

The ARCHITECTURE *of* ROMAN TEMPLES

The Republic to the Middle Empire

This book examines the development of Roman temple architecture from its earliest history in the sixth century B.C. to the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines in the second century A.D. Although archaeologists, architects, and historians have studied these temples since the Renaissance, this book is unique for its specific analysis of Roman temples as a building type. John Stamper analyzes their formal qualities, the public spaces in which they were located, and, most importantly, the authority of precedent in their designs. The basis of that authority was the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the city's first and most important temple. Stamper challenges the accepted reconstruction of this temple, proposing a new reconstruction and an assessment of its role in the transformation of Rome. He also traces Rome's temple architecture as it evolved over time and how it accommodated changing political and religious contexts, as well as the effects of new stylistic influences.

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The Republic to the Middle Empire

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PREFACE

The temple architecture of ancient Rome has served as a model for architectural design for more than two millennia. Beginning with the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill and proceeding through the buildings of the Republic and the Empire, generations of architects have copied Roman architecture directly or have been influenced by its principles and building vocabulary. Even the most abstract modern buildings often have links to ancient Rome. It has been the standard against which all other architecture and urban design is measured, and even today, nearly two thousand years after the construction of Rome's major buildings and urban spaces, hundreds, if not thousands, of architects and city planners across the United States and Europe use Rome's architecture as a vital design source.

The inventive transformations of architects such as Charles Moore, Michael Graves, and Robert Venturi or the literal interpretations of Leon Krier, Robert Adam, and Thomas Gordon Smith reveal the profound and persistent influence of Roman temple design. Even those who rail against its influence, who point out its representation of political oppression or of pagan sacrifice, or who dislike the orders in general, still marvel at the beauty of its proportions and the technical expertise of its buildings. Whatever our bias may be – traditional, modern, or something in between – the buildings of Rome provide a rich manifestation of precedent-based architectural design. Representing the power of ancient Roman culture, they commemorate its largely anonymous designers and builders.

Beyond their meaning for today's architects, the temples of ancient Rome tell us much about the city's political, social, and religious history. They played an important role in mediating between the efforts of the

ruling class to legitimize its power and the needs and desires of the general populace to have a safe and secure existence. An analysis of the temples reveals much about the relationship between politics and religion on one hand and the signs, symbols, and rituals embedded in architecture and ceremony on the other. The image Roman citizens had of the temples resulted from the interplay between physical appearance and mental construct. Like all cities, ancient Rome was a composite of the manifest and the imagined, and any reading of its buildings and urban spaces must see them both as physical forms and as ancient political and religious symbols.

The purpose of this study is thus to describe the architecture and the political and religious context of the most significant sacred shrines in ancient Rome, from the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at the beginning of the Republic to Hadrian's Pantheon and Temple of Venus and Rome in the middle of the second century A.D. It does so in terms of both the archaeological and the literary evidence that allows reconstruction of their forms and architectural details. It describes aspects of their structural and spatial types, formal vocabulary, topographical and urban orientation, ceremonial function, and symbolic meaning. In terms of their social context, it analyzes their symbolic role as places for public ceremony and the display of political and religious authority.

This book is not intended to be an all-encompassing guide to Roman architecture. Building types other than temples – basilicas, curias, theaters, and housing, for instance – are not part of this study. Only those temples that are fairly well documented are included, and only those found in central Rome. Some examples from the Roman provinces are included, but

only for reasons of comparison. This is not an archaeological study, although it obviously draws on the work of archaeologists both past and present. Nor is it a treatise on ancient Roman religions and their mythological figures. Rather, it is a study in architectural history that focuses on the forms of the Roman temples, their urban settings, and their cultural and political contexts. It places more emphasis on reconstructions and architectural character than on the physical remains of foundations and fragments of building materials. It analyzes changes to the buildings over time and relates those changes to broader political and religious events. Finally, it considers the temples in a comparative way, not as isolated examples on a tourist's itinerary, but in relation to other temples of their time and to the urban context in which they were built.

The thousands of visitors who go to Rome each year, especially to its ancient sites and monuments – the Forum Romanum, Forum Boarium, the imperial fora, and the Campus Martius – are invariably impressed by the grandeur and dignity of what they see. They cannot, however, easily visualize the original appearance of the temples, the technical methods used in their construction, nor their role in the ancient city's social, political, and religious life. The fragments of the buildings that remain only suggest their original character; it is the task of archaeologists and architectural historians to make those images more vivid and tangible in both form and meaning (Fig. 1).

This book's purpose is to provide visitors to Rome – architects, planners, historians, and students – with a more comprehensive description of its ancient temples than exists to date. It also proposes a new reconstruction of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and emphasizes both the crucial role it played as a precedent for later temple design and the basis for its political and religious authority. It reviews the principal temple and forum complexes of the Etruscan and early Republican periods, then focuses on the projects of Rome's most famous consuls, dictators, and emperors from Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar to Augustus and Hadrian – those who contributed most to the city's civic and religious architecture. It sheds new light on the form and chronological development of Roman architecture, and interprets the work of archaeologists through the eyes of an architectural historian. Discussing the authority of precedent as the basis for design and symbolic

connotations, it proposes a new unity in the history of Roman temple architecture.

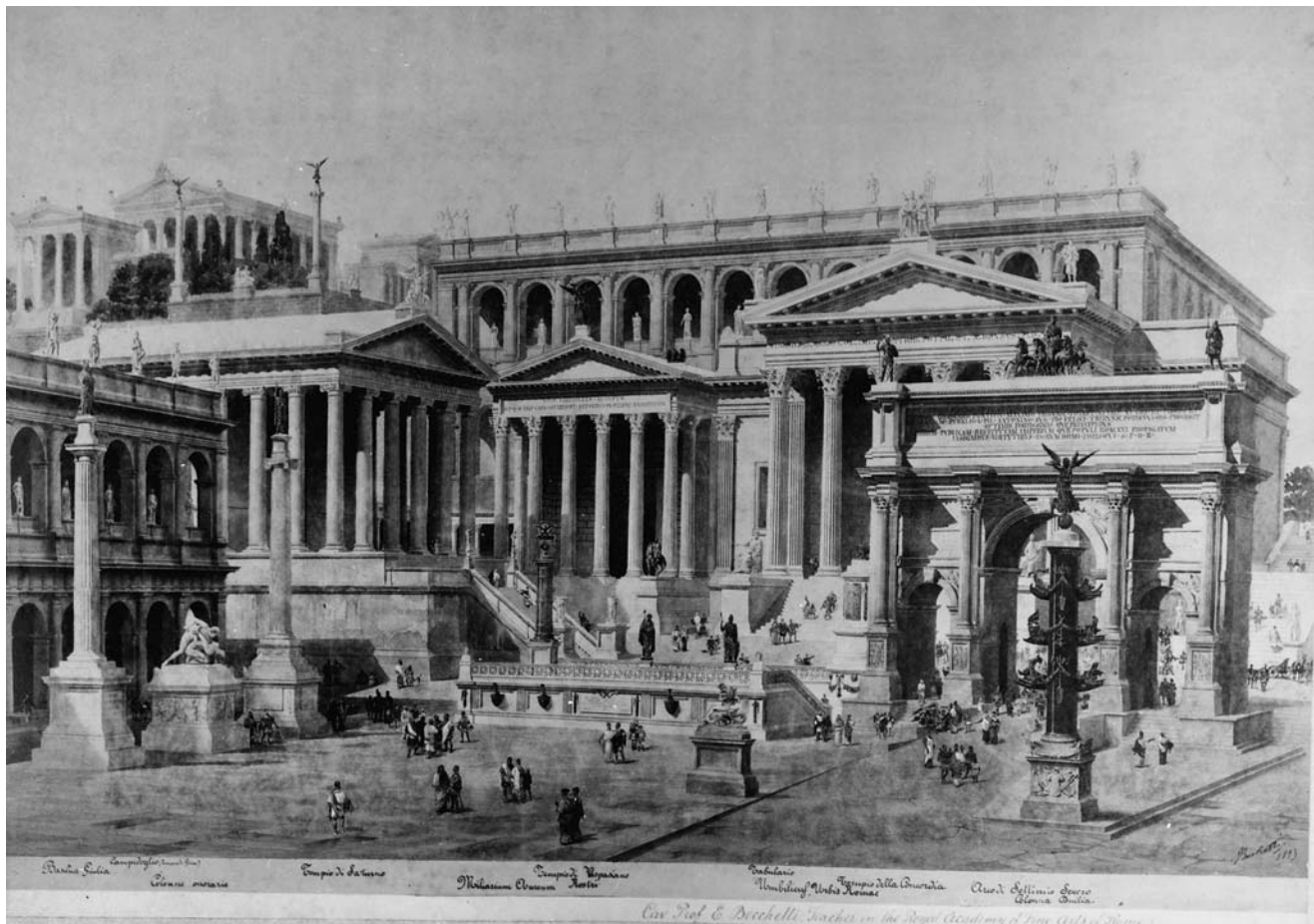
The illustrations include a large number of new drawings of the temples in plan and elevation that I or architecture students under my direction have produced. The classical focus of the School of Architecture at the University of Notre Dame provides these students with an excellent grounding in drawing the orders. They are highly proficient and accurate in drawing reconstructions of classical buildings. They have been further aided in this expertise by their experience of a junior year abroad at Notre Dame's Rome Studies Center, where I was director from 1990 to 1999. I have credited individual students in the illustration captions and have indicated the primary source or sources for each drawing. In most cases, several sources and data from firsthand site visits were used, including articles on recent archaeological findings from the 1990s.

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1. Perspective view of west end of Forum Romanum as it appeared in ca. A.D. 300. Drawing by E. Becchelli, 1983. Photo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, 74.2700.

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