RESURVEYING THE RELIGIOUS TOPOGRAPHY
OF THE TIBER ISLAND

By

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This thesis is dedicated to Mom, Dad, Clay, William G. & Anna Bevis, and ID & Annie-Mell Bruce.
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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

RESURVEYING THE RELIGIOUS TOPOGRAPHY OF THE TIBER ISLAND

By

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Chair: Robert Wagman
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This project brings together a survey of various architectural and historical elements of the Tiber Island based on the most up-to-date research available on the site. This body of research consists of a) a thorough treatment of the scant ancient sources, which refer to the island, b) a selection of archaeological evidence over the past several centuries, c) pictorial representations of the island, d) examination of the epigraphical evidence from the site, e) a physical survey conducted in the summer of 2003.

Through a reappraisal of these sources, I was able to clarify certain aspects of the island’s history, most notable of which are the complete set of column measurements in the Basilica of St. Bartholomew, the most comprehensive to-date study of the Tiber Island obelisk, measurements and conclusions concerning the herm imbedded in the G.G. Belli monument, pictorial evidence of the foot of the Pons Fabricius, and the discovery of four previously unpublished inscriptions.

I organized this work to include a complete history of the structures existing on the island today and the former structures which remain only partially or have been obliterated completely. While the scope of this thesis is, by no means, exhaustive, it presents the most current topographical survey of the Tiber Island from antiquity to the present day including some new material, previously unknown to scholars, and a reinterpretation of existing material on the site.
INTRODUCTION

The Island and its Importance

The Tiber Island is a small strip of land (ca. 200m. x 50m.) in the bend of the Tiber River south of the Campus Martius and just west of the Palatine hill (see Figs. 1 & 2). Its position provided for early settlers a natural land bridge across the river and a means of fording cattle from the nearby Forum Boarium. The presence of the island may have even been the impetus for the founding of the city.

The sources tell us very little about the history of the island. According to legend, the island did not even exist prior the end of the monarchy (Livy 2.5.2-4). However, most scholars agree that the island must have formed long before the first settlement of the area.¹ The sources may date the formation of the island to such a late date to explain why it is not mentioned in the early legends (Holland 1961, p.180-81).

The island first gained historical significance during the third century BC when the Romans imported the Greek god, Asklepios, to Rome to end a plague and placed his temple there. Though it is not indicated in the sources, scholars believe religious activity must have existed on the island in earlier times. From the third century, the island became completely dominated by the healing cult of

¹ The legend and the geology of the island’s origin is covered in the following chapter.
Asklepios. This Greek god, in his Roman manifestation as Aesculapius, replaced a host of minor local deities associated with healing.

From these early beginnings, the island continued to exercise its function as a healing center throughout the end of the classical world and the Middle Ages into modern times. The contemporary hospital of the Fatebenefratelli, which occupies today the northern half of the island, marks the arrival point of almost two and a half millennia of unbroken medical tradition.

**Previous Work**

The sources concerning the Tiber Island are numerous and confusing. Often the ancient authors appear as confused as we are about the complex history of this site. Their accounts are generally vague, and long spans of time go unaccounted for. The first mention of the island in literature doesn’t occur until Livy (2.5.2-4).

Several attempts have been made to collate this large body of material.

The most comprehensive work on the island, *L’Ile Tibérine* by Maurice Besnier, dates back to 1902. A doctoral dissertation for the University of Paris, it covers in more than 350 pages all the literary and archeological data available at the turn of the twentieth century. *L’Ile Tibérine* is the starting point for all later studies on the island and remains still today the standard reference on the subject. A hundred years after its publication, however, Besnier’s work is in need of a substantial revision. Since the early twentieth century, new interpretative studies and fresh archeological evidence have appeared which shed new light on the island’s history and topography.

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2 See chapter on St. John of God and the Fatebenefratelli.
Margaret Brucia, a Latin Teacher at Port Jefferson Public School in Huntington, New York and a visiting scholar to the American Academy in Rome in 2002, also made the island the subject of her doctoral dissertation (1990). Brucia’s work, which relies on the innovative research of twentieth-century topographers such as Holland and Castagnoli, adds a more contemporary interpretative dimension to Besnier’s nineteenth-century style Quellenforschung. Also, the scope of her study is extended to the Medieval history of the site. Despite these merits, Brucia’s work fails to produce a study of the island as complete and systematic as Besnier’s. Unlike her predecessors’, her research is not founded on a strong archaeological background and is often marred by omissions and oversights. (Most obvious among these, her unawareness of the 1970-1978 excavations in the northern sector of the island.)

Besnier and Brucia’s are the only monographic treatments of the Tiber Island available to date. When used together, they provide a fairly comprehensive account of modern research on the island from the nineteenth century to the 1960’s. For more current information, one must turn to the relevant entries in E.M. Steinby’s monumental Lexicon Topographicum Vrbis Romae (Rome, 1993-2000.)

Outside the range of strictly academic publications, Fabrizio Plateroti’s recent guidebook Isola Tiberina (published for the 2000 Jubilee by the Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca della Stato), provides a concise but valuable reference on this still largely unexplored site. Though it lacks the traditional scholarly apparatus of references, footnotes, and indexes, this booklet succeeds in compiling a vast array
of information on the island’s architectural and artistic patrimony, ranging from Roman times to the present day. Plateroti’s work explains the chronicle of the island in the context of what can be seen on the site today, this style largely served as a template for this present work.

The present thesis has its origins in a seminar on Roman archeology directed by Professor Robert Wagman in the Fall of 2002. During the summer term of the same academic year, I was assigned to work at the Tiber Island as Wagman’s field assistant. This thesis brings together the results of my own experience at the site with those of several months of reading about the island’s history and topography. In it, I present a revised topographical survey of the island and its monuments based on research not included by Besnier and Brucia. For the most part (although not always), I chose to arrange my topographical discussions in reverse chronological order, i.e., working my way from present to past, through the various historical periods attested at the island (Contemporary, Modern, Early Modern and Medieval, Classical.) Two appendices, containing (a) the first complete survey of the Roman architectural elements reused in the Basilica of St. Bartholomew and (b) five new epigraphical fragments discovered during the 2003 fieldwork season, follow the main text.
1) The island’s aspect today.

2) The island during the nineteenth century, including the ‘isoletta,’ perhaps another alluvial formation. 1893 Lanciani.
CHAPTER 1
GENERAL BACKGROUND

Legends of the Island’s Origin

Scholars have long debated whether the island was of alluvial formation, *i.e.* formed from the accumulation of sediment washed down by the Tiber, or was carved by the river out of the volcanic tufa ridge which forms the nearby Palatine Hill. Unfortunately, geologists had not taken such an interest in the dubious origins of the island until recently. Drillings (up to 50m. deep) have revealed the island’s formation was alluvial, and it was formed from the accumulation of sandstone mud over the millennia (Plateroti 2000, p.5).

According to the ancient sources, the Romans also seemed to think that the island was of alluvial formation. Various sources give similar accounts of an accumulation of sediment formed in the center of the Tiber during a turbulent period of Roman history.

Livy (2.5.1-4) relates the period of transition between the end of Roman monarchy and the beginning of the Republic (*ca.* 509 BC), when Tarquinius Superbus, the last Roman king, was expelled from power:

*De bonis regiis, quae reddi ante censuerant, res integra refertur ad patres. Ibi uicit ira; uetuere reddi, uetuere in publicum redigi. Diripiendra plebi sunt data, ut contacta regia praedia spem in perpetuum cum iis pacis amitteret. Ager Tarquiniorum qui inter urbem ac Tiberim fuit, consecratus Marti, Martius deinde campus fuit. Forte ibi tum seges farris dicitur fuisse matura messi. Quem campi fructum quia religiosum erat consumere, desectam cum stramento segetem magna uis hominum simul immissa corbibus iudicere in Tiberim tenui fluentem aqua, ut medidis caloribus solet. Ita in uadis haesitantes frumenti aceruos sedisse inlitos limo; insulam inde paulatim, et aliis quae fert temere*
Concerning the royal goods, which before they voted them to be given over, the whole matter is reported to the Senate. Thereupon, anger took over; they forbade them to be returned and they forbade them to be rendered to the state. They had to be laid waste and were given over to the plebs, so that the regal booty having been appropriated might send away any hope of peace with them [the Tarquins] forever. The land of the Tarquins, which was between the city and the Tiber, was consecrated to Mars, thence it was [known as] the Campus Martius. By chance, it is said, there was a crop of grain ready to be harvested. What produce of the field, because it was taboo to consume, was cut, and, at once, a large force of men was sent to scatter the crop, with the straw in baskets, into the Tiber flowing with a weak current, as it is accustomed [to be] in the middle of the summer. Thus in the shallows the crops, clumping in heaps, settled, smeared with mud. Thence, little by little, the island, with other things added which the river brings in the same spot, was formed; afterwards, I believe, more was added and was helped by hand, so that the eminent area might be stable enough for temples and porticoes to be supported.

All of Tarquinius’ possessions were confiscated and distributed among the plebs. The Senate possibly did this in order to curry favor with the lower classes and destroy any chance of a resurgence of the royal family. Among the royal spoils was the land *inter urbem ac Tiberim* (2.5.2), which was then consecrated to Mars, as the Campus Martius.1 Here grew a large supply of grain planted by the Tarquins. On account of a taboo which Livy doesn’t explain, it would have been sacrilegious for the new Republican authorities to distribute the grain for consumption, so they reaped the harvest and cast it into the Tiber. Livy reports that this happened during the summer, while the water level was extremely low, so the grain did not wash away, but clumped with the mud, collected silt, and slowly grew into a landmass in the middle of the river. Thence the island was born, a new stretch of land from the cursed spoils of the former monarchy.

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1 The name, Campus Martius, in early times, referred to the area between the Capitoline, Quirinal, and Pincian hills, and the Tiber. After Augustus divided the city into fourteen regions, the Campus Martius was restricted to Region IX (Platner & Ashby 1929, s.v. “Campus Martius”).
Livy’s story is dubious. Livy even concedes the unlikelihood that an island (even one as small as the Tiber Island) could form from a clump of mud in less than three-hundred years (535-510 BC [Tarquinius’ traditional reign] – 292/291 BC [Aesculapius temple constructed]):

Postea credo additas moles manuque adiutum, ut tam eminens area firmaque templis quoque ac porticibus sustinendis esset.

Afterwards, I believe, material was added, and it was aided by hand, so that the area might stand out (of the water) and also be firm enough to support temples and porticos.

(2.5.4)

Livy is evidently passing on the tradition handed down to him. However, no previous mention of the island is made anywhere in the literary or in the epigraphical evidence. Though we have other later sources, no other explanation is given for the island’s origin other than the tale we find in Livy.

Dionysios of Halycarnassus also relates the legend of the island’s formation. His version differs only in that he claims the land had been dedicated to Mars much earlier by the Romans’ ancestors but had been appropriated by Tarquinius. Dionysios’ account is supported by the existence of an archaic Ara Martis in campo, the earliest cult center of Mars in Rome (Platner & Ashby 1929, Campus Martius). This altar is mentioned by Festus (189) in a citation of the regal laws of Numa. The fact that the land must have been sacred to Mars long before the Tarquins would explain the mysterious taboo to which Livy alludes.

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2 The Campus Martius was often referred to simply as campus (cf. Liv. xl. 52. 4; Cic. Cat. ii. 1. 1; Iuv. ii. 132; Hor. Carm. iii. 1. 11; Ov. Fast. ii. 860; iii. 519).

3 See above.
Another source for the formation of the island is Plutarch (Publicola 8, 1-8). His detailed account parallels Livy’s closely. Plutarch, however, implies that the destruction of the Martian grain was part of an effort to leave ἀργὸν παντάπασι τὸ χορίον...τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἀκαρπον (the field totally idle and fruitless for the god). This area was used for the training of Roman troops and other forms of military gathering. For example, returning armies were not allowed to enter the city, and generals awaiting triumph would remain with their troops in the Campus Martius.

The legend of the discarded grain crop may have a symbolic significance. The ritual discharge of unwanted matter in the Tiber usually marks the end of a cycle. Here, the disposal of the Tarquin’s grain would mark the end of Etruscan domination and the birth of an independent Republic, perhaps symbolized by the birth of the Tiber Island.

This tradition continued even well into the ninth century when Formosus, then bishop of Porto (another important character in the history of the island to be discussed later), was removed from his papacy. He was killed, exhumed, mutilated, and his remains were also cast into the Tiber.

**Legend of Aesculapius' Arrival from Epidauros**

Aesculapius is the Romanized name of Asklepios (Ἀσκληπιός), the Greek god of healing (see Fig.3).

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4 cf. Hor. Carm. iii.7.25-27.
6 For more about Formosus, see chapter on Basilica di San Bartolomeo.
7 cf. Some early inscriptions from the Tiber Island show the original Doric form, Αίσκλαπιός, represented as “Aiscolapios” / “Aisculapius.” CIL VI.12, 30846, 30842.
During the late third century BC, a plague had been ravaging *simul urbem atque agros*. The elders consulted the Sibylline books for a possible cure (Livy 10.47.1). They decided that they must send a pilgrimage to Epidauros, the seat of the godhead of Asklepios, and return to Rome with the cult image.9

The nature or cause of the plague is unknown. Ovid (*Met.* 15. 627) reports that the disease affected the blood. Livy specifies that the cult image must be brought *ab Epidauro Romam*, since several other centers of Asclepian worship existed in Greece (namely in Pergamum, Kos, Corinth, Athens, and Crete). Valerius Maximus believes that there already existed a cult of Aesculapius in Italy during the late third century. In his version (1.8.2), the returning envoy stopped fifty miles south of Rome in Antium, where the god visited an existing sanctuary of his.10 The existence of an early Asclepieum in Antium is not in contradiction to the legend. Even if a form of Aesculapian worship had been present in Italy already, the *numen* needed to be imported from Greece to end the plague.

According to Ovid, the Greek priests were reluctant to yield their deity to the Roman envoy. Asklepios was not an omnipresent god but must reside in one place at a time. Undoubtedly, the actual presence of the god at the Epidauros sanctuary brought a certain prestige to the priests as well as revenue from the frequent pilgrimages. Brucia (1990, p.96-97) focuses on Ovid’s phrase, *non emittere opem* (*Met.* 15.650). *Ops* could simply mean ‘help,’ as *auxilium* in line 8 Ovid’s version tells us instead an oracle was sent to Delphi, the oracle of Apollo (a god traditionally associated with disease), whereupon Apollo himself instructed the delegation to seek *nec Apolline vobis…, sed Apolline nato* (*Met*.15.631).

9 The Epidaurian sanctuary was established ca. 370 BC during the Peloponnesian war during similar circumstances of severe pestilence.

10 Ovid also mentions a pit-stop in Antium on the envoy’s return to Rome. The existence of the Antium Asclepieum is still debated today by scholars.
649, or it could take the meaning which is more commonly used in the plural, “resources, wealth.” Brucia asserts that, through a subconscious transferral, Ovid might be alluding here to the profitable nature of Asclepian worship on the island.

Despite the unwillingness of the Epidaurian priests, according to Ovid, the god appeared in a dream to the Roman embassy, Quintus Ogulnius, and assured him that he planned to leave his seat in Epidauros and move to Rome. The god appeared in the form of a bearded man holding a staff in his left hand with a serpent entwined around it, the image which has since been the symbol of western medicine.11

The following day, the Romans took Asklepios, in the form of a giant snake, onto their ship to return to Rome. Ovid (15.694) makes a point of describing how the ship sank considerably under the weight of the god.

As they were sailing up the Tiber, the ship approached the final bend between the Aventine and Trastevere, and the snake slipped out of its amphora and jumped overboard swimming into the canebrakes of the Tiber Island. This omen marked the official seat of the worship of Aesculapius on the island. Here, Livy states (10.47.7), a temple was erected in 291 BC.

Ovid’s account is clearly a reflection of the foundation legend (or κτίσις) of the Tiber Island Asclepieum. The island would have been a natural choice as a refuge for the extremely ill. Throughout the Republic, this site remained outside the official boundaries of the city. Its physical and religious separation from the

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11 The caduceus with its winged staff and two intertwined serpents, frequently misused as a medical emblem, is without medical relevance. It represents the wand of Hermes, or Mercury, the messenger of the gods and the patron of trade. See LIMC v.II.2. 1981, p.631-669 s.v. “Asklepios” for the iconography of the god of medicine.
city made an ideal quarantined environment for the cure of contagious diseases. Also, the island contained a natural spring which provided a strong incentive for the placement of the Asclepian complex. Groundwater was an indispensable component of ancient medical sanctuaries. The ancients believed in its natural healing properties, and it provided a means of sanitation.

**General Information on Asklepios / Aesculapius and His Cult**

The healing cult of the Greek god, Asklepios, was a combination of medicine and religion. Doctor-priests performed religious rites, prescribed medicine, and even performed surgery. However, the Asclepiea were mostly known for their miraculous cures.

The ill often came as suppliants to the sanctuary seeking a miracle. Many travelled great distances in hope of a cure. The healing process was initiated at nightfall when the patient was sleeping. Sleep may have been induced by drugs or hypnosis. Patients would have been also exhausted from their journey and illness. Religious rites were performed, during which the sick man or woman would be anointed by oil and / or even licked by dogs and snakes, animals which were both sacred to Asklepios.

The god would come to the faithful in a dream, as a bearded man with a staff, or in his theriomorphic guise as a giant serpent. He would then prescribe a plan for treatment or simply perform a miraculous cure. As recorded in the ἰάματα, or cure inscriptions, his interaction with his suppliants could be very casual and sometimes humorous. He made requests from some, but usually granted mercy even to the irreverent. The accounts of these miraculous cures were
recorded on large στήλαι which were later set up in public areas for the visitors to read.12

Because of the superposition of later structures all over the island, very little archeological evidence is available about the temple and its adjoining subsidiary buildings. Until a systematic excavation can be made, a plausible template for the general design of the island Asclepieum is, of course, the mother-sanctuary, Epidauros.

**Epidauros as a Model for the Tiber Island and Other Asklepia**

The nucleus of the Asclepian sanctuary at Epidauros comprised three buildings: the temple of the god, the sacred dormitory, or abaton, and the mysterious round building known as the tholos (thymele). Unlike a site as stratified as Rome, where several archaeological layers survive on top of one another, Epidauros is an unencumbered archaeological site set apart from modern civilization. The ruins, though pillaged of much of their original material, preserve the original fourth-century BC foundations (see Fig.4). Several other buildings dot the landscape including a well-preserved theater designed by Polykleitos.13

**Temple**

The temple was built in the fourth century by the architect, Theodotos. Its dimensions were small, *ca.* 23m. x 11.75m., with six columns in front and eleven along the sides. Tomlinson observes that, since the columns stood in direct

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12 See the section on the Abaton for examples of the miracle cure inscriptions.
13 The cult of Asklepios also included artistic and athletic contests. The theater may have been built to accommodate contests and performances, which may have been held at the sanctuary long before any construction on the site (Tomlinson 1983, p.85).
alignment with the axes of the alternating triglyphs above, the columns must have
stood perfectly upright, and their inclination was not altered for the sake of optical
illusions like many other fifth-century temples (1983, p.58). This may be due to
the small size of the temple and to a need for quicker construction. The floor is
composed of white and black marble slabs. Throughout the temple were also
inlays of ebony, ivory, and gold.

Inside the cella stood the cult statue of Asklepios, made of gold and ivory.
Pausanias (2.27.1) tells us that the artist was Thrasymedes, a Parian, the son of
Arignotus, and that the size of the statue was half as big as the Zeus at Olympia,
which is believed to have been about seven times life-size, 13m. (or 42 feet). The
god sat holding a staff entwined by his sacred snake, and the figure of a dog lay
by his side. The snake, the dog, and the cock were animals closely associated with
Asklepios which all played a role in the healing rituals.

Fortunately, an inscription survives from the site which details the
materials and costs of construction. The Asklepios temple was funded from the
city treasury in combination with generous gifts from healed suppliants. Its very
presence indicates the prosperity of Epidauros, since a temple is not a necessary
component of the healing ritual (Tomlinson 1983, p.55). Decoration was minimal
and most of the material was rather inexpensive. The roof tiles were made of
terracotta, and there were marble gutters with carved lion-head water spouts
surrounding the perimeter. The metopes lacked sculptural decoration but were
probably painted. The pediments, however, were elaborately decorated with
marble sculpture. An Athenian sculptor, Hektoridas, depicted the fall of Troy on

14 IG II² 4960
the eastern pediment. The western pediment was sculpted by another Athenian man whose name is only partially preserved in the inscription as Theo-. He depicted a battle between the Greeks and the Amazons. Above each of the pediments were acroteria of terracotta.

The foundation stands on top of an earlier foundation from a lesser structure which may have been related to the previous sanctuary of Apollo.\(^5\) The altar stands thirty meters from the temple’s entrance. It is not aligned to its central axis, being offset by the so-called ‘Building E,’ an early structure which scholars speculate may have been the original temple.\(^6\)

**Abaton**

The ἐγκοιμητηρίον, or ‘dormitory’ was the most essential element of the sanctuary. Its sacred, not utilitarian, character can be inferred from its other name, ὠβατον, ‘the inaccessible place.’ In this building, the sick patients slept to receive visions from the god. It was a long, narrow porticoed building in poros masonry, measuring 70m. x 9.5m. Its eastern half, constructed around the middle of the fifth century, was one story high. Prior to the construction of sleeping quarters, people may have brought their own temporary shelter or even slept outside. The southern side is open, facing the temple. The proximity of the abaton to the temple may be due to the fact that the god was supposed to visit the patients in their sleep. Sleeping directly in front of the temple, which is known to contain

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\(^5\) The sanctuary is reported to have begun in the sixth century BC as a precinct of Apollo. Prior to the worship of Apollo and Asklepios, inhabitants gathered on the plain during spring at the Sanctuary of Malos on Mt. Kynortion to celebrate regeneration and the end of winter. Apollo’s surname, Maleatas, attests to this early ritual.

\(^6\) Tomlinson (1983, p.73) suggests that Building E may have been “the original cult building for Asklepios, containing altar, shrine, and incubation room.”
not only the statue, but also the *numen* of the god, would have enhanced the healing experience and facilitated the expected cure dreams.

The western half of the abaton was added in the late second century to accommodate the increasing number of patients. This shows that the sanctuary did not suffer financially after the Roman confiscation of the *numen*. The addition was composed of two stories which conformed to the steeply sloped hill. This portion was accessed from a wide stairway cut into the southern side of the hill.

Under the porticoes of the abaton were displayed the inscriptions of cures received by suppliants. Most of the miraculous ones were outrageous and entertaining: A young girl was cured of dropsy by having her head severed from the body to drain the fluid and then reattached (*IG IV².122*). Another woman had to donate a silver pig as penance for her lack of faith (*IG IV².121*). People were cured from various ailments by the licking of dogs or snakes (*IG IV².121*). Some of the cures actually required the use of medical intervention, such as the use of drugs to cure blindness, the application of ointment to regenerate hair growth, or even surgery to remove a gastric worm (*IG IV².121/122*).

Several noticeable patterns emerge from the inscriptions: all of the cures are related to incubation and a direct encounter with the god. Asklepios displays the character of a mostly benevolent god who does not seek unreasonable

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17 Tomlinson hypothesizes that the construction was even as late as the Roman occupation of Greece (1983, p.68).
18 In fact, the sanctuary was wealthy enough to merit a looting by Sulla in 87 BC (Plut. Sull.12.6; Paus. 9.7.5). In the second century, Epidaurus again upsurged in popularity when also were added other deities: Ammon, Sarapis, and Isis.
19 For a full discussion, text, and translation of these remarkable inscriptions see LiDonnici *The Epidaurian miracle inscriptions*, 1995.
payment for his services. In fact, he often grants his help to people without charge because they showed extreme faith. Women were not permitted to give birth within the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{20} Several accounts are given of women who were pregnant for extended periods of time, even years.

A similar fragmentary inscription of miracle cures was also found on the Tiber Island (see Fig.5).\textsuperscript{21} The text is written in Greek, the official language of the cult. The accounts of the miracles on the island stela closely parallel the cure inscriptions of Epidauros. Fantastic cures and divine visions appear in almost every story. The first cure recorded on the stone is that of a blind man, named Gaius. He was prescribed by the oracle to go to the sacred podium to pay homage, then to move from right to left and place his five fingers on the podium. He raised his hands to his eyes, and he saw again.\textsuperscript{22}

A structure very important to the healing ritual stood at the north end of the abaton in Epidauros: the well or springhouse. Ground-water was believed to possess salutary properties and was used in the cult ritual for basic sanitary purposes. This well (measuring 17 meters deep) dates from the beginnings of the sanctuary in the fifth century BC. One of the earliest structures at the Epidaurian Asclepieum, it was later incorporated in the Abaton, with which it had close associations.

\textsuperscript{20} Pausanias 2.27.1
\textsuperscript{21} IG XIV 966. The inscription is now in the Naples Museum.
\textsuperscript{22} For a full discussion of the inscriptive text, see Guarducci. Epigrafia greca. v.A. Epigrafi sacre pagane e cristiane. 1978, p. 158-66.
**Tholos**

The most elusive building in the entire complex is the ‘tholos.’ This structure was, by far, the most elaborate and ornate piece of architecture in Epidauros. Circular in plan, the tholos was approached from the east by a ramp which traversed a three-step platform. The eastern face had a window on either side of the entrance.

Though its exact purpose is still not fully understood, the tholos must have been of great importance to the sanctuary, as the complexity of its floor plan and its sheer magnitude would indicate (nearly double the size of the temple, with a 20m. diameter). The columns were also much larger and more numerous. The structure is tiered by six concentric rings: Twenty-six Doric columns formed the outer peristyle. A solid wall formed the second ring, enclosing the structure and limiting the amount of sunlight to the inner circles. A third ring was composed of fourteen nonstructural Corinthian columns forming an inner colonnade.

Inside this colonnade were three concentric walls made of tufa. These walls had doors which provided access to the core of the building. However, the doors were arranged adjacent to barricades which required one to traverse the full circumference of the circle at each tier. The effect was a miniature labyrinth that would have been totally dark unless illuminated with torches. At the core of the tholos was a pit in which stood a beam with attached descending stairs. This elaborate design must have had a very important significance to the cult. The sources give us no clues about what rituals were performed there, nor do any parallel structures exist for comparison. Another tholos does exist in Athens, but it is not of such a grand scale, nor is it labyrinthine.
Such a mysterious and under-documented structure conjures a broad spectrum of hypotheses. Some suggested interpretations have been as follows: 1) The center of the tholos was a well (such as the Delphic inspirational well) for use in the healing ritual. 2) The center may have been a snake pit, as snakes were associated with medical practice since early times and were animals sacred to Asklepios. This area could have even been the dwelling place of the god, a pit for the giant Asclepian snake. 3) Others suggest that this was the site of a chthonic altar, to be used separately than the temple altar; or that the building could have been used for the initiation of the priests. A theory which would explain the uniqueness of this structure is that the central pit (and perhaps also the central pillar stairwell) was used in ritual reenactments of Asklepios’ descent into the underworld. With the exception of Heracles, few chthonic deities were so elaborately worshipped in antiquity.

Some scholars claim that the outer three rings were additions made between 360-320 BC, by the architect and sculptor, Polykleitos the Younger. Tomlinson dismisses this theory: “There is no doubt that, despite suggestions to the contrary, all six rings belong to one and the same building phase,” (1983, p.61). The outer layer is now being reconstructed as a part of an ongoing restoration project of the site.

Evidence of the Island Sanctuary

Whether or not the Tiber Island contained all the main constituent buildings of the Epidauros site, adapted to a reduced space, cannot be certain. The

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23 Asklepios was struck dead by Zeus’s thunderbolt for transgressing divine law by bringing a dead man back to life. Most sources claim Asklepios himself was brought back to life, having permission from the Fates to do so (Hygenus 251, 2; Ovid Meta. 2.647-48).
Epidaurian template had been successfully used before for the small Asclepieum on the southern slope of the Athenian Akropolis.24 The only structure we have literary evidence for is the temple, which appears to have stood in the southern half of the island, near the site occupied today by the Basilica of St. Bartholomew.25

It seems plausible that the design of the island temple was similar in style to that of an Etruscan temple (see Fig.6). In the third century, the Romans borrowed many of their building styles from their more technically advanced neighbors, the Etruscans.26 In fact, a painted antefix of terracotta, the traditional decorative material of Etruscan temples, was found in the Tiber, in close proximity to the island (see Fig.7). There is no evidence that this piece came necessarily from the temple of Aesculapius, but we have confirmation that this building style existed on the island during the early Republic.

The presence of an abaton or abaton-like building is also to be expected. Logically, the ill would have needed some form of shelter while they were awaiting their cure. In his account about the island’s origins, Livy refers to the existence of porticoed buildings at the site. Since the dormitories of Asclepian sanctuaries at Epidauros and elsewhere are all designed as colonnaded structures, we may assume that Livy is alluding here to the island’s abaton. Also, the Roman well which is still preserved in the Basilica of St. Bartholomew,27 points at the early presence of an Abaton in the site now occupied by the basilica, or in its

26 Throughout the Republic, Roman architecture was primarily Etruscan.
27 See related chapter below.
immediate vicinity. As discussed above, the Abaton and well house were closely associated in the original Epidaurian layout.28 The later healing establishments on the island all had some sort of dormitory for their patients.

No evidence exists for a tholos on the island. If we follow the Epidaurian model, this would have been the most expensive and perhaps the largest structure on the island. However, there is no reference to such a building on the island or in any of the other Asclepiea originated from Epidauros. Evidently, the tholos had a local relevance which non-Epidaurian architects did not understand or feel the need to replicate.

28 As well as at other Asclepian sanctuaries; see, e.g. the well in the Abaton of the Athenian Asclepieum (Travlos, Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens. 1971. s.v. Asklepion, p.138-41).
3) The healing god, Aesculapius, with his traditional cloak and staff.

5) Miracle cure inscriptions from the Tiber Island. *IG XIV* 966.

6) Terracotta antefix found in the Tiber nearby the island.
7) Etruscan temple design, as defined by Vitruvius.
CHAPTER 2
TOPOGRAPHY, PART 1

Access Structures

Although located outside the city’s pomerium, the island was never completely isolated from the urban fabric, but connected with it through the neighboring areas of the Campus Martius and the Forum Boarium. Scholars assume that the island was first joined to the east bank of the Tiber by means of a ferry, and later by a wooden bridge.1 In the first century BC, the latter was replaced by a permanent structure in stone.

Pons Fabricius

The eastern approach to the island is still spanned today by the Pons Fabricius, the oldest standing masonry bridge within the city of Rome (see Fig.8). The solid state of this bridge attests to the ingenuity of Roman engineers at the end of the Roman Republic. The Pons Fabricius was presumably built as a replacement for an earlier wooden structure (Platner & Ashby 1929, p. 400), but the evidence from Livy (35.21.15) is uncertain. Dedicated in 62 BC by Lucius Fabricius, the curator viarum,2 this bridge spans 62 meters. The three large arches are composed of tufa and peperino; travertine and Gabine stone3 face the ferrules (the reinforcement rings lining the circumference of the arches). On the northern end, where the bridge meets the monumental nineteenth-century retaining walls

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2 Cass. Dio. 37.45
3 a higher quality of non-local tufa.
on the shore of the Jewish Ghetto, the dilapidation of the later brick facing reveals the original tufa structure beneath. The walkway, now traveled only by pedestrians, is 5.6 meters wide and is paved with Sanpietrini (lit. Little St. Peters, the familiar volcanic cobblestones which cover most of the streets in Rome). The current ground level at the foot of the bridge is ca. 4.5 meters above the ancient stratum.

The island has been continually built up over time to circumvent erosion. As most modern building sites are fortified with red clay prior to the pouring of the foundation, the Romans imported fill dirt and other material to stabilize the land. Centuries of this practice have made the island higher than it was in ancient times. Thus, the foot of the bridge would have extended much further than is visible today. In the basement of the bar, L’Isola Antica, can be seen a rather large portion of the bridge’s foot. It now serves as a shelf for storing beer kegs, a blender, and coffee condiments (see Fig.9).

The pier, the central foundational support where the arches meet, is exceptionally wide (measuring 9m.). This figure is consistent with the traditional Roman ratio of 1:3 pier to single-arch-span. However, this ratio was a criterion for smaller bridges. Wide piers tend to accelerate the water flow on both sides, causing the erosion of the foundation, especially in times of high current (a common occurrence for the Tiber). Bridges which had wide piers have mostly fallen into ruin. The only Roman bridge with a wider pier was the large Ponte d’Augusto at Narni, which has collapsed since antiquity (O’Connor 1993, p.165).
The engineers of the Pons Fabricius took several measures to circumvent such problems. They installed a floodgate above the central pier which would allow better flow during periods of high river levels. The foundation is also fortified with large stone blocks in a wedge shape at the northern, or upstream, end, and with rounded ones on the downstream end, in order to achieve the best hydrodynamics. In the riverbed, a pile of rubble surrounds the foundation to slow down erosion.

The span is composed of two main arches measuring 24.25 and 24.5 meters, and one six-meter arch above the pier and flood gate. This central arch is decorated with engaged columns surmounted by ionic capitals. All three arches bear matching inscriptions on both sides. The inscription on the north side reads (see Fig.10):

\[
\begin{align*}
L \cdot FABRICIVS \cdot C \cdot F \cdot CVR \cdot VIAR \\
FACIVNDVM \cdot COERAVIT
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{Lucius Fabricius Caii filius curator viarum faciundum\textsuperscript{4} coeravit.}\textsuperscript{5}

Lucius Fabricius, son of Gaius, curator of roads oversaw the making (of this bridge).

Inscriptions on both sides above central arch complete the text of the dedication.

\textsuperscript{4} “In the 3rd and 4th conjugation, -undus prevails in Early Latin, with -endus perhaps by labial dissimilation; \textit{cf.} the distribution in the Lex de Repetundis, with repetundis 'extorted money to be reclaimes' beside tribuendei 'of apportioning', volvendus 'rolling', solvendo 'solvent'. It is well known that -endus first becomes the norm in Caesar's Lex Iulia Municipalis (Bruns, p.102ff.) [-45] and the Lex Coloniae Genetivae Iuliae Ursonensis (Bruns, p.122ff.) [-44].” –D.G. Miller 2001

\textsuperscript{5} ‘oe’ for ‘u’ \textit{cf.} Diehl 356.3ff.
The eastern face reads: and the western:

EIDEMQVE
PROBAVEIT

and the same man sanctioned it.

This same dedication is repeated verbatim on both sides of the two main arches. These inscriptions were made at the time of the bridge’s completion in 62 BC. The office of curator viarum was a high political position which handled the maintenance, not the construction of roads. However, road maintenance also encompassed the authority for the construction of bridges (O’Connor 1993, p.41). There were only six curatores viarum during the Republic, one of whom was Julius Caesar himself. The office became a common political stepping stone during the Empire, considering more than half of all curatores viarum went on to become consuls shortly after serving as highway commissioners.

Underneath the above discussed inscription is another smaller inscription reading:

M · LOLLIVS · M · F · Q · LEPI<N · M · F · C>OS · EX · S · C · PROBAERVNT

Marcus Lollius Marci filius Quintus Lepidus Marci filius consules ex senatus consulta probaverunt.

Consuls Marcus Lollius, son of Marcus, and Quintus Lepidus, son of Marcus, from a decree of the senate sanctioned (this bridge).

This inscription from 21 BC commemorates the bridge’s restoration after the destructive flood of 23. Dio (LIII.5) lists the flood with other strange events

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6 “Eidem is the older spelling, cf. the same formula in Oscan: isidum prüfatted [3sg] (Vetter 11.5ff. Pompeii), and a Latin inscription from Formiae with pl. eisdem: eisdemqae probaverunt (Diehl 373.3f.)”
which occurred simultaneously in the city: Rome was ravaged by fire and storm; she was turned into a πόλις πλωτή, ‘city [being] navigable by boats,’ by a flood, and a wolf was caught in the city. Others think the inscription does not specifically refer to a restoration but actually to a final approval of the bridge by the consuls. 7

To the left of this inscription are two rows of another inscription which has been scraped away; the dates of the inscription and obliteration are unknown. A similar deleted text also exists on the western face.

Two other small arches on the peripheries of the bridge exist, though hidden by modern superstructures. The arches are portrayed in two 1756 engravings by G. Piranesi (1989, p.486-87). Their presence was confirmed during an excavation conducted in the nineteenth century (see Fig.11), prior to the construction of the massive retaining walls which flank the banks of the Tiber, the so-called ‘muraglioni.’

The Pons Fabricius was partially restored in 1669 along with its west-channel equivalent, the Pons Cestius (see section below). An inscription by Pope Innocent XI commemorates the repair of the two bridges senio labentes onere laborantes ‘stressed from burden, falling with age.’

Ten years later, a chest-high parapet was added, constructed out of bricks and trimmed with travertine slabs. This new parapet presumably replaced a former bronze balustrade (Gazzola 1963, p.42). The evidence for this earlier railing rests, however, on the dubious origin of a pair of marble herms which are

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7 Hüelsen (Röm. Mitt. 1891, p. 136); also O’Connor (1993, p.66).
now cemented into the parapet. These sculptures, which are responsible for the bridge’s other name, “Ponte Quattro Capi” (or Four-Head Bridge), pose an interesting archaeological problem in themselves and must be discussed here in more detail.

The two herms visible today on the Pons Fabricius are cut in Luni Marble (see Fig. 12). Each has two aged, bearded faces and two youthful ones with curly hair. Along the sides of both are indentations (5cm. wide) which run vertically the length of each. Undoubtedly, these are the fittings for two metal railings, but the indentations are on adjacent sides of each herm rather than on opposites (as one would expect in the supports of this type of balustrade). As Holland (1961, p.216) observed, such an arrangement is more appropriate for the railing of a rectangular enclosure with herms at each of its four corners, rather than that of a bridge. We, in fact, know that, as early as 1697, there were two additional herms, and that the four stones were casually lying at the east entrance of the bridge.8 Fifty years later, Father Casimiro da Roma could see three of the herms in front of the nearby church of San Gregorio della Divina Pietà, and the fourth one is Piazza di San Bartolomeo on the island.9

Nowadays, only two herms survive. We have no physical evidence for the other two, nor are they mentioned by later writers. Holland suggests that one of the missing herms could be incorporated in the nearby monument to the Roman poet, G.G. Belli (see Fig.13).10 This is a travertine statue representing Belli as he

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10 G.G. Belli (1791-1863). His monument stands on the south side of Viale Trastevere, across the street from Ponte Garibaldi, unveiled on May 3rd, 1913. It is attributed to Tripisciano.
leans on the Pons Fabricius by one of the herms. Unlike the rest of the monument, the herm is made of marble. Can this actually be one of the missing herms from the bridge? Holland seems to think so, but a closer look at the carving of the sidelong groove reveals this sculpture to be a reproduction.11

The grooves of the bridge herms run the full length of the marble slabs. Instead, the groove on the Belli herm stops at the point of insertion where this sculpture is joined to the larger monument, showing that it was carved after the herm had already been set up (see Fig.14). Also, the Belli herm is 12cm. larger at the base than the herms on the bridge.

There is no conclusive evidence for what kind of monument the herms were originally a part of. The arrangement of the sidelong grooves suggests that they were corner elements from a small square or rectangular enclosure at the foot entrance to the Pons Fabricius. The two-headed god, Janus, was a common subject for herms of this type. As a god of passages, he had a “peculiar power over water” (Holland 1961, p.221) and would have been an appropriate deity at the foot of a bridge. This small shrine may have been a relic from early religious rites traditionally performed at water crossings.12

**Pons Cestius**

The island is reached from the west shore of the Tiber by the Pons Cestius (see Fig.15). Unlike the Pons Fabricius, this bridge has undergone massive alterations and cannot be appreciated today in its original form. The date of its construction

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11 One of Holland’s arguments in support of this herm’s authenticity is an interesting one: She writes that the new marble herm seems an expensive ornament for what she considers a budget statue.
12 Holland 1961, p.27; 50; 74; 175; 275 n.51; 341.
is uncertain but is generally accepted to be 46 BC (Gazzola 1963, p.42). Also uncertain is whether the sponsor of the project was Gaius Cestius Epulo (praetor in 44 BC) or Lucius Cestius (praetor in 43 BC), who was appointed to administrative duties while Caesar was on campaign in Spain. Neither Cestius appears in Ertman’s 1976 catalogue of *curatores viarum*.

Not much is known about the original Republican structure. Following severe flood damage, the Pons Cestius was restored in 152 by Antonius Pius to repair flood damage (*Inscr. It.* XIII.1, 207, 238). Between 365-370, it was dismantled and replaced by a completely new structure under emperor Valentinian I. The new bridge was built mostly from the ruins of the old bridge and from material taken from the nearby Theater of Marcellus. It was dedicated under the emperor Gratian and received the new name of Pons Gratiani (see Figs.16 & 17).

The Pons Gratiani consisted of one wide central arch of 23.7m. with two small arches of 5.8m. at the sides (Gazzola 1963, p.42). Its total length was 48 m. Along the parapet, it held a dedicatory inscription to Gratianus (*CIL VI*, 1175, 1176). On the side of the parapet opposite to the inscription, is a blank marble slab of the same size and shape, where twin inscriptions once stood. The block was loosed and tossed into the river in 1849 when defenders of the Roman Republic attempted to destroy the bridge (Leoni 2004).

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13 Degrassi more conservatively estimates the date of construction as “non molti anni dopo il *Pons Fabricius*,” (1993, p.108).
A second inscription, still visible on the bridge today, commemorates another extensive restoration in the twelfth century by Benedictus Carushomo, a Roman radical who had seized power from Pope Celestinus in 1191. On this inscription can be seen Carushomo’s self-proclaimed title, *Summus Senator* (see Fig.17). We cannot be certain what kind of repairs were made. Plateroti assumes only the parapets were withdrawn to widen the pathway (2001, p.72). Both the inscription and the bridge have been recently restored for the 2000 Jubilee.

The Pons Gratiani was also known as the *Ponte San Bartolomeo* after the basilica on the Tiber Island. Another name for the bridge was *Ponte Ferrato*, in reference to the iron rings attached to its sides where millers attached their floating granaries.15

The Pons Gratiani stood until 1889, when the west channel of the Tiber was artificially widened from 48 to 76m. To fit the new width, the old bridge was dismantled and rebuilt with two additional arches of the same span as that of the central arch of the earlier structure (13.7m.).

Of the original 563, 347 travertine blocks used came from the demolition of the old structure (Nash 1962, p.187). The entire bridge was faced with travertine, except the underside of the arches, where the tufa core is exposed. A toothed pattern of travertine stones makes up the ferrules. The ferrules of the central arch contain a few original stones, while the stones of the other two are all of modern making. The exposed tufa also has been cut flush. The bridge was completed in 1892.

15 See San Bartolomeo chapter for more about floating granaries.
The three-arch design had initial problems. Because of slow water flow, the two outer channels frequently became entrenched with mud. To circumvent the problem, the two passages had to be blocked off, or ‘chained,’ so that the current could be redirected again through the central channel (Gazzola 1963, p.42).

The Cestius is now the only bridge to the island which carries motor traffic. Its narrow width (8.2m.) allows for two lanes of traffic and a small walkway on either side. Much of the traffic consists of patients, hospital workers, and ambulances.

**Embankments and Ancient Wall Decoration**

The necessity of protecting the island from the Tiber’s frequent floods required the construction—and thereupon the frequent upkeep—of a double system of embankments which could be used in times of both low and high water. Nothing survives today of the lower tier of this system, which embraced the outer perimeter of the island just above the waterline. The elevated central part of the site, filled with imported dirt throughout the years, was enclosed by a more massive retaining wall in squared stone peperino masonry, the partial remains of which can still be seen today along the east shore of the island, near the Pons Fabricius and the island’s downstream end. The first wall fragment, which amounts to a total of seven blocks, survives immediately north of the bridge junction, measuring slightly above two meters in height (see Fig.18). The second fragment, at the southernmost extremity of the site, is more extensive (see Fig.19). It is almost exactly a meter higher than the first and contains ten more blocks. The stone is also peperino tufa, replaced in the upper tiers by another type of reddish
tufa, which could be either Anio or Monteverde. This difference in the building materials is due, in all likeliness, to a restoration. The date of the wall can be placed anywhere between the early second and the late first century BC.¹⁶

This section of the island’s embankment walls is covered to the south by a travertine revetment carved in the shape of a Roman battleship’s prow (see Figs. 20 & 21). On the ship’s flank, it is possible to see a much worn out bust of the god Aesculapius armed with his snake-entwined staff. A bull protome also projects immediately to the right of the Aesculapius figure. This monument, somewhat smaller than life-size (ca. 9.2 x 3.3m.), has remained in situ since the very time of its setup, probably in the first century BC.¹⁷ From the sixteenth century, it appears in the illustrations of countless artists, antiquarians, and cartographers (see Fig. 22). In all probability, it was this monument which originated the belief that the island was originally landscaped in the shape of a large stone boat, imitating the legendary warship in which, according to the tradition, the god Aesculapius had been transferred from Greece to Rome in the early third century BC. This fantastic design, for which no evidence exists in the ancient sources, included also an Egyptian obelisk functioning as the ship mast at the center of the island. Neither the ship revetment, which still survives at the southern end of the island, nor the fragments of the small obelisk which were retrieved in the square of St. Bartholomew (see below section on Island Obelisk), appear to match, however, the proportions required by such a landscape plan. It is

¹⁶ As surveyed by Wagman 2002-03.
¹⁷ For the only thorough examination of the monument, see Krauss. Rheinisches Museum 59, 1944, 159-172.
generally maintained nowadays that the island was shaped like a boat only at the upstream and downstream ends; but even in this revised configuration, all proportions seem to be off. Until additional evidence is produced, it is more prudent to interpret the ship revetment at the south end of the island as a standalone monument, possibly intended to greet upcoming river traffic as it prepared to enter the Tiber’s east channel from downstream.

**The Central and Southern Sectors of the Island.**

In antiquity, as in our day, a small road ran between the two bridges which connected the island to the river banks. South of this road, in the area now occupied by the square and the church of St. Bartholomew, was the site of the Temple of Aesculapius. Nothing remains of the ancient buildings, except for a few structures incorporated into the church, a fragment from an architrave, and fourteen column stems, preserved with some of the original bases. The presence of a Republican well shaft, also incorporated in the church, points at the existence of a well house in close proximity to the temple, perhaps associated with an Abaton, or sacred dormitory. A small obelisk, the fragments of which are scattered today among various European museums, appears to have decorated an open area in the middle of the island, perhaps in the same spot now marked by the nineteenth-century *Guglia* of I. Giacometti.

**The Square of St. Bartholomew and the Tiber Island Obelisk**

Piazza di San Bartolomeo is the only square on the Tiber Island. A roughly rectangular space with a pronounced southwards slope, the piazza is located along the south edge of the pathway which connects the two opposite banks of the island, in the area where the sanctuary of Aesculapius once stood.
The piazza’s centerpiece is the *Guglia*, or ‘Spire,’ a four-faced marble monument built in 1869 by Ignazio Giacometti (1819-1883), the official sculptor of Pope Pius IX. On its faces are depicted St. Bartholomew, whose remains are preserved in the nearby basilica; St. Adalbert, for whom the basilica was originally constructed; St. John of God, who founded the Fatebenefratelli Hospital on the other side of the island; and St. Francis, whose convent once flanked the piazza to the east.\(^\text{18}\) This small marble monument marks the center of the square and roughly the very navel of the island itself. Scholars believe that this is the spot where an Egyptian obelisk once stood at the front of the temple of Aesculapius.

Plateroti (2001, p.30) assumes that the placement of the obelisk was contemporary with the introduction of the cult of Aesculapius to Rome, perhaps along with construction of the temple (291 BC). This date is far too early to coincide with the archeological evidence. Most scholars agree that the placement of the obelisk coincided with the Roman conquest of Egypt. Besnier (1902, p.43) reports the existence of six known large obelisks and several other smaller ones which decorated the public areas of the city. He and Guarducci (1971, p.273) assume the Tiber Island obelisk was imported from Egypt some time during the early Empire.

Iversen (1968, p.179) does not believe that the obelisk is Egyptian at all, but a late Roman production. He interprets the remaining fragmentary engravings as “pseudo-hieroglyphic decorations [seeming] to represent some of the signs of the zodiac.” The top of the obelisk is rounded instead of pyramidal, and is circumscribed by winged sun-disks wrapped by cobras. Egyptian kings sit on

\(^{18}\) For a discussion of these structures, see below.
strangely decorated thrones, wielding scepters. Below each king is a centaur in stride, firing arrows. These are the only fragments which have been positively identified as remnants of the Tiber Island obelisk. The last known recorded witness of the obelisk while it was still in place was that of Bernardo Gamucci in his *Le antichità della città di Roma* based on observations he made in 1569. He also provides two woodcuttings representing the island but no depiction of the obelisk.

In 1676, excavators uncovered a large foundation of tufa, four and a half meters below the current level of the piazza. Archaeologists assumed this must have been the original foundation of the obelisk (Bellori 1676, p.41). A closer look at its construction revealed that it was from early Republican times. Bellori (1676, p.41) described the support base as *congeries tophorum*, ‘a heap of tufa.’ The apparently crude use of tufa, the great depth at which it lies, and the excessive size for what Gamucci (1569, p.180) described as a small obelisk prove that the support base was built for an earlier monument. No written or archeological evidence exists on what could have previously stood in front of the temple of Aesculapius.

Up to the middle of the last century, scholars also believed the Tiber Island obelisk represented a boat’s mast. This belief was based on the equally widespread idea that in ancient times the island had been landscaped in the shape of a trireme—a design intended to commemorate the Roman warship which delivered the image of Aesculapius from Greece in 291 BC (Livy 29.11). It is unclear when and how such a notion came into existence, as the ancient sources
on the Tiber Island mention nothing of the sort. Possibly, it was a late creation inspired partly from the physical configuration of the island itself, partly from a travertine revetment still visible at the island’s south end, which represents the stern of a ship. The idea of a stone boat floating in the middle of the Tiber appealed to the imaginations of artists and illustrators. Various maps and drawings from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries show the island as an oversized trireme with an Egyptian obelisk as its mast. Yet, neither the ship carving from the south end of the island, nor the extant fragments from an obelisk which once stood at its center, seem to fit the proportions which such a design would require.

The notion of a boat-shaped island with an obelisk as its mast was certainly in existence in the sixteenth century, since Gamucci knew of it (1569, p.180.) Gamucci expressed astonishment at how such a small obelisk was used to represent the mast of a ship as large as the island (current dimensions: approximately 270 X 70m.). However, from shore, even a large obelisk would have been difficult to see, since it would have been obstructed by the extensive construction on the island. Though there is some evidence that the island was adorned to represent a ship in a few areas, there is no proof that the piazza was in any way embellished to resemble a deck. Nothing would have made the island piazza look different from any other piazza embellished with an obelisk.

The Tiber Island obelisk was either dismantled or collapsed some time shortly after Gamucci saw it in 1569. Its remains have made their way all over

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19 See above section on the ship monument.
20 Possibly at the four points of access: upstream, downstream, and at the bridge landings on each bank.
Europe. Iversen traces the various and rumored travels of the separate fragments. Two pieces (still in the piazza of San Bartolomeo in the eighteenth century, where they were sketched by Piranesi (see Fig.23), were collected by Cardinal Borgia and put in the Museum of Velletri until his death in 1804, when they were joined with fragments from an authentic Egyptian relief and attached to the so-called Borgia obelisk in the Villa Albani. Besnier (1902, p.43), believes instead that fragments had already been mounted on the Borgia obelisk when they were moved to Villa Albani from Velletri. These two pieces were later taken to Paris, where they decorated the monument dedicated to General Desaix in the Place des Victoires, until they were finally transferred to the Louvre where they reside today. The Borgia obelisk went to München (Iversen 1968, p.181).

Two additional pieces can be accounted for. Besnier (1902, p.43) refers to a third fragment which was brought to Paris from the Villa Albani during the revolution and later moved to the collection of the King of Bavaria in München. A fourth and final fragment is reported in Naples by Nibby (1838, p.291). Platner and Ashby (1929, p.564) assume that these last two fragments are pieces from the rounded apex (now missing) as sketched by Pococke. Essentially, much of the information about the various remains of the obelisk is unclear and even contradictory.\footnote{Iversen refers specifically to the inventory of the Louvre, where the fragments of the Tiberine Obelisk are shown listed in deClarae, F. *Musée de Sculpture* II.175 Nos. 2-3. Text II. 162-63.} A systematic survey of the museums rumored to contain parts of the Tiber Island obelisk has not been conducted. Even if we were able to reconstruct it completely from the various fragments, the question remains...
whether the Tiber Island obelisk was originally conceived as a mast for the Aesculapian ship, or was just a stand-alone piece of late imperial kitsch.

In place of the obelisk, at an unknown date, a column was erected. This monument is shown in the etchings of Giuseppe Vasi, an eighteenth-century engraver who authored many views of the city of Rome (see Fig.24). The column’s proportions and capital closely resemble those of the Roman columns preserved in the basilica of San Bartolomeo (see Fig.25), suggesting a provenience from the ancient sanctuary of Aesculapius. This column was later called *la colonna infame*, or ‘column of infamy,’ because upon its shaft, during the 1870s, was placed a blacklist of people who were singled-out as *banditi che nel giorno di Pasqua non partecipavano alla messa eucaristica*, ‘villains who were not attending mass on Easter Day.’ Among these names was Bartolomeo Pinelli, a famous Roman engraver whose bust still stands today on Viale Trastevere. Apparently Pinelli was annoyed at the compilers of the list, not so much because they had included him in it, but because they had inaccurately grouped him among the painters (Scolastici 2002).

The column stood until 1867 when it was struck down by a speeding carriage. The modern visitor can read about this accident in the dedicatory inscription engraved on Giacometti’s *Guglia*:

PIUS IX PONT.MAX IN COLUMNNAE LOCUM QUEAIPLAUSTRI IMPETU QUASSATA CONCIDERAT PECUNIA SUA FIERI ERIGIQUE IUSSIT - ANNO CHRISTIANO MDCCCLXIX CONCILIO VATICANO INEUNTE

Pio IX Pontifex Maximus, in place of a column which, shaken by the impact of a cart, fell, ordered [this] be built and erected at his own expense-in the Christian year 1869 at the beginning of the Vatican council.
It is worthy to note that city officials have since then taken extra precautions against losing another monument to reckless drivers.

**Basilica of St. Bartholomew**

The church which stands at the south end of Piazza San Bartolomeo houses the holy relics of the twelfth apostle of Jesus Christ, Saint Bartholomew (Aramaic: *bar-Talmai*, the son of Talmai²²) (Spadafora 1961, p.862).²³

**The Legend**

After the crucifixion of Christ, the apostles Bartholomew and Philip preached the gospel in Syria and Asia Minor. At Hieropolis, Bartholomew healed a blind man named Stakhios; word spread and multitudes gathered to receive healing and exorcism. The pagan priests protested that Bartholomew, Philip, and Philip’s virgin-sister, Mariam, were turning people away from the worship of their ancestral gods. The city officials arrested them and had Stakhios’s house burned (Sollerius 1741, p.25).

The governor, thinking that the apostles had stored magic powers in their clothes, ordered them to be publicly stripped naked. Mariam glowed like a fiery torch, and everyone feared to touch her. Philip and Bartholomew were then crucified upside down. But, after Philip had been raised upon the cross, the ground shook and fissures opened along the earth swallowing the governor, the priests, and many bystanders. The townspeople in fear took down two the men

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²² The name Tolmai appears in the Old Testament: 1Sam. iii.3, xiii.37. Tolmai was the king of Geshur and the father of Maacah who, with King David, beget Absalom. This lineage is attributed to Bartholomew because of the etymology of his name and because St. Jerome claimed him to be the only apostle of noble birth. The lineage is further obscured when Tolmai is forgotten and is assumed to be Ptolemy, which would make Bartholomew of Egyptian ancestry (Baring-Gould 1914, 254).

²³ See Figs.26 & 27
from the crosses. Philip was dead but Bartholomew was able to leave with Mariam (Sollerius 1741, p.25).

Performing miracles and converting pagans along the way, Bartholomew travelled as far east as India. He returned to Greater Armenia, where he continued to preach the Gospel to receptive audiences until he reached the city of Al’ban (modern Baku). Here he converted the local king, Polymius, and his wife, to the Christian faith, arousing resentment among the pagan priests. Following the priests’ advice, the king’s brother, Astiag, had the saint arrested and crucified upside down again (Sollerius 1741, p.28). Bartholomew, now used to suffering capital punishment in this fashion, continued preaching from his cross until Astiag ordered him to be flayed alive and beheaded. His remains were first buried in Al’ban. The king wished to hide the body from the Christians and encased it in a leaden coffin and cast it into the Caspian Sea. The coffin floated and washed upon the shore of Lipari, near Sicily, before it was moved again to Benevento (Baring-Gould 1914, p.257-258).

Because of the type of martyrdom he suffered, in religious art, Bartholomew is often represented holding knives or his own flayed skin (Casanova 1961, p.863); also he is portrayed holding a copy of the Gospel of Matthew which he translated into Hebrew during his travels in India (Sollerius

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24 The Armenian sources claim Santrug, whose daughter was converted by S.Bart., ordered the execution (Baring-Gould 1914, 257).

25 Baring (ibid.) reasons that since the Caspian is not accessible to the Mediterranean, “The coffin must have voyaged by land across Medea and Susiana, floated down the Persian Gulf, swum down the east coast of Africa, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, coasted West Africa, and entered the Mediterranean by Gibraltar.”
By ways of the same associative process, he became the patron saint of knife-grinders, butchers, tanners, furriers, shoemakers, and bookbinders. (For reasons not as clear, he is also worshipped in Florence as the saint of salt-and-cheese merchants [Roeder 1955]). Like Aesculapius, whom he replaced on the island, Bartholomew is, above all, a healer, associated with the cure of nervous disorders and epilepsy.

**History and description of the church**

The church of San Bartolomeo all’Isola traces its origins to the emperor Otho III of Bayern (980-1002). King Otho was a relative and an admirer of the bishop of Prague, Adelbert Vojtech Slavnik. In 997, when Adelbert was martyred in Prussia, Otho vowed to found a church in Rome in his name. It is unclear why the Tiber Island was chosen as the site for this project. According to local lore, the emperor wished to have a clear view of the new church from his palace on the Aventine.

The Romans, “mai troppo amichevoli nei confronti degli imperatori tedeschi,” ‘never too friendly when dealing with German emperors,’ Plateroti, 2000, p.38) accepted the cult of Otho’s martyred friend with certain reluctance. Eventually Adelbert was superseded by St. Bartholomew, whose relics had also been moved in the meantime to the Tiber Island. Otho had retrieved them from Benevento—along with the remains of a southern Italian saint, Paulinus of Nola—during a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of St. Michele Arcangelo on Mt. Gargano (Hülsen 1927, B10). As early as 1088, the church on the island is cited in

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26 “India” likely refers to Arabia, Ethiopia, Libya, Parthia, Persia, and the Medes (Butler 1956 v.3, 392).
the sources as *S. Bartholomeus a domo Ioanni Cayetani* ‘[The church of] S. Bartolomeo by the home of Giovanni Caetani.’

The appearance of the original church can be best surmised from the appearance of the lower order of the basilica’s façade (Richiello 2001, p.53). There are three arches separated by two facing walls. Four columns of Tuscano granite support the overhang above which now carries the inscription:

IN HAC BASILICA REQUIESCIT CORPUS S BARTOLOMAEI APOSTOLI

In this basilica rests the body of St. Bartholomew, the Apostle.

Between the two pairs of columns are small niches with inscribed seashell decorations. These niches look as if they once held statuettes or decorations of some kind. Otho’s church would have been faced with reddish brick which can be seen on the peripheries of the church and on the bell tower.

The second level is faced with five windows. The central window is surmounted by a triangular *timpanum* while the windows on either side have curved *timpana*. The two exterior windows lack decoration. The whorls on the ends of the attic serve to hide the complex of roofs behind them (Richiello 2001, p.53). The entire face had been a rust-red color with the windows in white relief until the 2000 Jubilee when the church was restored to its original cream color.

Inside the porch of the basilica, an inscription over the central entrance in Greek marble reads:

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27 The fortified residence of the Caetani family occupies the east side of St. Bartholomew’s square. The Caetani were a noble family who settled on the island in the early Middle Ages (Plateroti 2001, p.53).
TERTIUS ISTORUM REX TRANSTULIT OTTO PIORUM CORPORAM
DOMUS HAEC SIC REDIMITA VIGET ANNO DNCI INC. MIIICXIII IND.
VII M APL D III TPRE PSCL II PFP\textsuperscript{28}

King Otho III transferred the bodies of these pious [men], adorned with which, this house now flourishes, in the year of the Lord 1113, in the seventh Indiction, the fourth day of the month, April, at the time of Paschal II.

Underneath in larger letters reads:

QUE DOMUS ISTA GERIT SI PIGNORA NOSCERE QUERIS, CORPORAM
PAULINI CREDAS BARTHOLOMEI

If you want to know the relics which this house contains, may you believe [they are] the bodies of Paulinus and Bartholomew.

This inscription was placed in 1113 during the construction of the bell tower (Plateroti 200, p.44). It records the first instance of Bartholomew’s supercession of the church’s name from Adalbert, the original namesake (Richiello 2001, p.31).

On the porch’s left wall can be scene the remains of a former structure on the island which was revealed during the 2000 reconstruction.\textsuperscript{29}

According to the common basilica floor plan, the interior contains a central nave, two aisles, and three apses at the rear of the church.\textsuperscript{30} The aisles are lined by two rows of seven columns: eleven are granite, two are Egyptian green marble, and one is of Greek alabaster. As in many other Roman basilicas, the columns had not been originally cut for the church, but were reused from preexisting structures at the island. Shorter columns had to be boosted, either by means of a tall base, or by filling in the missing height with mortar in order obtain

\textsuperscript{29} see section below for a full discussion of these fragments.
\textsuperscript{30} For a description of all the chapels along the sides, see Descrizione delle Piture, Sculture e Architetture esposte in Roma di Filippo Titi. Printed by Marco Pagliarini in Roma, 1763.
the required fit. The capitals, on the other hand, seem to have been made specifically to fit these columns. An elegant mix of Ionic and Carthaginian styles, their circumferences vary according to the size of each column.

The bases do not match each other at all. They all vary in breadth, height, and style. Two of these column bases are believed to be of ancient origin, probably remains from the temple of Aesculapius. The columns are also thought to have come from the temple. However, their smallness in comparison to the column bases from other better known temples seems to disprove this view. In fact, these spoils may come from a variety of different structures in the Aesculapian complex. See appendix A for a complete set of measurements for the columns and bases, which supplements Besnier’s partial survey (1902, p.186).

The pavement of the basilica is quite uneven due to the erosion from frequent floods. In fact, the slope of the church is nearly the inverse of the island as a whole. The last major flood occurred in 1937 when the Tiber covered the island with nearly two meters of water (Richiello 2001, p.109). On the church’s porch, a plaque marks the highest point of the flood waters. As the Tiber has been dammed upstream, floods no longer constitute a threat in our day.

In 1118, pope Paschal II added the bell tower which still dominates the silhouette of the island. This is a traditional Romanesque structure in red brick, with a tiled roof and four orders of mullioned windows. The windows in the upper orders have three lights, those in the lower ones, two lights. (3-3-2-2). It has a tiled roof surmounted by a crucifix. Disks of green Egyptian marble, obtained from Roman column drums combine with disks of painted maiolica, decorating its
four faces. The Romanesque style of this bell tower hints at the appearance of the original church. Buildings from later centuries engulf the tower, concealing on all sides its base, which can only be seen from a small garden behind the church. The bells no longer chime.

The appearance of the original basilica changed radically in 1284 when the front was entirely faced with golden mosaics. At this time, a decorative floor was added as well as a tabernacle supported by four porphyry columns (Richiello 2001, p.54). These extensive renovations were almost entirely washed away by three major floods in 1530, 1557, and 1598. Only a small portion of the mosaic work remains. The columns of the tabernacle were recovered in 1829 and placed in the gallery of the tapestries in the Vatican museum (Plateroti 2000, p.42). After the floods of 1530 and 1557, the church was once more restored by Gregory XIII.

After the flood of 1598, the church remained abandoned until 1624, when Martino Longhi the younger and / or Orazio Torriani were commissioned to build its current baroque façade under the papacy of Urbano VIII (Thayer 2003). This last stage in the architectural history of St. Bartholomew included the restoration of the altar and the tabernacle, and the addition of the left nave. Bartholomew’s remains, which had been stored in the Vatican while the church was abandoned, were brought back to the island.

Adelbert’s relics now lie in a small, metal box encased by glass in the chapel of the Molinari. For years, the relics of St. Bartholomew and Paulinus lay encased in a porphyry urn with those of Saints Exuperantius and Marcellus,

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31 cf. the face of the Basilica di Santa Maria. Note also its belltower.
32 Typically of medieval relics, the remains of Adelbert are variously claimed in different churches. Another supposed seat of Adelbert’s relics is in Gniezno (PL).
two fourth-century martyrs. When the relics of Paulinus were transferred to Nola in 1909, those of St. Bartholomew were placed at the front of the basilica, in the ancient porphyry tub which had been consecrated to the church in 1585. The very lead basin in which Otho carried Bartholomew and Paulinus’ bones is displayed in a wrought-iron case on the west wall before the chapel of the Madonna.

Apparently, in 1035 Queen Emma, the wife of the Danish / English king Canute, paid a large amount of silver to a corrupt Italian bishop in exchange for one of Bartholomew’s arms; the relic was placed in Canterbury where it has since been venerated. According to another tradition, Emma bought the entire body of the saint and donated it to Canterbury, keeping the arm, however, for herself (Stafford 1997, p.144).33

In the left nave of the basilica is the chapel known as Cappella dei Molinarii. This was dedicated by the owners and proprietors of floating granaries which were anchored to the island since the sixth century. Previously, Roman millers had used the power of the aqueducts’ water flow to grind their grain until the Gothic king, Vitiges, sieged Rome in 537 and blocked the city’s aqueducts to deprive the Romans of their water supply. The granaries were then relocated along the banks, around the perimeter of the island. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the floating mills had disappeared due to the construction of the embankment walls which now enclose the bed of the Tiber. Also known as the

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33 Catalogue of relics housed in Canterbury Cathedral: St. Dunstan, St. Thomas (of Canterbury), St. Alphege, St. Anselm, St. Wendreda (from Ely), St. Ethelhard, St. Ouen, St. Oda, St. Ethelbert, St. Wilfred II (of York), St. Furseus (head), St. Austroberta (head), St. Swithun (head), St. Blaise (head & arm), St. Simeon (arm), St. Bartholomew (arm), St. George (arm), St. Wulfstan (arm), St. Richard (of Chichester) (arm), St. Romanus (arm), St. Gregory (the Great) (arm), St. Hugh (arm), St. Mildred (arm) & St. Edburga (of Minster) (arm).
Cappella di Sant’Adalberto, this chapel was originally the church’s sacristy, a room which sacred vessels and vestments were kept or meetings were held.

The right nave is the oldest part of the church and may be the principal structure of the original tenth-century construction. The angle of the chapel is incongruous with the alignment of the rest of the church. At the rear of the chapel is the thirteenth-century fresco, *Vergine in trono con il Bambino benedicente*, engrafted in a brick alcove. Embedded in the left side of the chapel, is a French cannonball which crashed through the window during the seizure of the Roman Republic in 1848. Many people had been huddled in the church to escape the violence. As no one was injured, the cannonball was dedicated as a thank-offering (Plateroti 2000, p.49).

One of the most interesting parts of the Basilica di San Bartolomeo is found on the marble steps leading to the altar. Here stands an eleventh-century well-head, made from a Roman column of white marble, which depicts Jesus Christ, a crowned Otto III, and the two saints, Bartholomew and Adelbert (see Fig.28). Its sculptor is unknown, but some sources attribute the work to Niccolò di Angelo. This well-head stands on top of an ancient well-shaft, 10¼ meters deep, which dates from the early Republican period. When illuminated with a flashlight, the interior of the shaft reveals the characteristic *opus quadratum* work of the mid-Republic. This very spot marks the place where suppliants would have drawn the ground water needed in the ritual practices of the cult of Aesculapius. It is clear that this well continued to be used after the disappearance of the
Aesculapian cult and the Christianization of Rome, since the builders of the church went to serious efforts in order to work around it.

Precisely what structure formerly enclosed this well is undetermined. Most assume that the well was housed inside the temple of Aesculapius. After all, there is a well-documented tradition for the establishment of Christian churches on top of pagan temples. However, with Epidauros as a model, the *abaton*, an infirmary of sorts where patients slept, would have housed the well for healing and perhaps sanitary purposes. Laymen were not permitted inside Roman temples where the image of the deity is kept. This area could be accessed only by the chief priests. So, unless the priests’ job was to retrieve water from the well for the suppliants, the well most likely stood inside a more public building than the temple. This source of ground water may be the reason why the island was chosen as the site for the sanctuary of Aesculapius. Most ancient healing places were located in the vicinity of natural spring water which was believed to host magical healing properties.

The *Basilica di San Bartolomeo* was the inspiration for a much larger church in England founded by the courtier, Rahere. Rahere seems to have been a court jester of sorts under King Henry I, the third son of the Conqueror, but may also have held a religious office, since he appears on the list of the Canons of St. Paul’s cathedral. He has been reported as living the “creeping life of a courtier, indulging in carnal delights and pouring pleasantries into princes' ears,” (Binder 2001). He went to Rome in 1100 on a pilgrimage seeking penance for his sins, when he was struck with a severe case of malaria. Other sources claim that he had
contracted some sort of skin disease. This may have been a later addition to the story to fit in with Bartholomew’s known specialty, or perhaps the island at this time had special dermatology care-centers. Whatever the case, Rahere received a vision on the Tiber Island from St. Bartholomew who told him to found a hospital and church in his name back in Smithfield, England in return for a full recovery (Collie 2001). As late as the twelfth century, the tradition of healing through sleep-induced visions is still strong on the island. Rahere agreed and founded a priory church and hospital in Smithfield, a suburb of London. The interior of the marvelous church was used as the setting for the recent film, “Four Weddings and a Funeral.” Rahere is buried inside under a canopied tomb.

The current chief priest of the Basilica di San Bartolomeo is named Angelo. He performs many marriage ceremonies in the church on weekends. The simultaneous organist and angelic singer for these services is a charming woman named Sylvia. Percy from Peru is in charge of the grounds and cleans the floor by scraping it with razor blades.

**Architrave**

Underneath the Baroque porch of the Basilica of St. Bartholomew, one can see an example of the elusive archaeological remains on the island (see Fig.29). During a recent restoration of the church’s porch, workers uncovered a confusing assemblage of structural ruins embedded in the modern wall. The ruins consist of various marble fragments compiled into what has been given the working title ‘architrave’ (Nazzaro 2001, p.89).

A long slab of marble lies imbedded within the brickwork of the medieval wall. The facing side of this slab is unfinished and rough. However, the facedown
plane is dressed and decorated with a simple, but skillfully executed, floral design. There is a long row of laurel leaves interposed with berries. At a point about one fifth the length of the slab, where the leaves change direction, there is a small rosette.

The marble slab is supported on one side by more architectural fragments, including an unfinished capital. The other end extends into the wall of the church, so its total length is unknown. However, we may reasonably assume that the length was at least originally double what is visible today since the rosetta seems to mark the center in the foliage design with leaves facing inward from each side.

Supporting the left end of the marble slab is a small portion of entablature facing sideways and extending into the wall. Its facing side is unfinished and rough. Directly adjacent to it is another piece, similar in size and shape, perhaps a fragment from the same slab. Both pieces rest on another thinner piece of marble which is supported by the capital. The upper border of the capital has a floral decoration in raised relief. The most prominent feature of the capital is a small, winged figure on its corner, a Cupid. The Cupid emerges from the right corner of the capital and is leaning forward facing the entrance to the church, his wings outstretched along the two out-facing sides of the capital (Nazzaro 2001, p.89). The arms blend into garlands and extend across the full length of both flanks. The workmanship appears to be of quality, but it is unfinished and worn from age.

Nazzaro conjectures that this assemblage comes from an ancient portico or gateway, and that the apparent gaps in the construction are due to pillaging by later architects (Nazzaro 2001, p.90). This assumption appears to be disproven by
the unfinished nature of all stones concerned, which are likely the remains of a project never completed. The haphazard arrangement of the fragments would lead us to believe that these pieces are reused Roman materials built into the wall by medieval architects. Unfortunately, the excavation of this wall was very limited in scope. We are afforded only a small window into what may be a much more extensive complex of remains.

**The Northern Section of the Island**

On the north side of the road which crosses the island from shore to shore a few meters west of the Pons Fabricius stands the church of San Giovanni Calibita (see Fig.30-32). Just as the basilica of St. Bartholomew, this church is associated with an intricate history of wandering saintly relics and overlapping cults.

**Church of St. John Calybite**

**The Legend**

The life of St. John Calybite has been passed down through numerous versions and in several languages. The Greek tradition\(^{34}\) places him in Constantinople at the first half of the sixth century. His parents, Eutropius, a senator and military general, and Theodora, had three sons, the youngest of whom was John (born *ca.* 450). He was marked by a precocious temperament and an extraordinary devotion and piety. At the age of twelve, *a sancto Spirito inflammatus*, he left his home against his parents’ will and accompanied an Acemete monk on a voyage to Jerusalem (*Acta Sanctorum* 460, p.567). He

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\(^{34}\) There are at least three versions of John’s life in the Greek language (Caliò 1966, p.640).
arrived on the Asiatic shore of the Bosporos at the famous monastery of the Acemetes, founded by St. Marcellus, in Irenaion (modern تتشيبوكلی Tchiboukli. Пєтродес 1908).35

The Acemetes were a monastic order which practiced a vow of sleep deprivation. They required their members to carry always a copy of the Gospel. St. John received from his parents (ignorant of his plans to leave home) a Gospel, written in gold ink, illuminated, and covered by gold and precious stones, which earned him the title, ‘Owner of the Golden Gospel,’ (Caliò 1966, p.640).

After six years, St. John abandoned the monastery life, having been recommended to do so also by his fellow monks (Acta Sanctorum 460, p. 575). He returned home in the garb of a beggar and lived outside the doors of his parents’ palace. Here, unkempt and bearded, he lived unrecognized by his parents in a shack constructed for him by the palace servants, for three years, whence he earned the appellation, Calibita (hut-dweller from Greek καλύβη, ‘hut’).

Overcome by illness, he manifested himself to his parents three days before his death, presenting his golden Gospel as proof (Acta Sanctorum 460, p. 579, 582). Moved by the piety of their son, his parents converted their palace into a hospice, and upon the site of his hut they erected a church which stood until about 468 when it burned during a city fire (Caliò 1966, p.641).

Another tradition places St. John’s family in an aristocratic home on the Tiber Island. According to this legend, the current church of St. John Calybite stands on the site of John’s former hut. Several sources indicate that on the same site there existed a church of John the Baptist, listed in Plateroti (2000, p.14). The

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35 Butler (1956, p.95 v.1) names St. Alexander Akoimetos as the founder of the order.
confusion may stem from a misreading of John’s life where his birthplace, Constantinople, was referred to as Νέα Ρώμη, ‘new Rome’ (Sauget 1966, p. 643). A Greek St. John better explains the widespread nature of this saint’s cult in the East.

St. John is commemorated in the Byzantine synaxaria on the fifteenth of January, but he is completely unknown in the medieval calendars of the western church (Sauget 1966, p.641).

The Church

The church of St. John Calybite stands between the island’s east shore and the Fatebenefratelli hospital, a short walk to the west of the Pons Fabricius. The present building results from the radical restoration, in 1640, of an earlier structure, the date of which cannot be established with certainty.36 The façade visible today was completed between 1711 and 1741 in the style of the ‘Barocchetto Romano,’ a local variation on traditional Baroque architecture used for a great number of Roman churches.

The main entrance is crowned by a curved pediment, flanked on both sides by two engaged columns. On the second level is a framed window surmounted by a pediment and architrave. To the right of the church stands its elegant and slender bell tower with its orientalizing roof, rebuilt in the twentieth century during work at the adjacent Fatebenefratelli Hospital.

The interior of the church is lavishly decorated. Its appearance is dominated by the radical restoration of 1741 (Huetter-Montini n.d., p.55). Upon the ceiling is the fresco “The Glory of Saint John of God” by Italian Rococo artist,

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36 See paragraph below on the early church of St. John the Baptist.
Corrado Giaquinto (1703-1765) (Lombardi 1993, p.258). Other pieces by Giaquinto decorate the church. The ceiling of the presbytery depicts St. John of God tending to a patient and being assisted by Sts. Sebastian, Augustus, and John Calybite. His other works in the church include *The Martyrs of Porto; The Madonna with Child and St. John of God; The Martyrs Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abacus;* and *St. Anthony the Abbot.* These works vary greatly in scope and style. The works of Giovanni Paolo Schor, G.B. Lenard, Andrea Gennaroli, and Mattia Preti also decorate the church.

The church is richly lined with colored stones. The floor is made from white, green, and red marble. The walls are lined with reddish-brown variegated marble. The central aisle divides two rows of five pews. Above the main altar hangs a large crystal chandelier flanked by white marble angels.

The altar is faced by a sixth-century altar frontal in marble and mother-of-pearl. Behind the altar stands the work of Giovanni Battista Lenardi (1656-1704) representing the *Morte di S. Giovanni Calibita.* On both sides stand columns of dark green marble surmounted by golden capitals of a mixed Ionic-Corinthian style. Behind the second altar is an entrance to the hospital. Associated with the church is also a cemetery where are buried the patients who died in the hospital (Armellini 1891, p.619).

On the left side of the first altar is the *Madonna della Lampada,* an image which originally was located outside the church, near the Pons Fabricius. In 1577, a terrible flood completely submerged the island. Reportedly, the image of the Madonna and child burned continually under the water. The former title for the
work had been *Madonna delle Mole*, ‘Lady of the grain mill,’ but was renamed *Madonna della Lampada* after the miracle and was transferred into the church (Huetter-Montini n.d., p.9). A copy now stands in place of the original near the access to the bridge.

**History**

The present church of St. John Calybite stands on top of an earlier church to St. John the Baptist, the remains of which have been recently discovered underneath the Fatebenefratelli Hospital. This church likely survived well into the ninth century when, under pressure from Ottoman attack, the pope Formosus (891-896), then bishop of Porto, sought refuge for a short while on the Tiber Island, bringing with him from Ostia the relics of Hippolytus, Taurinus, Herculanus, and St. John Calybite (Armellini 1891, p.618). Why Formosus changed the dedication of the church from St. John the Baptist to St. John Calybite is unexplained. As mentioned above, John Calybite was unknown to the Medieval calendars of the western church. The Acemete monks had been introduced into Rome several decades prior by Paschal I (817-824) (Huetter-Montini n.d., p.6). Also, since the sixth century, a Byzantine community remained on the southeastern shore of the Tiber, opposite the island, and in Trastevere. Possibly, the presence of the Acemetes and a nearby Greek community were factors in Formosus’ decision to establish the cult of the Calybite at the island.
Also, Formosus might have been trying to please the philo-Byzantine party in Rome, the members of which were his supporters (Wagman, 2004 p.3).\footnote{The transfer of St. John’s relics during the middle ages contradicts the account of one Anthony of Novgorod who reports having seen the Calybite’s tomb next to the door of his parents’ home in Constantinople in 1200. \textit{cf.} Gordini (1966, p.641-2).}

The relics of the four martyrs were placed in a reused pagan sarcophagus engraved with the following inscription:

\begin{center}
HIC REQUIESCUNT CORPOR\textit{A} SCOR MARTYR\textit{UM} HYPPOLIT\textit{I} TAUR\textit{INU}
HERCUL\textit{ANI} ATQUE IOHANNIS CALIBIT\textit{IS}, FORMOSUS EPS CONDIDIT.
\end{center}

According to Casimiro, Formosus’ papacy lasted only five years. He was deposed by John VIII in 896. After Formosus’ death, the next pope, Stephen VI, exhumed his corpse to put it on trial. Formosus’ corpse was convicted, mutilated, and cast into the Tiber (Cigola 2004).

The church is first mentioned among Vatican records in 1018 in a papal bull by Benedetto VIII (1012 – 1024). We find the church named \textit{San Giovanni dell’Isola} in the \textit{Liber Censuum} by Cencio Camerario (treasurer of the Papal Court) among the churches listed by the Roman Church for the annual Census in 1192.

In 1366, an order of Benedictine nuns, called \textit{Santuccie}, was incorporated into the Calybite church under Urban V. Prior to this date, the Santuccie occupied the small church of Santa Maria Cantu Fluminis between St. John Calybite and the river. After the incorporation, the nuns coexisted with the clergy of the Calybite church until the late sixteenth century. In 1573, Gregory XIII moved...
them to Sant’Anna dei Funari to protect them from the frequent floodings of the Tiber.

The Benedictines yielded their monastery and the church of St. John Calybite to the Confraternita dei Bolognesi, which occupied the site from 1573 to 1583. Here, they founded their confraternity under the invocation of St. Petronius, the bishop of Bologna. However, they soon left due to both the distance from the center of Rome and, again, the frequent floods (Huetter & Montini n.d., p.10-11).

After the Bolognesi, the Arciconfraternita of Saint John of God took over the church and the adjacent buildings in 1584 (Plateroti 2000, p.20). The church was then incorporated into the Fatebenefratelli hospital. The back of the church contains an entrance into the hospital, which constitutes the subject of the next section.

**Fatebenefratelli Hospital**

The history of the Fatebenefratelli Hospital is intimately connected with the personality of its founder, Juan de Dios. Today, the entire region of the island, from Piazza di San Bartolomeo to the upstream end of the site, is occupied by the structures of the Fatebenefratelli Hospital (see Fig.33). Especially since its latest expansion in the 1930s, the hospital has obliterated completely the medieval and ancient topography of this section of the island, except for the layout of two inner courtyards, which may date back to late medieval times, when this spot was

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occupied by a convent of Benedictine Nuns. Recent excavations four and a half meters below of the courtyards has revealed in the 1990s the foundations of a temple of Jupiter, formerly known only from the literary sources (Livy, Ovid, Vitruvius). The discovery of this building, which is still awaiting publication, marks an important first step in the recovery of the island’s ancient topography.

Saint John of God was born in Portugal in 1495. The accounts of his early life vary considerably. It is generally accepted that he spent several years serving as a bailiff in Castille. In 1522, he enlisted as a mercenary soldier for the count of Oroprusa and fought with the Spanish forces in their recapture of Fuenterrabía. After nine years performing odd jobs throughout Spain, he returned to mercenary life and took part in the defense of Vienna against Suleyman II (Russotto 1987, p.740-41).

According to the tradition, St. John had fallen into worldly vices during his military career and had neglected the practice of religion. To pay recompense for his past misconduct, he decided to travel to Africa to bring aid to the Christian slaves, in hopes of achieving martyrdom. However, he made it only as far as Gibraltar, where he focused his charity on the family of an exiled man. He assisted this family without payment, and even worked to help support them. Afterward, St. John abandoned his plans to go to Africa and decided to remain in Spain.

John saved his money to buy sacred books. He peddled the books he bought in Granada. In 1538, he opened a bookstore near Porta Elvira. On St.

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39 *Granada* is Spanish for pomegranate; thus, in art, St. John of God is always portrayed holding a pomegranate surmounted by a cross (Butler 1956, p.520 v.1).
Sebastian’s day of the following year, he encountered the famous preacher, John of Avila. According to the tradition, after hearing his sermon, John reportedly began acting like a madman, pulling out his hair and raging through the streets, until he was pelted with sticks and stones by passersby (Butler 1956, p.520 v.1). He was then committed to an insane asylum. John of Avila, having heard what happened, visited him there and redirected him to spend his life more productively. Following the preacher’s advice, St. John then began caring for the patients at his asylum and moved on to establish the first modern hospital in Granada, largely funded by charitable contributions.

At the advice of bishop Ramírez Fuenleal, the president of the Royal Chancery of Granada bestowed upon St. John the title, ‘de Dios,’ and gave him a hat which distinguished him as a man working in the service of God. He acquired several disciples who followed him to Toledo where they founded another hospital for the poor (Russotto 1961, p.742).

St. John returned to his hospital in Granada. On July 3, 1549, a fire erupted in the hospital. During the fire, St. John of God rescued the patients from the burning building. He then reentered the blaze and removed the beds and mattresses from the windows. He miraculously suffered no burns. The following year he died, as the tradition goes, praying on his knees (Russotto 1961, p.741).

John’s followers, increasing in number, continued his work and founded many hospitals throughout Europe. Their order was first approved as a congregation on January 1, 1571 by a papal bull under Pius V. In 1581, a few members of the Confraternity, came from Spain to Rome, where they became
known as the Fatebenefratelli ‘Do-Good Brothers,’ from the formula they used in addressing people on the street. They founded a hospital in an existing orphanage, situated among the ruins of the Temple of Hadrian in Piazza di Pietra (Caporilli 1999, p.24).

But the numbers of needy sick in Rome outgrew the capacity of the small hospital in Piazza di Pietra, and the brotherhood transferred to the Tiber Island, seeking larger premises. Next to the church of St. John Calybite (see previous chapter), there had stood a small church of the Virgin with a monastery of Benedictines. For a time, both the church of John Calybite and that of Santa Maria were run by the Benedictines. After the sack of Rome in 1527, the church was abandoned for nearly fifty years. In 1575, they were taken over by Confraternity of Bolognesi, who restored the church for the Jubilee. When the Bolognesi also left the island, the church of the Calybite and its annexed monastery then given by Pope Gregory XIII to the order of the Fatebenefratelli in August of 1584. A few months later, they formally established the hospital. Over the next two years, the Confraternity absorbed several of the adjacent buildings, and they converted the left nave of St. John Calybite’s church40 into an entrance for the hospital (Caporilli 1999, p.25).

During the refacing of the church created from and around the existing premises of the Fatebenefratelli in 1640, the hospital also underwent a massive expansion, which allowed many patients to stay in the hospital for extended treatment. The hospital was again enlarged in 1858 with funds from the will of

40 See previous section on the church of St. John Calybite and the convent of the Santuccie.
Francesco Amici. They constructed another wing for the accommodation of male patients (Caporilli 1999, p.43).

By the twentieth-century, medicine had advanced rapidly, particularly in sanitary practices, so, in 1930, Father Faustino Calvo began a radical transformation of the old hospital to meet modern standards. The four-year project (1930-34) involved the purchase of many existing structures and even private residences on the island. Much of the old hospital was demolished to make room for the new design which would encompass the majority of the upstream end of the island. The extensive renovation completely furnished the hospital with the most recent equipment available and multiplied its patient capacity.

The hospital continued its expansion in the 1980s to accommodate new technology. For the most part, this renovation involved a relocation of many of the hospital’s appendages. The limited space on the island made it necessary to utilize areas nonessential to the hospital proper. The main warehouse, personnel and accounting offices, nurse school, and housing for the sisters were all moved elsewhere in the city. The last of the work was completed in June of 2000 under Father Paschal Piles. More than 3000 sq.m. were made available to accommodate the growing needs of the patients (Caporilli 1999, p.59).

Thus, the Fatebenefratelli Hospital is the ultimate manifestation of one of the longest healing traditions in history. Nearly twenty-three hundred years of medicine have culminated in the existence of this large modern hospital.

**Fatebenefratelli excavation**

In 1994, during construction work underneath the church of St. John Calybite and the Fatebenefratelli hospital, the foundations of the temple to Jupiter
came to light 4.30m. below present ground level (see Figs.34 & 35). The excavations unearthed also an early Christian church, built on top of the temple (at 4.0m. below ground), which is probably to be identified with the church of St. John the Baptist, the predecessor of St. John Calybite in this area of the island. Although the results of the excavation are still awaiting publication, much can be learned from a preliminary inspection of the ruins. Contrary to what was previously thought, the temple was not aligned with the axis of the island, as the church of St. John Calybite above it, but with the pathway which ran between the two island bridges from east to west. Its back was to the east, at the edge of the water. An even more important finding concerns an inscribed mosaic floor running along the length of the temple. The inscription of the mosaic records a dedication by the sons of C. Servilius Geminus (60), the duumvir who, according to Livy (34.53.7), dedicated the temple in 196 BC. This will be examined in detail in the next section.

In ancient times, on the site of St. John Calybite’s church, stood a temple to Jupiter. The existence of a cult of Jupiter Jurarius, in this exact location, was formerly known through an inscription found underneath the Calybite’s church, (CIL ii 990 = vi.379)\(^41\):

\[
C. Volcaci(us) C.f. har(uspex) de stipe Iovi iurario...onimentom
\]

Jurarius was the particular incarnation of Jupiter who dealt with the indissolubility of oaths.\(^42\) The ritual practice for oath-making involved casting a

\(^{41}\) See Fig.36
\(^{42}\) Platner & Ashby (1929, p.296) relate the god to Greek, Ζεὺς πίστος.
stone at the moment of pronouncing the oath; the thud from the rock striking the
ground was intended to simulate the very crash of Jupiter’s thunderbolt (Plateroti
2000, p. 16).

**Servilius inscription**

*CIL* 40896a (see Fig.37).

The pavement extends 7.41m. and is composed of small white tesserae. An inscription in black tesserae extends nearly the full length of the pavement, surrounded by a border 5 cm. wide. The left corner of the mosaic is virtually intact and is now reinforced by a brick wall surrounding its perimeter. The back wall of a later structure, the church of St. John the Baptist (see above), was erected on top of the mosaic, but it does not encroach upon the inscription. At the corner of this wall, near the beginning of the inscription, is a break in the mosaic where the foundation falters. The lacuna is 1.65m. long. The remaining right portion of the inscription is very well preserved up to the point where the wall of the later church ends and the fill dirt beneath the inscription has crumbled. The pavement is cracked in several places and collapses completely at the end.

The extant text reads:

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C·SERVEIL·M·F·PR[--]SERVEILEIS·C·F FACIENDUM·COERAVERUNT·
EIDEMQUE PROBAV[...
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The archaic spelling of *ei* for *ī* and the diphthong *oe* for *ū*[^1] coexist here with the later –*endum* form of the gerund (in place of the expected –*undum*, found in the inscription on the Fabricius bridge).

The emended text of the inscription, as interpreted by G. Alföldy in his *CIL* article, reads:

\[ \text{C(aius) Serveili M(arci) f(ilius) pr(ator)[- - - ?, C(aius), M(arcus), P(ublius) (?)]}\]
\[ \text{(vac.3) Serveileis C(ai) F(ili) (vac.3) faciendum coeraverunt eademque probaverunt}.\]

Gaius Servilius, praetor, son of Marcus, Gaius, Marcus, and Publius attended to the making (of this monument) and the same men sanctioned it.

The reconstruction seems plausible, as much text is missing between *PR* and [Serveilies, the lacuna is filled with the names of Gaius’s sons in the nominative, to serve as the subjects for our plural perfect *coeraverunt*.

The only troubling point in this reconstruction is the nominative *G(aius) Serveili*. Alföldy interprets *Serveili* as an archaic nominative agreeing with his sons’ names as subjects of the verb. However, this is a form of the nominative which occurs very rarely. Dr. Gary Miller, a Latin linguist at the University of Florida, disagrees with Alföldy’s reconstruction. He comments (in an e-mail dated 10-29-2003):

\[ \text{Faciendum (for older faciundum) shows that the inscription is not genuinely archaic, so a NOM sg Serveili is totally out of the question. It must be genitive, as in '(grave) of Caius Serveil(i)us', ergo restorandum Caii (not Ca[ius]). Another possibility, of course, is an abbreviation for Serveilios.} \]

[^1]: cf. *eodemque* for *īdemque* on the eastern side of the Fabricius and *coerav* on all faces.
With this in mind, we may expect a more traditional inscription in which only the sons are subjects, and an object is missing, perhaps *hoc monumentum*, to serve as the complement for the initial genitive *Gaii Serveili*.

Gaius Servilius Geminus (60) began his political career in 212, when, as an Envoy Legate, he was sent by the praetor, Cornelius Sulla, to Etruria to buy grain; thence he supplied the garrison of Tarentum (Livy 25.16.4-5). He became tribune of the Plebs in 211 (*id.* 29.21.10; 30.199) and Aedil of the Plebs in 209 (*id.* 27.21.10). The following year he was appointed as the Magister Equitum and as the Aedil Curule (*id.* 27.33.6-8; 27.36.8). In Sicily, he served as Praetor in 206 and then as Consul in Etruria and Cisalpine Gaul in 203. His *imperium* in Etruria was extended another year while his uncle presided as consul in Rome (*id.* 29.38.3; 30.1.1-2,8). At this time he was briefly appointed as dictator to hold elections (*id.* 30.39.4-5). In 201 he was a decemvir agris assignandis. In 194, during his duumvirate, Livy (34.53.7) credits him with the dedication of the temple of Jupiter on the island. From 210 he served as a pontifex for thirty years (*id.* 27.6.15) and as Pontifex Maximus from 183-180 (*id.* 39.46.1). That year also marked the end of his duty as decemvir sacris faciendis (Broughton 1951 v.2, p.619).
8) Pons Fabricius.

9) Foot of the Pons Fabricius in the basement of the bar, L’isola Antica.
10) Pons Fabricius dedicatory inscription.

11) Original side arch, now covered by the massive embankment wall.
12) Fabricius herm with sidelong groove.

13) G.G. Belli monument.

14) Later fashioned groove of the Belli herm.
15) Pons Cestius.

16) Pons Graziani.
17) Original Graziani inscription, as depicted by Piranesi. *Le antichità romane*, p.490.

18) North embankment.
19) South embankment.

20) Ship monument.
21) Reconstruction of ship monument.

22) Fanciful 1561 map of Rome, depicting the Tiber Island as a giant floating ship with an obelisk mast.
23) Obelisk fragments, as portrayed by Piranesi. Iversen, 1968.

24) Piazza di San Bartolomeo, including the so-called *colonna infame*, or 'column of infamy.' Vasi (1747-1762).
26) Basilica di San Bartolomeo.

28) Medieval well-head.
29) Architrave.

30) Church of St. John Calybite.

31) Interior of the church.
32) Floorplan of the church of St. John Calybite.

33) Fatebenefratelli Hospital.

34) Courtyard excavation.
35) Remains of a temple to Jupiter and a church of St. John the Baptist.


CHAPTER 3
TOPOGRAPHY, PART 2: STRUCTURES OF UNCERTAIN LOCATION

In addition to the archaeologically documented cult of Jupiter, the northern region of the island housed a number of other forms of worship only known through literary and epigraphical evidence. In the absence of physical remains, the topography of these cults remains conjectural. A passage from Ovid’s *Fasti* would point at the existence of a cult place for Faunus at the upstream end of the island. Because of their affinities with Jupiter, the cults of Semo Sancus and Veiovis are hypothetically located by scholars within the sanctuary of Jupiter Jurarius. As for Bellona, her worship might have been associated with the site (between St. John Calybite and the river) later occupied by the church of Santa Maria Cantu Fluminis and its annexed nunnery.

**Faunus**

The Italian deity, Faunus, was also worshipped on the island. Livy tells us that his temple, the only actual temple to this deity in Rome, was vowed in 196 BC by the aediles Gaius Domitius Ahenobarbus and Gaius Scribonius Curio. The temple was dedicated two years later by Ahenobarbus who then held the office of praetor urbanus (33.42; 34.53). Though Faunus’ temple was not dedicated until nearly a century after the importation of Aesculapius, his presence at the island may be associated with the earliest religious activity on this site.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) Holland (1961, p.192).
Livy (33.42.10) reports that the temple of Faunus on the island was constructed from fines taken from three *pecuarii* (cattle-breeders):

*Ex eorum multaticia pecunia aedem in insula Fauni fecerunt.*

Out of their fine money, they built a temple of Faunus on the island.

Although no archaeological evidence exists for the temple of Faunus on the Tiber Island, the temple could not have been very large, nor very lavishly decorated, since it was funded by the fines of only three herdsmen. We know the main characteristics of the temple from Vitruvius (3.2.3), who uses the temples of Jupiter and Faunus on the island as examples of prostyle temples. As Vitruvius informs, a prostyle temple has columns in front of the cella which support an entablature. Squared pilasters or *antae* stand opposite the columns at the corners of the cella.

The temple’s exact location on the island is a matter of conjecture. Ovid (*Fasti* 2, 193-94) says that the altar of Faunus was *ubi discretas insula rumpit aquas* (where the island breaks the separated waters). Scholars assume this refers to the northern upstream tip of the island.² However, it has been pointed out that the whole island could conceivably be dividing the water and that Ovid may be playing with imagery, rather than pinpointing the temple’s location.³ Also, the author of the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* lists a temple of Faunus “on,” or in the vicinities of the Pons Fabricius.⁴

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² see D’Onofrio 1980, p.49.
³ cf. *Fasti* 1.292 *insula dividua quam premit amnis aqua*.
⁴ *in ponte Iudeorum, templum Fauni*. Mirabilia 30.
Faunus (etymologically related to *faveo*—‘help, favor’) was an ancient Italian deity of the forests, pastures, and shepherds. He was especially associated with the mysterious sounds of the forest. Dionysius of Halycarnassus (1.32.3) reports that the cult of Faunus was first initiated in Rome in a cave below the western corner of the Palatine. By the second century, he became so closely associated with the Greek god, Pan, that it is difficult to interpret which were the original traits of the Italian god and which were incorporated from the Greek cult. Faunus was associated with the festival of Lupercalia celebrated on Feb. 15th (Faunus’ own festival at the island, recorded in the calendar of Antium, was on the same day). The Lupercalia was a fertility festival in which special priests (Luperci) rode horses naked and whipped virgin girls with goatskins dipped in blood. Goats and dogs were sacrificed, and the blood from the knife was smeared onto the foreheads of two young boys who were expected to laugh hysterically in response (Lindersky 1999, p.892). The significance of the Lupercalia lies in the needs of a small, primitive society. They sacrificed wolves, threats to early urban life, which also preyed on the shepherd’s flocks, and they celebrated fertility, a crucial concern for a high-mortality society such as that of early Latium (Brucia 1990, p.46).

The primitive nature of Faunus (represented, like Pan, as half-man / half-beast) and his liminal status between civilization and wilderness may have been the reason for his cult on the island. Located in the middle of the Tiber, the island marked a definite transition between the civilized lands of the nascent Roman city and the uncultivated lands to the north (Transtiberim).
Another probable reason for a cult of Faunus on the island hinges on the early use of this site as a stepping stone for driving cattle across the river. Since Faunus was a primitive Italian god closely associated with the wilderness, his prevalence in Roman religion decreased as the urbanization of Rome accelerated. The dedication of a temple to Faunus on the island one-hundred years after the Aesculapius cult was already firmly established there (in an urbanized environment) makes sense only if there had been previous worship of Faunus at the site. Holland suggests Faunus was worshipped by the cowpokes of the early Forum Boarium for his ability to prevent stampeding (1961, p.158-59). The Tiber Island was ideal for crossing the Tiber from the nearby cattle farms which were a very important industry in early Rome. Using the island as a midway point, the river could be easily forded or rafted across. Ferries were frequently used even after bridges were available, because cattle are frightened by the sound of their own hooves striking on the wooden bridges (Lanciani 1897, p.513).

Faunus’ role in aiding fertility could also be traced to the presence of granary mills on the island. Until the last century, the island’s periphery has been crowded with floating granaries which used the river’s power to turn millstones and grind grain.5 We know that aqueducts were also used for this purpose until the Gothic king, Vitiges, besieged Rome and cut off the aqueduct supply, whereupon mills were moved to the Pons Agrippae (modern Ponte Sisto, immediately upstream from the island). On the other hand, the particular configuration of the river in the island’s neighborhood, *i.e.* four distinct banks in close proximity, would make this spot ideal for the placement of floating granary

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5 See above section on the *Cappella dei Molarit* in the section on St. Bartholomew.
mills, inviting us to consider an even earlier date for the use of these devices (D’Onofrio 1980, p.50).

Holland suggests that Faunus’ role as an averter of disease and his assimilation to Incubus, the daemon of dreams and nightmares, made him an appropriate neighbor / colleague for Aesculapius at the island (1961, p.158 footnote 68):

Faunus had an established reputation as a giver of oracles, whether the incubation method was originally his or not.

Although Faunus’ affinity with the Aesculapian cult, in its use of the incubation procedure,6 would account for the coexistence of the two cults at the island, it does not provide any evidence about a possible presence of Faunus at this site before the arrival of Aesculapius.

Essentially, no literary or archeological evidence places Faunus on the island any earlier than the construction of his temple in 194 BC. However, scholars assume he must have been associated with the island from early times, since Faunus was essentially an ancient half-forgotten deity by the second century BC. Holland finds the reason why the Romans chose to dedicate a temple to Faunus on the island “incomprehensible unless he had been there from time immemorial,” (1961, p.192).

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6 For a full discussion of the affinities between Faunus-Pan-Incubus and Asclepius, see Wagman, L’inno Epidaurico. 2000, p. 51-78.
Ve(d)iovis

The cult of another elusive deity, Ve(d)iovis, is also attested on the island. Even to the ancients, Veiovis was an obscure god. Our only direct evidence for his presence at the island is preserved in the Roman calendars of Antium and Praenesta (Inscr. It. XIII.2, 388). For the first day of May, these texts read:

\[\textit{Aescula(pio) Co[r]o(nidi) Vediove}\]

\[\textit{Aescu[lapio] Vediovi in insula}\]

Less direct references to a cult of Veiovis at the island are also detected by scholars in Livy (31.21.12) (34.53.7) (35.41.8), Ovid (Fasti 1.289-94), and Vitruvius (3.2.3).

Livy (34.53.7) reports that in 194 BC the duumvir, Gaius Servilius, dedicated on the island a temple to Jupiter which had been vowed six years earlier by the praetor, L. Furius Purpurio:

\[(194 \text{ BC})\]
\[et in insula Iovis aedem C. Servilius duumvir dedicavit; vota erat sex annis ante Gallico bello ab L. Furio Purpurione praetore, ab eodem postea consule locata.\]

and on the island, Gaius Servilius, duumvir, dedicated a temple of Jupiter on the island; it was dedicated after six years, during the Gallic war, by Lucius Furius Purpurio, the praetor, and was contracted afterwards by the same consul.

Livy’s text is corrected by scholars to read: \textit{Veiovis} instead of \textit{Iovis} from comparison with another passage (31.21.12)\(^9\) where the historian refers to the

\(^7\) F.Ant.M.
\(^8\) F.Pran.
same temple as a dedication *diiovi*. Because the Roman calendar has no entry for a cult of Jupiter on the island (while it does have one for Veiovis), and because the text in *diiovi* appears to be corrupted, scholars conclude that in both passages Livy must be referring to Veiovis, rather than Jupiter.

However, Ovid also makes reference to a temple of Jupiter on the island (*Fasti* 1.293-94):

\[
Iuppiter in parte est: cepit locus unus utrumque
iunctaque sunt magno templa nepotis (sc. Aesculapii) avo.
\]

Jupiter had his part [on the island],\(^9\) One place found room for both, and the temples of the grandson, [Aesculapius], and the mighty grandfather were joined.

As with Livy, scholars assume that here, too, the reference must be to Veiovis rather than Jupiter. Platner and Ashby (1929, p.548) write, “these emendations [i.e. the passages in Livy and Ovid], and therefore the existence of the temple [of Veiovis] near that of Aesculapius, are accepted by most scholars.\(^{11}\) The same problem arises, however, in Vitruvius (3.2.3), who also also refers to a temple of Jupiter on the island in his account on prostyle temples:

\[
Prostylos omnia habet quemadmodum in antis, columnas autem contra antas angulares duas supræque epistylia, quemadmodum et in antis, et dextra ac sinistra in versuris singula. Huius exemplar est in insula Tiberina in aede Iovis et Fauni.
\]

A prostyle has everything like the temple in *antis*, but there are two columns against the corner pilasters, and architraves above, as the ones in *antis*, and

\(^9\) id ubi vidit praetor <sc. L.F.Purpurio>, ut et ipse dilataret aciem, duas legiones ex subsidiis dextra laeuaque alae quae in prima acie pugnabat circumdat aedemque *Diiovi uovit*, si eo die hostes fudisset.

\(^{10}\) Previous line: *insula, dividua quam premit amnis aqua*. Ovid *Fasti* 1.292.

\(^{11}\) Platner and Ashby 1929 (s.v. “Veiovis”) claim that Ovid’s substitution of Jupiter for Veiovis is “through ignorance of the facts.”
individual ones on the right and the left in the returning angles. An example of this is on the Tiber island in the temple of Jupiter and Faunus.\textsuperscript{12}

One possibility is that both titles, Jupiter and Veiovis, are separate incarnations of one main god (Jupiter) which were worshipped in the same sanctuary. The ambiguity in the sources makes it difficult to determine for which incarnation the temple was constructed. Do we need to substitute \textit{Veiovis} for \textit{Iovis} in the texts of Livy, Ovid, and Vitruvius? Our problems lessen if we interpret Jupiter to be the main godhead behind these two denominations.

We are left with several possibilities:

1) Jupiter and Veiovis could each have had their own temples on the island.

2) A temple to Jupiter could have contained a small shrine to Veiovis which was associated with the festival mentioned in the calendar entry.

3) Jupiter and Veiovis are synonymous titles for the same deity.

4) Only a temple to Veiovis stood on the island, and the texts of Livy, Ovid, and Vitruvius all must be corrected as wrong or corrupted.

Holland (1961, p.188) does not accept the theory that Veiovis has any relation to Jupiter. She argues that his cloak\textsuperscript{13} makes him more akin to Mercury-Hermes and that his function was that of a “patron of wayfarers.” She believes that his presence at the island is explained by the proximity of this site to the early route of the salt-trade, the \textit{Via Salaria}. Also, Holland interprets the \textit{ve}– element in Veiovis’ name as a stem instead of a prefix, as in Veii, Veientes, or Veianius. She

\textsuperscript{12} See the above section on Faunus for a description of the temple style. The singular \textit{aede} is generally accepted to refer to two separate temples.

\textsuperscript{13} See below for a full description of our only sculptural evidence for the guise of the god.
goes as far as to suggest the name could be related to *veho*, or *via*, an etymology which would point to an early role of Veiovis as a “road god.”

As discussed in the above section on the Fatebenefratelli excavation, the temple dedicated at the island in 194 BC by Gaius Servilius (Livy 31.21.12 & 34.53.7) was unearthed underneath the hospital in 1994. An inscription discovered on the same site more than a century earlier (*CIL* VI.567: 30795) would associate this particular area of the island with the cult of Jupiter Jurarius, an otherwise unattested Roman equivalent of Ζεύς Ὀρκιος. The evidence of this inscription, while confirming on one hand the correctness of Livy, Ovid, and Vitruvius, it further complicates matters on the other, by introducing one more, yet, divine personality to the list of candidates for the occupancy of this part of the island.

Besides the ambiguity surrounding Veiovis’ presence on the island, the nature of the deity itself is elusive. The ancients’ inclination towards false etymology has left us with several interpretations of the cult of the god based on the prefix *ve*–.

Aulus Gellius attempts to explain the meaning of this prefix as follows (5.12.9):

"Ve" enim particula ...quaedam vocabula, quibus particula ista praeponitur, ambigua sint et utroqueversum dicantur, veluti "vescum," "vehemens," et "vegrande."

"Ve" is, in fact, a particle ...some words, in which that particle is used as a prefix, are ambiguous and are used diametrically, such as "vescum," "vehemens," and "vegrande."
While he concedes the meaning of the prefix *ve*– is ambiguous (5.12.10), he focuses on its privative use, as in *vegrandis* (not-large), *vesanus* (not-sane), *vecors* (not rational). According to this interpretation, Veiovis would be a sort of anti-Jupiter (Brucia 1990, p. 51).

Gellius (5.12.11) informs that the temple of Veiovis contained a statue of the god which *sagittas tenet, quae sunt videlicet partae ad nocendum* ‘holds arrows which, clearly, were produced for the purpose of harming / injuring.’ However, his use of *videlicet* between the verb and its auxiliary shows that he may be basing his description of the god on his impression of the monument rather than on sound iconographical knowledge.

The figure of a goat standing next to the god alludes to a sacrificial ceremony for Veiovis in which *immolaturque rito humano capra* ‘a nanny-goat is sacrificed by a human rite,’ (Gellius 5.12.12). The adjective *humano* can be interpreted in two ways: 1) As ‘human,’ a translation which points to the fact that the ceremony at point may have its origins in human sacrifice, and that the goat was used as a surrogate in a later version of the ritual (Brucia 1990, p.5114: if Veiovis is indeed an early chthonic deity, such a primitive practice could have been a possibility). 2) or as ‘humane,’ *i.e.* ‘civilized/refined.’15 However, Gellius’ description of the god has such negative overtones elsewhere, the former meaning is probably the intended one.

Ovid’s Veiovis is an entirely different character. Again, the god is interpreted to be an incarnation of Jupiter. Ovid paints a picture of a kindlier,

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14 For uses of *humano* in contexts of human sacrifice, *cf.* Cic. *Font.* 10 21; Tac. *G.* 9; Plin. 8, 22, 34, § 82; Flor. 1, 16, 7.
handsome deity rather than a harsh, menacing one. He describes Veiovis as a *Jupiter iuvenis* and doesn’t mention his arrows but instead explains why the statue is not holding the thunderbolt (*Fasti* 3.429-48). As Ovid puts it, Jupiter did not assume the thunderbolt until the revolt of the Titans, presenting the image of a benevolent, peaceful god, who was forced into taking arms. Even the goat standing beside him no longer represents a sacrifice victim, but is attributed a life-giving, nurturing role as *infanti lac dedit illa Iovi* (that goat which gave milk to the new-born Jove, *ibid.* 444).

Ovid devotes the second half of his account on the Nones of March to explain the etymology of the god’s name (*Fasti* 3.447-48):

> Ne tamen ignaro novitas tibi nominis obstet,  
> Discque quis iste deus, curque vocetur ita.

May the strangeness of the name not be a hindrance to you, ignorant,  
Learn who is that god, and why he is named thus.  
(*Fasti* 3.435-36)

By Ovid’s day, most people would not recognize the name Veiovis. Ovid interprets the *ve–* prefix to mean ‘young.’ He adduces the colloquial meanings of *vegrandia* ‘puny’ / ‘far from large’ and *vesca* ‘thin’ in support of his interpretation. However, he wavers in his assurance when he later writes:

> Vis ea si verbi est, cur non ego Veiovis aedem  
> aedem non magni suspicer esse Iovis?

If this is the force of the word, why do I mistrust the temple

---

16 Holland (1961, p.187-88) rejects this etymology, since the prefix in the rare adjective, *vegrandis*, is not functioning as a diminutive but as an extreme privative, *i.e.* not large—puny. However, she presents another possibility that *ve–* could be an intensifier, where from Veiovis would be a ‘Super-Jupiter.’
Clearly, Ovid feels the need to give an authoritative explanation for the novitas of a name which his contemporary fellow Roman would be ignarus of.\footnote{cf. Cicero DN 3.62 who concedes some names are from unknown origins: \textit{In multis enim nominibus haerebitis} (in many names you will be perplexed), namely Veiovis and Volcanus.}

An excavation conducted in the 1930s revealed the temple described by Gellius and Ovid at the corner of the Tabularium.\footnote{The excavation was conducted underneath the Palazzo Senatorio. The site showed evidence of several rebuildings (Purcell 1999, p.1583)} A fragmentary statue found at the site represents the god as young, beardless, and muscular. The statue’s curly locks and heavy cloak lead Holland (1961, p.188) to believe that it is modeled after an “Apollo archetype.”\footnote{Antonio Colini first noted the likeness in the god’s appearance to Apollo in the 1942 excavation reports. “Aedes Veiovis inter Arcem et Capitolium,” \textit{Bullettino Archeologico Comunale} 70: 5-55.} The figure lacks its head, right arm, left hand, both feet, as well as its goat-companion. We cannot see whether the god held the arrows described by Gellius or not. The relaxed appearance of the fragmentary statue hardly resembles the menacing god described by this author. Brucia (1990, p.52) questions whether Ovid and Gellius were even describing the same statue.

Essentially, we have no firm evidence from which to draw any definite conclusions about the role of Veiovis on the island. We know for sure a temple existed, indicated by Livy (31.21.12 & 34.53.7) and confirmed archaeologically by the excavation underneath the Fatebenefratelli hospital. Veiovis might well have been one of the secondary deities housed in this precinct, but he was hardly the main occupant. Like Semo Sancus, he appears to have been rather one of early

\footnote{For \textit{magnus} = aged, \textit{cf.} Livy 3.71.3; 10.38.6 \textit{homo magnus natu}. Usually in the comparative and superlative, with or without \textit{natu} or \textit{annis} (L&S).}
island divinities later assimilated with Jupiter and his precinct in the north sector of the site.

**Semo Sancus**

On the Tiber Island there may have also stood the shrine of another ancient Italian deity, Semo Sancus Dius Fidius. Our only evidence rests on a statue of Semo Sancus as described by Justin, the second-century apologist and martyr. The base of this statue, with the accompanying inscription,\(^21\) was found in the vicinity of the church of St. John Calybite.

Semo Sancus was introduced to the Romans very early by the Sabines who first colonized the Quirinal Hill. Lanciani describes the god as “the Genius of heavenly light, the son of Jupiter Diespiter or Lucetius,\(^22\) the avenger of dishonesty, the upholder of truth and faith whose mission upon earth was to secure the sanctity of agreements, of matrimony, and hospitality,” (1892, p.105). The Sabines considered Semo Sancus to be their ancestor (Plateroti 2000, p.16). Both the name, Semo, and, apparently, the god himself originated from a legendary deified king (Holland 1961, p.191). He is often confused with Hercules from the misinterpretation of Dius Fidius as Iovis Filius ‘son of Jupiter’ and because of the mutual associations between these two deities with the swearing of oaths (Scheid 1999, p.1383).

A temple to Semo Sancus dating back to the mid-fifth century BC existed nearby on the Quirinal Hill (Dionysius 9.60.8). Ovid (*Fasti* 6.217), who calls the god *Semo pater*, reports that the ancient Sabines presented him with a temple.

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\(^21\) See below for a discussion of the statue base.

\(^22\) Varro (*LL* 5.66) calls him also *Diovis* and *Diespiter.*
However, the structure on the Quirinal is more likely associated with the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus (Holland 1961, p.191).23

The extent of the shrine on the island is difficult to determine because there is no archaeological evidence for a structure of any kind. However, scholars agree that it was no more than a small open-air sanctuary ‘one which perhaps even incorporated other ancient deities.’ According to Varro (LL 5.66), the temple on the Quirinal was designed so that it had a *perforatum tectum, ut ea videatur divum* ‘a roof with a hole in it so that it might seem open-air’ because the religious rites associated with Semo Sancus had to be performed *sub divo.* Holland assumes that Sancus’ island shrine must have been “an open sanctuary between the bridges rather than an *aedes* for which there is no evidence,” (1961, p.190).

Because of his association with the sanctity of agreements, Sancus may be associated with an ancient form of Jupiter Jurarius (D’Onofrio 1980, p.49). If so, the shrine of the god was likely in proximity to or incorporated in the larger precinct of Jupiter Jurarius.24 On the other hand, as we know from the inscription on the base found near St. John Calybite that the Tiber Island shrine was attended to by the same *sacerdotes bidentales*25 who staffed the Quirinal sanctuary (*CIL* 6.567; *cf.* 14.2839). It is likely that the island shrine was a lesser branch of the main center of worship to the northeast.

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23 Supposedly the temple contained relics from the monarchy. *cf.* Dionysius 4.58.4; Plutarch *QR* 30; Pliny *NH* 8.194. The relics included the wool, distaff, spindle, and slippers of Tanaquil, and brass clypea or medallions, made of money confiscated from Vitruvius Vaccus (Lanciani 1892, p.105).

24 *cf.* HJ 636; Besnier 1902. 273-279, 286-289.

25 “According to Festus, *bidentalia* were small shrines of second-rate divinities, to whom *bidentes,* lambs two years old, were sacrificed. For this reason the priests of Semo were called *sacerdotes bidentales,*” (Lanciani 1892, p.106).
The only archeological evidence we have of the presence of Semo Sancus on the island is a marble statue base from the second-century BC, uncovered near the church of St. John Calybite in July, 1574, during the pontificate of Gregory XIII (Lanciani 1892, p.104). An inscription survives on the base, which reads \((CIL \text{ VI.567})\):

\begin{verbatim}
Semoni
Sanco
deo Fidio
sacrum
Sex(tus) Pompeius Sp(urii) f(ilius)
Col(lina) Mussianus
quinquennalis
decur(iae) bidentalis
donum dedit.
\end{verbatim}

Sacred to Semo Sancus Deus Fidius.
Sextus Pompeius Collina Mussianus, son of Spurius, of the five-year bidentalis priesthood, gave [this] gift.

A (not very accurate) representation of this inscription, lying alongside the main island path, can be seen in Giuseppe Vasi’s engraving, \textit{Chiesa di S. Bartolomeo all'Isola.} Another dedication to Sancus was retrieved in the Tiber in close proximity to the island \((CIL \text{ VI.30995})\).

The text of the inscription on the statue base was misread by the second-century apologist, Justin the Martyr. He mistook the dedication \textit{Semoni Sanco Deo} to be \textit{Simoni Deo Sancto} ‘for the holy-god Simon.’ He interpreted the monument to be a statue of the infamous Simon Magus, St. Peter’s secular rival, (as defined by Goodenough 1968, p.80). Simon Magus had practiced magic in Samaria and had apparently offered money to the apostles to grant him the power of the holy spirit \((Acts 8: 9-20)\). Between 152 and 154 AD, Justin wrote an

\textsuperscript{26} Vasi \textit{Book V} Plate No. 92.
emphatic letter to Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Commodus demanding that they destroy the statue on the island which he believed to represent this questionable character (Apologia I). Justin’s error wasn’t discovered until July, 1574, when the statue base showing the correct inscription was unearthed. This is now preserved in the Galleria Lapidaria of the Vatican Museum (Lanciani, 1892, p.151).

Bellona

In 1970, the discovery of a funerary inscription of unknown provenience has shown the existence of another minor deity on the island, the goddess Bellona. This text, which is dated to the first century, reads (AE 1971, 40):

_Apidia Ma scap(h)iar(a) Bellones Insulensis_

Apidia Ma, seller of bowls for Bellona on the island.

No other evidence exists for the cult on the island. A temple to Bellona, dating from 296 BC, existed in the nearby Campus Martius. Bellona was an ancient Italian goddess of war, probably also Sabine in origin. In older Latin, her name appears as Duellona and she later became associated with the Greek goddess Ἐνυώ, Enyo (Peck 1898, s.v. “Bellona”). She accompanied Mars in battle, and was variously identified as his wife, sister or daughter. Her temple in the Campus Martius served as a meeting place for the Senate when it received foreign ambassadors (Livy 30.21, 40; 33.24; 42.36).

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27 Temples of Bellona Pulvinensis and Bellona Rufilia existed during the Empire. Platner (1929, p.83) asserts the epithets probably refer to the individual who built the temple.
28 The temple was vowed by Appius Claudius Caecus in 296 BC (Liv. 10.19.17; Plin. NH 35.12; Ov. Fast. 6. 201-04; CIL I. 2. p. 192, and dedicated on June 3rd (Ov. Fast. 6.201).
29 cf. CIL 06, 40943 = CIL 06, 31606.
Since the temple was outside of the pomerium, outside the religious boundaries of the city, it was also used by generals awaiting their triumph after battle. Generals were not allowed to enter the city in arms (Rose 1999, p. 238).³⁰

During the first century AD, another cult of Bellona entered Rome from the Anatolian district of Comana in Cappadocia. In the eastern cult, Bellona was a *dea pedisequa* of the Magna Mater. During her festivals, the Bellonarii walked in procession dressed in all black. At the sacrifices, they shed their own blood by cutting their arms and loins with a double-edged axe while the tumult of drums and trumpets added to the frenzy of the festival. They collected their blood in their hands and poured it upon the altar. The Apidia Ma, commemorated in *AE* 1971, 40, as a bowl maker for Bellona, appears, in fact, to be a woman of eastern origin. The name, Ma, may refer to a connection with the Great Mother.

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³⁰ Liv. 26.2; 27.9, 38; 31.47; 33.22; 36.39; 38.44; 39.29; 41.6; 42.9.
CONCLUSION

This thesis is the product of one and a half years of study on the Tiber Island—the islet on the Tiber river which housed the earliest and most important cult of the physician god, Aesculapius, in the Roman world. It brings together the results of over a year of bibliographical research at Italian and American libraries with those of one month of fieldwork at the site. It presents the reader with a re-examination of the religious topography of the island, ancient and modern, in light of the most recent archaeological discoveries and of the last three campaigns of survey work conducted by the University of Florida in the Summers of 2000-2003. As such, it constitutes an update of, and a supplement to, the previous monographs of Maurice Besnier (1902) and Margaret Brucia (1990). This thesis also introduces the reader to four previously unknown epigraphical fragments from the island (Appendix B) and to the first complete survey of the fourteen ancient columns preserved in the modern church of St. Bartholomew (Appendix A).
### Appendix A: Survey of St. Bartholomew's columns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column Base</th>
<th>Column Drum</th>
<th>Total height</th>
<th>General description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perimeter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cf.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Height</strong></td>
<td><strong>Height</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>66 x 67cm</td>
<td>211cm</td>
<td>90cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>73 x 71cm</td>
<td>220cm</td>
<td>88cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>60 x 60cm</td>
<td>183cm</td>
<td>109cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>73 x 74cm</td>
<td>226cm</td>
<td>102cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>88 x 90cm</td>
<td>279cm</td>
<td>100cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>70 x 71cm</td>
<td>213cm</td>
<td>96cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>round base</td>
<td>210cm</td>
<td>70cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>77 x 77cm</td>
<td>235cm</td>
<td>67cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>63 x 63cm</td>
<td>188cm</td>
<td>84cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>58 x 58cm</td>
<td>183cm</td>
<td>84cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4</td>
<td>61 x 62cm</td>
<td>184cm</td>
<td>94cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5</td>
<td>86 x 88cm</td>
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<td>90cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L6</td>
<td>61 x 59cm</td>
<td>186cm</td>
<td>91cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L7</td>
<td>62 x 62cm</td>
<td>188cm</td>
<td>100cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B. Four Unpublished Epigraphical Fragments from the Island

1. Inscribed fragment of white marble. 8.3 cm x 13 cm. Upper portion of a line of text with a double horizontal rule above. Found at the S end of the island, incorporated in the brick and rubble wall above the Ship Monument.

--]SMP[--

The curved stroke immediately after the break could be the upper part of a C. The third letter could also be a D or a B.
2. Inscribed fragment of white marble. 56 cm x 9 cm. The quality of the lettering is very poor. Found in a pile of rubble at the N end of the island.

I DCX[--]
3. Inscribed fragment of a cream colored marble. 24 cm x 5 cm. Found on the east bank of the island, incorporated in a brick and rubble wall south of the Pons Fabricius.

EA[--]

The second letter could be an M.
4. Inscribed fragment of grayish marble. 20cm x 38cm. Found in a pile of rubble in the same location as n. 2 above. The letters are deeply carved.

---]AN[---

---]ON[---

---]I[---

After the right half of an A, the left vertical and the oblique of an N or M are visible. After O, the left vertical and the oblique of an N or M are visible.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

I am a graduate student at the University of Florida, currently completing an MA degree in classical studies with a thesis on the history and archaeology of the Tiber Island in Rome. I received a $3000 scholarship to travel to Rome in the summer of 2003 to conduct field research on the Tiber Island for Dr. Robert Wagman, my project coordinator.

Beyond classics, my interests include music and astronomy.