolumns. 6 Terrazza della Cortina. 7 Theater and porticus. 8 Temple. *Bottom*, cross section (after Fasolo and Gullini).

The axial staircase (mostly restored) leading to the upper levels begins at the center of the terrace where the double ramps converged. A passageway beneath the staircase ensured access between the two sections of the Terrace of the Hemicycles. The terrace gets its name from the two large hemicycles that mark the center of the two halves divided by the stairway. The hemicycles are flanked by two series of four rooms on each side, in front of which there was a porticus (originally roofed by a coffered vault) with faceted Doric columns that followed the curve of the hemicycles. The one on the right (toward the east) is better preserved; some columns with Ionic capitals and a part of the high attic remain *in situ*. Within the hemicycles are remains of a large bench, a clear indication that these were rest areas for those waiting to consult the oracle. The seat of the oracle was immediately in front of the hemicycle on the right (FIG. 158:4). On axis with this was a base decorated with a Doric frieze, of which some fragments have been found. This must have held a seated statue—surely that of Fortuna with Jupiter and Juno as children. The oversized marble head now in the museum was found in the well near the hemicycle; it was undoubtedly

the statue of Fortuna described by Cicero. Cicero recounts that the *sortes* were discovered right next to the statue. In addition to the head of the statue, the well near the hemicycle, measuring 1.90 meters across, yielded the remains of a round aedicula that originally adorned the well's mouth. The circular structure, made of travertine, had a single row of seven Corinthian columns rising on a high podium, adorned with a Doric frieze. The spaces between the columns were closed at the bottom by a stone balustrade, above which there were metal grates that could be partly opened. This was obviously a *sacellum* erected to cover and thereby consecrate the well in which the *sortes* were supposed to have been found; Cicero called it a *locus saeptus religiose*.

The axial staircase allows access to the next level, which is called the **Terrazza dei Fornici a Semicolonne** because of the presence, along its northern side, of a series of rooms framed by Ionic semicolumns (FIG. 158:5). The **Terrazza della Cortina** follows, which is both higher and more spacious (FIG. 158:6). This, together with the adjacent buildings, formed the upper sanctuary, which opened to the south toward the valley, while the other three sides were bordered and enclosed by a porticus consisting of a double row of Corinthian columns. A roof over the porticus masked its two parallel barrel vaults.

The *cavea* of a theater, with a diameter of approximately 59 meters, rises at the center of this level on the north (FIG. 158:7). Underneath the *cavea* ran a cryptoporticus, which was entered through six arches framed by Ionic semicolumns. Two large vaulted niches (each with a fountainhead at the center), framed by Corinthian pilasters, were installed at the ends of the *cavea*. The steps of the *cavea* were destroyed in the fourteenth century. Those that we now see are largely restorations dating to the seventeenth century, when this part of the sanctuary was transformed into a palazzo. The wellhead in the center of the stairs dates to the same period. At the top of the stairs, the bases of the Corinthian columns that formed the porticus can still be seen. This structure, with its double row of columns, occupied the *summa cavea*. The bases of the central row of columns, as well as the back wall, are visible inside Palazzo Barberini, as is the pavement on which they stood. At the back of the entrance hall are substantial portions of the foundation (viewed more easily from the floor above) that supported the circular temple, which concluded the upper section of the sanctuary (FIG. 158:8).

The chronology of Praeneste's sanctuary has long been debated, but canonical dating of the complex to the reign of Sulla is no longer supportable; the complex clearly dates to the last years of the second century BC. That the people of Praeneste enjoyed an especially important, perhaps even a privileged, position among the merchants trading in the East from the last decades of the second century and during the reign of Sulla is certain. This fact explains, at least in part, how it was possible to rebuild the sanctuary on such a monumental scale.

The sanctuary of Praeneste, together with the slightly later sanctuary of Hercules Victor in Tivoli, is one of the greatest examples of Italian Hellenistic architecture, evidently inspired by models from the eastern Aegean such as those on Rhodes and Cos, but constructed with the local technique of *opus caementicium*.

The Museum

Since 1953 the Museo Archeologico Prenestino has been housed in Palazzo Barberini, displaying materials from local collections, from the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome, and from recent excavations. The museum was radically reorganized in 1996. It is best to proceed from the entrance room (no. 4) directly to the last room of the left wing (no. 1) and begin the visit there.

FIRST FLOOR

Room 1. In this room is the large marble head, a late Hellenistic original from the end of the second century BC, belonging to the cult image of Fortuna, which once stood near the well of the *sortes*. The small sculpture with two headless figures on a *ferculum* (litter) represents the cult statues of the two Fortunes of Praeneste, one of which was portrayed as a matron, the other as an Amazon, with her right breast exposed. At the back of the room is a large statue in gray marble, lacking the parts of the body that were exposed; these would have been executed separately in white marble. This is a good example of late Hellenistic sculpture from Rhodes, perhaps to be identified as the cult statue of Isis.

Room 2. On display here are three important statues of women in Greek marble (the heads are unfortunately missing), which are original Hellenistic works dating from the end of the second to the beginning of the first century BC. They

are probably ex-voto offerings carved locally by Greek sculptors and then erected in the Terrazza della Cortina, where they were discovered. Among the works displayed here is the marble head of a woman wearing a characteristically Hellenistic melon-shaped hairstyle.

Room 3. A group of interesting portraits is displayed here. Particularly noteworthy are the head of a man from the Republican period (middle of the first century BC); a man dressed in a toga and another wearing a *lorica* (cuirass), both headless and from the Imperial period; and a statue of a figure in heroic nudity (which could also represent a divinity). Several inscribed bases exhibited here must have held statues of important Praenestine citizens.

Back in the atrium, a small room (at the center toward the rear) contains an important Imperial marble group, representing the Capitoline triad (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva). The group, dated to the Antonine period, comes from a villa near Tivoli (Guidonia).

The visit continues in the rooms of the right wing.

Room 5. This room is devoted to works of the Augustan period. Of considerable importance is the relief on a slightly curved surface that represents a *cinghiale* (wild boar) nursing its young in a woodland landscape. Discovered recently in the excavations of the lower city, the work is part of the same series as the two Augustan "Grimani reliefs" (now in Vienna), whose provenance can thus also be traced to Palestrina. A marble altar from the age of Tiberius, dedicated to Divine Augustus, shows the deified emperor between two cornucopias from which garlands hang. The two marble bases with garlands suspended from bucrania and dedicated by the *decuriones* and the people of Praeneste to the *Securitas* and *Pax Augusta* are also noteworthy. The gigantic head of Augustus displayed was part of a large cult statue.

Room 6. This room is devoted to Imperial works. A striking relief, recently discovered in the lower city, depicts Trajan's Parthian triumph. There is also a beautiful female portrait of the Flavian age, as well as the colossal head of Faustina the Elder, the wife of Antoninus Pius, found together with the head of Augustus displayed in Room 5; the two statues must have originally been placed in a temple of the Imperial cult.

Room 7. This room features epigraphic documents. Among the most important items are an inscription of the *Aere(tinae) Matronae* (the matrons of Eretum), datable to the third century BC, and a cippus inscribed with the names C. Magulnius Scato Maxs(imus) and C. Saufeius Flaccus, praetors of the city, who are depicted in the act of consecrating an object, probably a statue, to a divinity.

Room 8. On display here are documents related to the other Praenestine cults, including dedications to *Iuno Palostcaria* (perhaps a *Iuno Palustris*, related to *Iuno Caprotina* of Rome) and to Hercules, dating to the second century BC. The dedication to Jupiter Dolichenus and two statuettes of Cybele and Mithras attest the presence of Eastern cults in Praeneste. A Republican marble relief of a battle scene is also of interest.

SECOND FLOOR

The visit begins in the rooms on the right.

Room 9. This and the following rooms (10 and 11) house material from tombs of the necropolis of Praeneste that dates to the middle Republic; the cippi displayed in Room 10 also come from this cemetery. The furnishings (*cistae*, bronze mirrors, bathing equipment, toilet articles in wood and ivory, and ceramics) were buried with the corpses in tufa sarcophagi and urns. An important group of cylindrical and oval *cistae* and mirrors with incised figures is exhibited in this room, with some small strips of carved bone and part of a casket with representations of gods. Three bronze plates represent a seated Hercules, a warrior battling an Amazon, and Athena in the act of slaying a giant. The cover of a large sarcophagus in the form of a roof and made of peperino comes from the necropolis of the Colombella (FIG. 156:16) and dates to the fourth century BC.

The left wing is devoted to the sanctuary of Hercules located outside the city (FIG. 156:15) and to its architectural

decoration.

Rooms 12 and 13. The sanctuary of Hercules lies in the suburban region of the city near the Church of S. Rocco; excavation of the site was undertaken as early as the eighteenth century. The sanctuary belonged to a commercial cult associated with a cattle and sheep market (*forum pecuarium*). The remaining structures, in *opus caementicium*, date to a second-century BC renovation, but the sanctuary certainly was already in existence during the archaic period. From here comes, among other things, the fragment of a frieze with a chariot race, datable to about 530 BC. Two cippi with dedicatory inscriptions dating to the third century BC must have held bronze statuettes of Hercules. Numerous terracotta votive objects were recovered from the site—human heads, statuettes, anatomical parts of the human body, and animals—all dating between the fifth and the second centuries BC.

Room 14. The rich and diverse architectural terracottas testify to the city's striking number of temples and shrines. The oldest examples, datable to the last decades of the sixth century BC, come from sanctuaries in the lower city (that of Hercules near S. Rocco and another sanctuary near the Church of S. Lucia), including a triumphal scene depicting leaders of the local aristocracy. The series of antefixes and revetments, dated between the fifth and second centuries BC, is most impressive. Especially interesting is the fragment of a frieze representing the struggle between an Arimaspus and a griffin, dating to the end of the fourth century BC.

THIRD FLOOR

Rooms 15 and 16. At the back of the room is the large polychrome mosaic that was originally on the floor of the apsidal hall (probably the Iseum or the Serapeum). This and the mosaic depicting the Battle of Alexander discovered in Pompeii are the largest Hellenistic works of this sort to come down to us. The Praeneste mosaic, dating to the last years of the second century BC, is a sort of large-scale perspective map of Egypt, represented at the moment of the Nile's flooding. On the other side of the room there is a large model reconstruction of the Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia.

The Lower City

The large rectangular area below the oldest city—a plateau bordered by Via degli Arcioni on the north, the present-day Via Prenestina on the south, the Valle dello Spedalato on the east, and the Valle dei Sardoni on the west—was the site of a rather large settlement, which is generally recognized as the Sullan colony founded after 82 BC. It seems likely, however, that the city had already extended to this area in the preceding decades, when the rebuilding of the sanctuary and the monumentalization of the area around the forum took over a considerable part of old Praeneste.

The archaic and middle Republican necropolis of the city was south of this area, in La Colombella. At its southern end, now partly incorporated in the modern cemetery, are the remains of a large villa. Several of its vaulted rooms in *opus mixtum*, datable to the first half of the second century AD, are visible. The identification of the property as an **Imperial villa** of Hadrian is secure. In fact, the famous Antinous Braschi, now displayed in the Sala Rotonda of the Musei Vaticani, was discovered here in 1793. This was likely the villa that once belonged to Augustus, the place which Tiberius loved to visit and where he once became seriously ill.

Still farther south, along the street of Valmontone, are remains of the **Basilica of S. Agapito**, the city's patron saint.

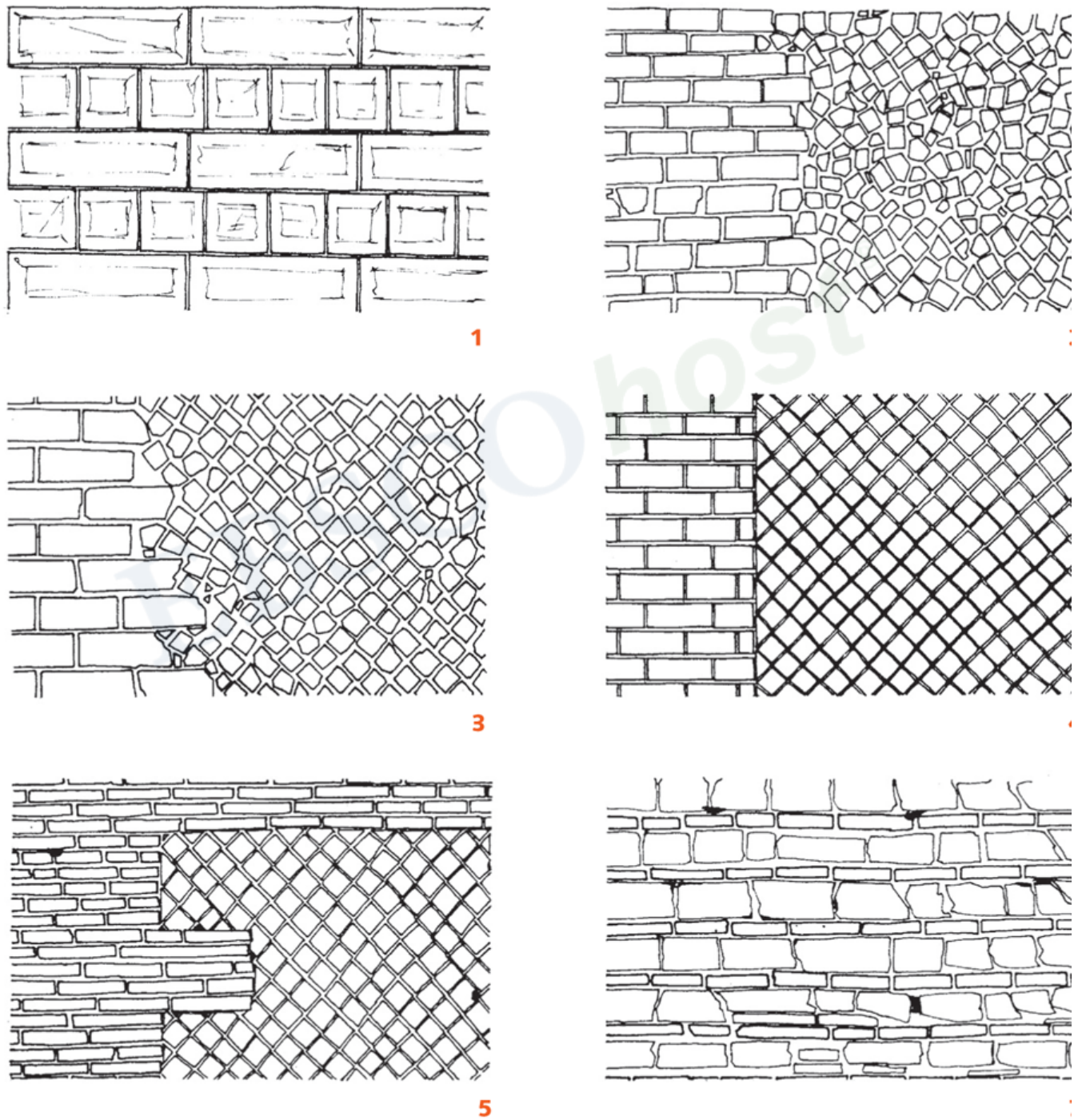


FIGURE 159. Wall types. **1** *Opus quadratum*. **2** *Opus incertum*. **3** *Opus quasi reticulatum*. **4** *Opus reticulatum*. **5** *Opus mixtum*. **7** *Opus vittatum*. (Not shown: *Opus latericium*.)

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