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The Capitolium at Brescia in the Flavian Period

Abstract: The Capitolium at Brescia is one of the rare well-preserved examples of this temple type in Roman Italy. Large parts of its architecture, interior design and the forum area to which it was connected, can be reconstructed. This case study will provide a systematic analysis of the Capitolium, focusing on the aesthetic and semantic effects of its decorative elements, as well as their correlation and interaction in the creation of specific spatial qualities. Consequently, various aspects – such as the urban setting, architecture and layout, different features of the interior design and the framework of action, i. e., that of ritual performances – will be taken into account.

Temples located in the forum helped to define the political and religious centre of Roman cities. At Brescia (Roman Brixia), located between Milan and Verona[1], the Capitolium was rebuilt during the reign of the emperor Vespasian, a process that was completed in A.D. 72/73[2] (Figs. 1–3). Distinctive features of the temple were its position on a high terrace on the southern slope of the Colle Cidneo and its transverse layout, which included three large *cellae* (dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva), two rooms of unknown function[3] and lateral porticos. The elongated forum was situated directly to the south of the Capitolium area, enclosed by porticos at the sides and a basilica at the end of the square. The two areas were separated by a remarkable difference in height and by the elevated *decumanus maximus*, which crossed the city in an east-west direction. In recent decades, numerous studies and new excavation projects have helped to delineate the development and architectural design of the temple and the forum[4]. Apart from a few exceptions, the individual decorative features that adorned the exterior and interior spaces have been analysed only in isolation[5].

According to Vitruvius, the urban setting of Roman temples, and especially Capitolia, guaranteed their visibility in the ancient cityscape[6]. Moreover, certain principles of *decor* – including symmetry, consistent proportions and a certain set of *ornamenta* – were appropriate for the design of such a temple[7]. As a result, the perception of the temple was affected by the building's proportions, rhythm, the tectonic structure, as well as the decorative features applied to the columns, entablature and pediment. From Vitruvius' point of view, all forms of *decor* were related to one another.

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1 The city, which was located in the former territory of the Cenomani, was given the rank of a *colonia civica Augusta* in the Augustan period. For the history of Brescia, see Albertini 1979, 152–171 and Rossi 2012.

2 The Flavian date is confirmed by the inscription preserved on the architrave (CIL V, 4312): cf. Panazza 2012. The interpretation of the temple as the Capitolium is secured by a dedicatory inscription belonging to an altar, which has been fragmentarily preserved. See Gregori 2014, 319 f. Fig. 1.

3 For the room next to the eastern *cella*, see Dell'Acqua 2014, 346–348.

4 The first excavations in the area of the temple were carried out between 1823 and 1826. For a history of research, see Dell'Acqua 2012, 80–82. In addition to the important studies of Hanns Gabelmann and Antonio Frova, which concern the layout and architecture of the temple and the forum, the results of excavations carried out during the 1990s are fundamental; see Mirabella Roberti 1961, esp. 256–259; Gabelmann 1971, 124–145; Frova 1979, 218–240; 1990; Rossi 1995; Gros 1996, 168–170. 214 f.; Rossi 1996; 1998; Bacchetta 2008; Sacchi et al. 2011; Dander 2014d. Antonio Dell'Acqua has presented detailed studies on the architecture and ornamentation of the temple: see Dell'Acqua 2012 and Dell'Acqua 2014.

5 Gabelmann (1971, 142 f.), in particular, focused on the interplay between decorative features in the architectural design of the forum and the Capitolium, describing the effects of the built architecture and the materials used. Despite numerous new and important insights into the design of the building's interior, floors and walls (Angelelli – Guidobaldi 2002; Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014), cult images and additional furnishings (Gabelmann 1969; Franken 2002; Locatelli 2002; Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014) are only treated separately.

6 Vitr. De arch. 1, 7, 1.

7 See the essential categories provided by the introduction to this volume by Annette Haug.
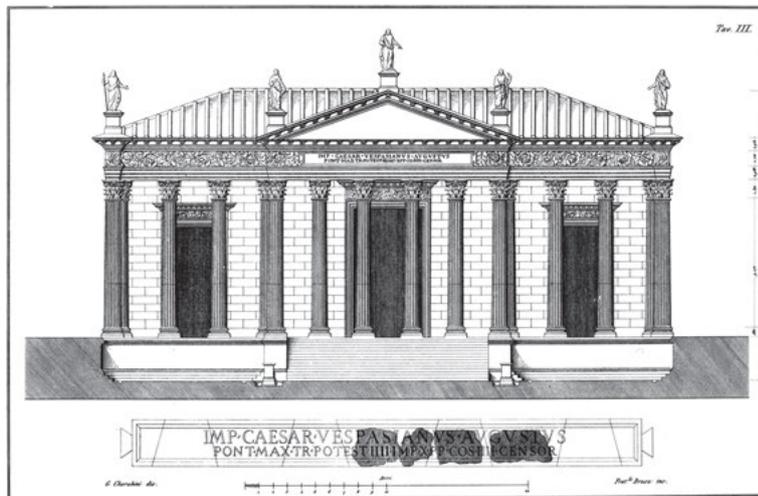
Fig. 1: Brescia, Capitolium.

Fig. 2: Brescia, Capitolium, reconstruction.

Apart from these recommendations, some of which remain ideal, the perception of Roman temples was determined by their architecture, their urban setting and the different forms of ritual activities associated with them. However, neither the complex ritual actions of the *sacra publica* that took place in front of *and* inside the temple[8], nor the possibility of private animal sacrifices performed in honour of the Capitoline Triad at Rome (as described by Juvenal)[9], can be treated in detail here. Instead, this case study aims to explore how the architectural design and spatial organisation of the Capitolium, as well as the materials employed in its construction, affected the perception of indi-

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8 On the primary components and various aspects of the Roman sacrifice (procession, pre-offering, animal sacrifice, *lectisternium* inside the temple, etc.), cf. Rupke 2001, 137–153; Scheid 2003, 79–100; 2005, 44–57; Prescendi 2007, 31–51; Linke 2014, 21–31. 112–116. Among the most important ritual acts that took place inside the temple were the ritual purification and crowning of the cult statue(s): cf. Ov. Fast. 4, 135–138; 3, 253 f. and the overview given in ThesCRA 2004 s. v. Rites et activités relatifs aux images de culte; Couronnes végétales, guirlandes, rameaux et bandelettes pour l'image cultuelle (C. Lochin – N. Blanc) 451–456 esp. 452 f. nos. 301–309. 319; 455 f. nos. 338–352.

9 In gratitude for the salvation of his friend, Juvenal (Sat. 12, 3–19) describes the arrangement of a sacrifice in front of the temple of the Capitoline Triad with sacrificial animals for Jupiter (a white bull), Juno and Minerva (a white lamb each).
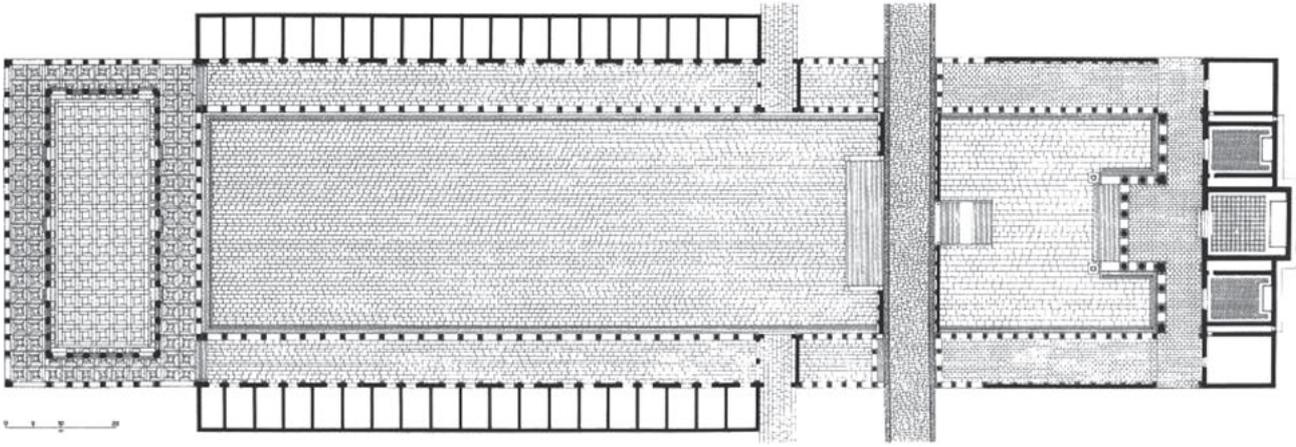
viduals approaching the temple from the forum. Here we shall follow in the footsteps of a prospective supplicant, who proceeds from the lower forum piazza towards the temple, before eventually entering the *cella* to make a private prayer or offering[10].

Exterior design: the forum and Capitolium area

A person entering the forum from the south (i. e., by passing through the basilica)[11] could perceive immediately the architectural and spatial extension of the forum square (120 × 40 m)[12], the lateral porticos (home to *tabernae*) and the essential elements of the Capitolium, high on the slope of the Colle Cidneo. It is evident that the arrangement of the buildings was influenced by these types of distant viewing positions. The location of the Capitolium on axis with the square and the forum's symmetrical porticos, which were situated in line with the lateral porticos of the temple, staggered the architectural features in a fixed spatial reference system. Due to the difference in height between the Capitolium and the forum piazza (Figs. 4–5), an aesthetically spectacular impact was created[13]. The porticos at the sides of the forum established a heterogeneous frame for the square and directed the viewer's gaze towards the Capitolium. The scenographic effect created by the Capitolium was emphasised by its central location and its higher position in comparison to the porticos located on the terrace (see below). The enormous scale of the complex was emphasised by the large number of columns across its front, with the temple's main entrance enhanced by a distinctive, projecting pediment and the staircase leading up to it (although from the southern end of the forum, the depth of the extended *pronaos* would hardly have been visible). The Capitolium area was further emphasised by the white limestone employed in its architecture, which reflected the light and distinguished the building from the green, verdant backdrop of the hill.

The contrasting architectural design of the Capitolium and forum areas also created a sequence of different spatial impressions. The porticos that enclosed the forum piazza on the east and west

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10 In principle, access to Roman temples appears to have been granted for private prayers addressing the gods, including the deposition of votive offerings inside the temple: cf. Mattern 2001, 57. Access to the Capitolium in Rome was special in the sense that a priest was solely responsible for announcing the name of the visitor to Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Furthermore, the gods are said to have been called upon to act as guarantors, to receive statements of claim submitted to them and to have disputes performed in front of them: Aug. Civ. 6, 10; cf. Pekáry 1985, 117 n. 21.
11 Cf. Mirabella Roberti 1961, 256–259; Rossi 1995; Sacchi et al. 2011. For a detailed analysis of the basilica, see Rossi 1998, 17–41.
12 Rossi 1995, 330. Previous data indicating 140 × 41 m are no longer valid.
13 The difference in height between the forum pavement and the running level of the terrace is 8.5 m (Sacchi et al. 2011, 116).
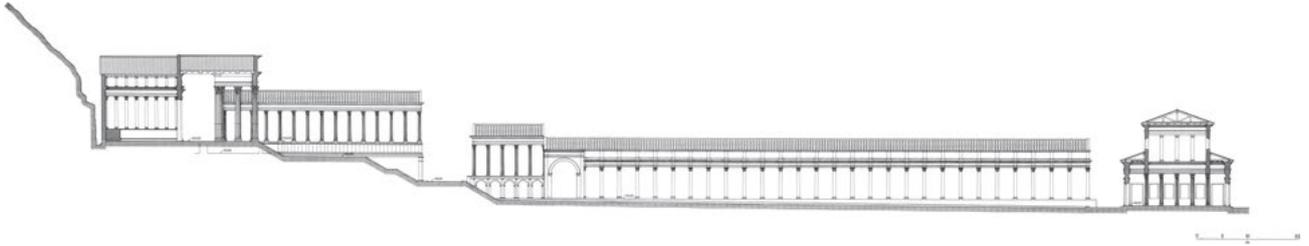
Fig. 4: Brescia, the various levels of the Capitolium and the forum area.

were elevated above the pavement of the square, accessible by three steps (Figs. 4; 6–7)[14]. Apart from the column shafts and bases, which were produced in coloured and white marble, respectively, white Botticino limestone was used for the architectural features of the porticos[15]. The columns, which measure 6.33 m in height, were set on Attic bases and plinths and topped with Corinthian capitals[16]. The shafts were produced from single pieces of grey marble[17]; they lacked flutes, making the irregular veining on their surfaces easily visible. The entablature above consisted of various decorative features, including an architrave with three *fasciae*. Judging by the technical treatment of the upper side of the blocks, the porticos were probably topped by an attic zone (Fig. 7)[18]. In correlation with the columns, parts of the architrave and the entablature projected slightly outward. As Gabelmann correctly pointed out: 'Auf diese Weise werden die horizontalen Linien der Hallen-architektur durch Vertikalakzente unterbrochen, die die Säulenachsen betonen'[19]. While the porti-
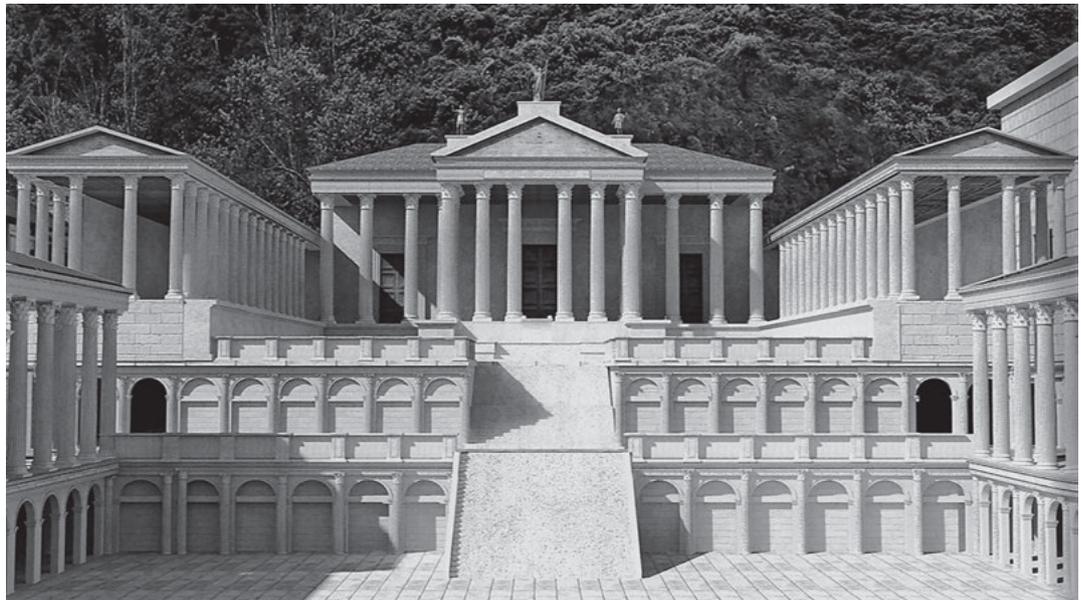

Fig. 5: Brescia, reconstruction of the Capitolium and the terrace, as seen from the forum.

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14 Rossi 1995, 338. The pavement of the forum is not preserved.

15 Sacchi et al. 2011, 117.

16 Filli Rossi (1995, 330) assesses the height of the columns including the base and capital. According to Mirabella Roberti (1961, 256), the lower diameter of the columns is 0.67 m, the intercolumnation is 2.90 m and the depth of the porticos is approximately 5 m. The floor consisted of white and grey marble slabs arranged in a rectangular pattern, similar to the one used inside the basilica (Rossi 1996 and Morandini 2006, 34). For detailed discussion of the porticos' architecture, see Sacchi et al. 2011.

17 Described as cipollino by Gabelmann (1971, 131) and Rossi (1995, 330), as pavonazzetto by Mirabella Roberti (1961, 254) and possibly as proconnesian marble in Sacchi et al. 2011, 122 f.

18 Rossi 1996, 81; Sacchi et al. 2011, 119 f. Figs. 9. 10. Cf. also Frova 1979, 225 and Stella et al. 1979b, 90–94 cat. IV 2–6. Gabelmann (1971, 131) had previously proposed two-storey porticos.

19 Gabelmann 1971, 127. On intensified illusionism as a decorative principle employed in Flavian architecture, see Gabelmann 1971, 128 and Strocka 2010, 98–104 esp. 99 f. 113. 122 with further literature.

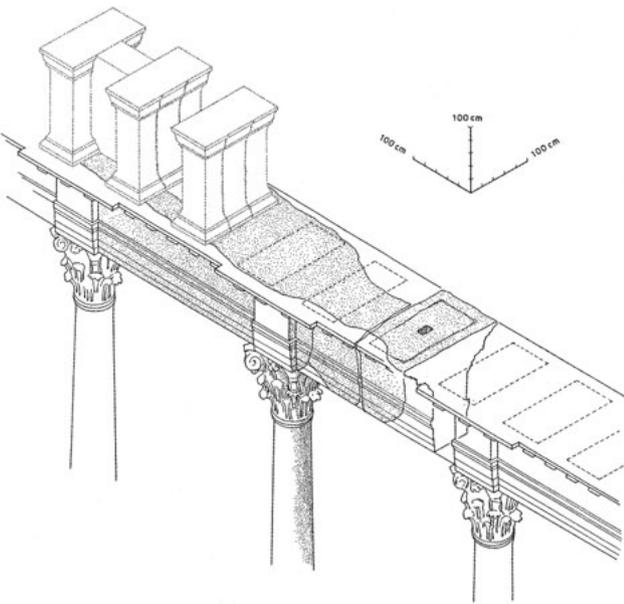**Fig. 6:** Brescia, reconstructed section of the eastern portico.

Fig. 7: Brescia, reconstruction of the portico's attic zone.

cos did not frame the entire length of the forum, their colonnades added a uniform rhythm to the space and directed the viewer's gaze towards the higher Capitolium. At the north end of the forum, however, this rhythm was disrupted by monumental arches and (possibly) raised loggias (Fig. 4)[20]. The north wall may have been decorated in the same manner as the façade of the terrace above, with pilasters and arches (Fig. 5)[21].

As one crossed the square, the perception of the temple changed with the decreasing distance. The vast forum piazza, *decumanus maximus* and the level of the terrace were connected via two

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20 Sacchi et al. 2011, 116–118.
21 Rossi 1995, 330.

sets of stairs[22], which defined a specific direction of movement and directed the gaze towards the temple's façade. Passing through these different levels, a rhythmisation of spaces – from wide, open expanses to narrower passages – would have become apparent. From the forum, the stairs led to the *decumanus maximus*, which formally separated the forum and the Capitolium area[23]. At this point, the high terrace wall, which extended to the west and east, would have come into view. This wall was rhythmically structured through the use of engaged arches and pilasters (set in low relief), with a balustrade probably positioned above them (Fig. 5)[24].

The temple, upper porticos and altar[25] were only visible upon reaching the level of the terrace, which was accessible via a wide staircase positioned on axis with the temple's front. From this point of view, the viewer was confronted with the outstanding architectural design of the area. On the one hand, the structural unity of the Capitolium area was obvious. The columns of the temple and the flanking porticos enclosed the terrace on three sides and were connected by a podium of the same height[26]. The coherence of the architectural design was emphasised by a comparable set of architectural features and the use of white Botticino limestone throughout, which created a bright impression through its light-reflecting properties. On the other hand, the temple was highlighted as the featured element of the complex, not only by the sheer dimensions of the façade[27], but also by its projecting *pronaos* and staircase[28], which sat on an axis with the middle *cella* (Fig. 3). Reaching the monumental staircase of the temple, the viewer was directly confronted with the monumental architecture of the temple, with a total height of slightly more than 20 m (Fig. 2).

The columns that decorated the front of the hexastyle Capitolium sat on Attic bases and were topped with Corinthian capitals. They were fluted, although on the lower part of the columns, these flutes were partially filled (so-called 'Rundstabfüllung') and thus were actually convex[29]. This decorative feature introduced an additional horizontal plane throughout the complex. As vertical elements, the columns directed the view upwards towards the finely decorated entablature and pediment. The architrave, with its three *fasciae*, was heavily embellished with ornament, which consisted of running dog, astragal and stirrup-framed leaf and dart motifs, among others, while the frieze displayed elaborately worked leafy tendrils[30]. Above the extended *pronaos*, the Capitolium's inscription, probably framed by a *tabula*, was especially emphasised, occupying most of the frieze zone and topped with dentils, egg and dart, and stirrup-framed leaf and dart mouldings, which continued upward to the modillion cornice. The same sequence of ornaments was employed for the decoration of the pediment[31].

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22 Even though no archaeological remains have survived from the northern part of the forum, the differences in height must have been overcome by stairs. In Fig. 5 presented here, it is assumed that the width of the stairs in the forum area is identical to the width of those on the terrace.

23 The street was approximately 3 m wide and paved with limestone slabs: see Mirabella Roberti 1961, 243 f. and Stella et al. 1979b, 90 cat. IV 1.

24 Gabelmann 1971, 129; Dell'Acqua 2014, 321.

25 Only the foundation of the altar has survived (Dander 2014d, 313 Fig. 1). In Fig. 1 presented here the altar is missing.

26 The podium (3.03 m in height) was structured by vertical limestone slabs. Dell'Acqua 2014, 323 f. Figs. 2. 3.

27 A length of 40 m, a width of 10 m and a total height of 8.30–8.50 m are assumed for the porticos. The height of the columns was presumably about 5.20 m: Dell'Acqua 2014, 343. 345 f.

28 The staircase is 14 m wide: (Gabelmann 1971, 142) and was framed by the extended podium and two small fountains: Dell'Acqua 2014, 322 Fig. 1.

29 Dell'Acqua 2014, 325. 326–329 Pl. 1, 1–4.

30 Compared to the temple, the number of decorative elements used in the entablature of the lateral porticos seems to have been reduced: two architrave blocks show only three *fasciae* without additional ornament (Dell'Acqua 2014, 343–347 Figs. 11. 12 Pls. 7, 1–8; 8, 2–7).

31 Dell'Acqua 2014, 329–339 Figs. 5–7 Pls. 2, 1–5; 3, 1–8; 4, 1–3; 5. Moreover, the pediment was probably crowned by three statues. Cf. Mirabella Roberti 1961, 253 n. 6: 'Sul timpano erano tre statue: ne restano almeno due resti di basamento sporgenti al livello del tetto'.

The transition from exterior to interior space

As one approached the temple from the terrace, the transition from outside to in was clearly accentuated. While ascending the stairs, essential design elements of the *pronaos*, such as the floor and walls of the *cella*, gradually came into view. Passing through the columns that established the Capitolium's façade marked the transition into a more clearly defined space. Passing through the *pronaos*, white limestone continued to dominate the view: this material was used for the floor, the façade of the *cella* and the door jambs. Pilasters were included in the design of the façade, modelled on the columns of the pronaos[32]. Naturally, the doors of the *cellae* were a decisive factor in separating outside from inside. While the massive doorjambs were simple in their design, the lintels they supported contained numerous decorative features, including a tendril frieze adorned with small flowers and birds, a modillion frieze with an egg-and-dart-moulding, a stirrup-framed leaf and dart moulding and a pipe frieze[33]. The hierarchical organisation of the temple's *cellae* was indicated by the height of the doors, with the largest reserved for the centre, thereby underlining Jupiter's supremacy.

The interior design of the Capitolium

When entering one of the temple's *cellae*, the viewer was confronted with entirely different lighting conditions[34] and decorative features. In particular, the various types of marble used for the walls and floors created strong colour contrasts to the bright external architecture. The central *cella* was characterised by its dimensions (11.8 × 14.8 m), the decoration of the walls, floor and ceiling and the cult statue of Jupiter[35]; indeed, one of the chief decorative principles of Roman temples was the extensive use of precious marbles. At Brescia, an elaborate *opus sectile* floor bridged the space between the entrance area and the colossal cult statue, which was highlighted by its placement on a high podium against the rear wall. The marble revetment on the walls created a uniform rhythm through its incorporation of horizontal elements and pilasters above a high dado. The wall design was also decisive for the perception of the depth and height of the space. The vertical pilasters directed the gaze upwards to the ceiling (of an unknown design) and emphasised the overall height of the *cella*.

The floor was dominated by a large square (10.20 m²) in the centre, bordered by narrow strips of dark grey bardiglio; the latter also appeared in the entrance area, just beyond the threshold[36]. In contrast to this rather dark frame, the central square was decorated with colourful pieces of pavonazzetto framed by rectangles of giallo antico, with smaller squares of pavonazzetto posi-

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32 If Ionic-Corinthian capitals can be assigned to the pilasters of the façade, the shift in the architectural order would have been distinctive (Dell'Acqua 2014, 340 Fig. 8). The reconstruction reproduced in Fig. 2 depicts isodomic blocks that structure the façade of the temple.

33 Dell'Acqua 2014, 340 f. Pl. 4, 1–5; Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 385. Apart from the pipe frieze instead of dentils, these ornaments are also employed for the entablature and the pediment (see above).

34 When the door of the *cella* was closed, the interior would have been much darker than the *pronaos*. However, the presence of candelabra and lamps should be considered. Fragments of a monumental candelabrum (c. 3.5 m in height) made of limestone (Fig. 8) have been found in the central *cella*; see Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 398 f. 397 Fig. 13. On the use of Roman marble candelabra in temples or sanctuaries and their role as lighting equipment or *thymiateria*, see Cain 1985, 12–22 esp. 15–19. Some aspects of lighting are emphasised in Mattern 2001, 59 with n. 16.

35 The decoration of the lateral *cellae* will not be discussed in detail. The hierarchical organisation of space indicated by the different size of the doors correlates to the size of the interior. The *cellae* for Juno and Minerva were smaller (8.80 × 12.25 m) (Fig. 2). Moreover, the podium for the cult statue of Jupiter (8.55 × 3.80 × 2.35 m) was almost twice as large as the lateral *cellae* (western *cella*: 4.48 × 1.87 × 1.60 m). See Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 369. 371. 375. 378.

36 Angelelli – Guidobaldi 2002, 202.

Fig. 8: Brescia, central *cella* of the Capitolium.

tioned at the corners (Fig. 8)[37]. The contrast between the two marbles – one a cold, blueish white and the other an intense, bright yellow – must have been striking for the visitor[38].

The size, pattern and surface structures of the marble floor also evoked various effects. The rectilinear character of both the constituent elements and the overall pattern was disrupted by the contrasting character of their material properties, including the colour and veining of the stones, as well as their polished and reflective surfaces. These impressions would have been intensified by the glistening light provided by lamps or a number of *candelabra*. A similar situation can be found in the western *cella* (Fig. 9), where africano, pavonazzetto and giallo antico were combined to form diagonal patterns[39]. Here again, the three types of marble were characterised by strong colour contrasts and their heterogeneous surfaces features.

Compared to the floor, reconstructing the wall decoration is more a difficult task, due to its poor state of conservation. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be drawn. At the bottom of the wall, slabs of greenish cipollino are completed by a moulding of white marble, forming a low kickplate. The design of the adjoining dado is not known, but likely corresponded to the height of the podium of the cult statue. Marble revetment seems to have covered the walls above this dado, although only a few fragments have been preserved. These include Corinthianising capitals, plinths and parts of an architrave adorned with three *fasciae*[40]. The pilasters, described above, served only an aesthetic

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37 Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 369. 372 Fig. 1. This area displays numerous antique and modern repairs; as a result, many of the pieces are composed of small fragments, sometimes containing different types of marble in the same slab; see Angelelli – Guidobaldi 2002, 203–211 Figs. 2–10. For further examples of *opus sectile* floors in various contexts, cf. Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 374 f. The mosaic in the centre is modern; see Angelelli – Guidobaldi 2002, 201.
38 On the use of coloured marbles, their possible interrelation in terms of colours and surface effects, as well as their strategic use in the creation of specific spatial hierarchies in public spaces, see Grüner 2017.
39 Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 371 f. Fig. 4. Only a small part of the pavement in the eastern *cella*, in the area around the podium, is preserved. A similar arrangement is proposed in the centre of the western *cella* (although in bichrome), thanks to the presence of pavonazzetto and bardiglio in the area next to the podium: cf. Angelelli – Guidobaldi 2002, 210 f. Fig. 12; Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 373 f. Fig. 7.
40 Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, esp. 380–385 Figs. 15–16 (Vgl. Anm. 41. 43. 44) Pls. 1–4.

Fig. 9: Brescia, western *cella* of the Capitolium.

function; while their exact number and position is unknown (as well as the design of the areas that they enclosed), the horizontal and vertical decorative elements employed here seem to have created a consistent rhythmic wall design with a slight expansion in depth[41].

The podium of the cult statue (Fig. 8) was substantial (8.55 × 3.80 × 2.35 m), occupying almost the entire width of the *cella* and thus defining the rear section of the room. Fragments of the marble revetment suggest that parts of the front were fashioned from africano and the sides from cipollino[42]. The cult statue of Jupiter was emphasised through its placement on this high podium, as well as the considerable dimensions of the statue itself and the precious decoration that may have adorned its throne – Norbert Franken has demonstrated that gilded bronze sheets with rosettes and floral motifs probably belonged to the latter[43]. The statue itself was produced in white-greyish marble (Fig. 10). The surviving fragments suggest a fairly standard representation of the god, in which his head was turned to the right, his left arm raised and his upper body naked aside from a hip mantle[44]. Comparanda for such representations of Jupiter can be found in a wide variety of media[45].

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41 A parallel for such an arrangement can be found in the Harbour Temple at Xanten, where the wall design above the dado was executed in stucco. Numerous fragments, indicating two scales, belong to fluted pilasters and an architrave. Other pieces can probably be assigned to a frieze. The rectangular areas framed by the pilasters were probably white and red fields and bordered by multicoloured lines. See the detailed analysis in Peters 1989, 159–170 Figs. 1–2 and Pls. 17, 1–4; 167 f. cat. K 20. 28–31. The reconstruction of the dado with narrow slabs of red stone (Fischer 1994, 87 Fig. 33 and Zelle 2000, 45 Fig. 52) is hypothetical. For the Harbour Temple, see also Zelle 2000, 42–46 Figs. 43–52 and Schalles 2008, 311–316 (Hadrianic) with further literature.
42 Further details are discussed in Angelelli – Dell'Acqua 2014, 375 f. 378. 373 Fig. 8.
43 Franken 2002, 191–195 Figs. 1–2. 6–7.
44 The height of the seated statue is estimated at about 4.70 m: see Locatelli 2002, 175–183. 187 f. Figs. 1–4 Pls. 1–3 and Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 393–396 Figs. 3–4. The feet of the statue were positioned on steps made of Botticino limestone (Fig. 8). According to Gabelmann (1969, 222. 224 n. 18 Pl. 72, 1), the preparation of the upper side of the second step suggests the existence of a third. Other fragments cannot be safely assigned to the cult statues of Juno and Minerva. Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 396 f.
45 Locatelli 2002, 181. 183. 186 f. Figs. 6. 8; Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 393 f. with further literature.

Fig. 10: Brescia, fragments belonging to the cult statue of Jupiter.

Prayers to the deity could be accompanied by other ritual acts, such as burning incense[46]. Four altars made of limestone were found in the central *cella*, and may have been used for such ritual performances. The smallest altar was adorned with fruit garlands attached to *bucrania*[47], while the other three (A, B and C) belonged to a series, as indicated by their size and standardised decoration. On the front of these altars, a pair of *erotes* appear, holding a garland with fruit. Assorted cult instruments, including a *patera*, jug and *aspergillum*, decorate the sides in various combinations[48]. Altars A and B were found *in situ* at the edges of the podium during excavation[49] and therefore Gabelmann suggests that the cult statue was flanked by the pair of altars on the podium, along with the third on the floor in front of it[50]. The additional furnishings of the *cella* included *mensolae*, small tables on which dedications or monetary gifts could be placed[51] and *thymiatheria*, for burning incense[52]. The position of the altar(s) and/or tables no doubt organised movement within the space.

Temples and *fora*: convention and diversity

The case study of the Capitolium in Brescia has shown how a Roman temple located in a city's forum could be distinguished by its urban setting, placement in a purposefully designed area and by the splendour of its architectural decoration. It is evident that the arrangement and orientation

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46 According to Ovid (Fast. 4, 305–328. 343 f.), small offerings and prayers attracted the attention of the gods and could lead them to act. The burning of incense and the offering of wine, in particular, were a means of attracting the gods and calling them down from heaven (Rüpke 2005, 230).
47 Gabelmann 1969, 220. 225. 230 Pl. 71, 1; Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 396. 398 Fig. 11..
48 Gabelmann 1969, 219–238 Pls. 68–71 and Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 393 f. Figs. 1–2; 396–398 Figs. 7–10. 12. The altars were of considerable size, with heights of 1.34, 1.24 and 1.35 m (Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 397 f.).
49 Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 394 Figs. 1–2.
50 For further details, see Gabelmann 1969, 221–226 Figs. 1–2 Pl. 72, 1; 1971, 143 Pl. 22, 1; Slavazzi – Invernizzi 2014, 394 Fig. 2. This hypothesis could explain the reworked upper sides of the altars. To account for the flat preparation of the upper side and three dowel holes in altar A, Gabelmann suggests that it was transformed into a base (1969, 220 f. Pl. 71, 2). Consequently the two altars on the podium may have had a purely decorative function. According to Fabrizio Slavazzi and Rosanina Invernizzi (2014, 398), the positioning of the altars on the podium is considered to be secondary. Therefore, in the reconstruction provided by Rossi and Francesca Morandini (2015, 137) the altars are positioned on the floor.
51 Cf. Liv. 10, 23, 11–13, on placement of silver vessels on three tables in the *cella* of Jupiter Optimus Maximus at Rome. See also Rüpke 2001, 141.
52 Supra 72 n. 8 and 77 n. 34.

of the buildings, decorative features, materials and surface structures on display were adjusted to specific viewing positions. The reconstruction of a specific form of action – moving from the forum into the temple for a private prayer – demonstrates how the perception of these spaces was calculated for visual impact from remote distances or positions nearby. Some decorative elements also underlined the architectural unity of the complex. The Corinthian order, for example, was employed across the forum and Capitolium area[53]. Architectural unity was also emphasised to a certain degree by the colours of the materials. White Bottocino limestone and white marble were employed for the construction of the Capitolium and various elements in the flanking porticos, while the column shafts of the forum porticos were produced in grey marble, accentuating these important architectural features through colour[54].

The alignment of the temple, altar and forum piazza on a central axis corresponded to conventional decorative principles applied to imperial *fora*. The separation of the forum from the temple by a broad street was also not unusual, and parallels can even be found for the enormous difference in height between the Capitolium and the forum piazza[55]. The temple itself is special for a variety of reasons, however. On the one hand, the Capitolium continued certain decorative trends popular since the early Imperial period, evident in the richly decorated entablature (including numerous ornaments positioned between the *fasciae*), the decoration of the pediment and the use of different coloured marbles to decorate the *cellae*[56]. On the other hand, in comparison to other Capitolia, the temple's transverse layout and connection to the lateral porticos was unusual[57]. These features, along with the extended *pronaos*, can be compared to the *Templum Pacis,* erected slightly later by Vespasian at Rome[58], and to the Flavian phase of the sanctuary of Minerva at Breno[59]. In contrast to Brescia, the Flavian temples at Rome and at Breno were incorporated into enclosed squares framed by porticos. In all of these instances, however, the perception of the temple from the square was purely frontal, with the volume and depth of the building itself hidden behind a screen of columns[60]. At Brescia, the temple, in combination with the lateral porticos and extended *pronaos*, can be linked to the intensified illusionism employed in Flavian architecture[61]. This is also true for the interplay between light and shadow, an effect evoked by the elongated front of the Capitolium and its characteristic arrangement of columns[62], as well as by the temple's frieze, in which the use

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53 Dell'Acqua 2014, 328 f. 327 Pl. 1, 1–6.

54 This must also be considered for numerous decorated cornices made of bronze, as well as the bronze sheets that were attached to various architectural features. Some of these elements are described by Alberto Bacchetta (2008, 47) as 'cornici architettoniche in bronzo, appartenenti all'originaria decorazione del Capitolium'; cf. Bacchetta 2008, 44; Giacobello 2008, 245 f. 253; Stella et al. 1979a, 77 f. cat. III 46 n. c ('rivestimento metallico di altare o base'). They were part of a large-scale deposit of bronze objects that was found on July 20th, 1826 in the space between the western *cella* and the adjoining room. The deposit included, among other finds, the Victoria of Brescia (mid-1st century A.D.) and several gilded bronze portraits from the 3rd century A.D. The sculptures are discussed in detail in Salcuni – Formigli 2011, 5–50 cat. B1–B11 Figs. 1–213. The former location of the statues can no longer be determined. The forum, the Capitolium area and the theatre must be considered.

55 For further comparisons between Roman cities, the so-called 'Forum-Basilica complex' and Hellenistic models of such public squares, cf. Gabelmann 1971, 129–136. 142; Frova 1979, 219–221; 1990; Gros 1996, 169 f.; Dell'Acqua 2014, 322. The case of Verona is discussed below.

56 Dell'Acqua 2014, 329. 331. 336.

57 Gabelmann 1971, 132 n. 25 and Dell'Acqua 2014, 321 f. For Roman temples with transversely positioned *cellae*, see Dell'Acqua 2014, 322 with n. 22 and more recently, in detail, Marcattili 2016/17. Usually, the layout of a transversely positioned temple also prefigured a horizontal layout of the *cella*. At Brescia this was not the case, as the three large *cellae* were positioned next to one another. The connection of the temple with the elevated porticos can now be associated with the Augustan phase of the Late Republican sanctuary (see below).

58 Gabelmann 1971, 132–134 and Dell'Acqua 2014, 325 with n. 52 and further literature.

59 Dander 2010, 139–148 Figs. 1–19 and Sacchi – Piziali 2010, 155–175 Figs. 1–3. 9–34.

60 For additional (also earlier) comparisons, see Sacchi – Piziali 2010, 155–158 and Dell'Acqua 2014, 325.

61 Gabelmann 1971, 128. 136.

62 Strocka 2010, 98 f.

of high relief and drilling of stems and leaves helped to achieve this result[63]. At Brescia, however, two important questions remain: (1) how did the extant urban structures and geographical setting affect the Capitolium's Flavian layout, and (2) what innovations were created in relation to previous periods?

The Flavian building's various predecessors were erected in the same location, on the southern slope of the hill, set apart by a broad east-west street (the later *decumanus maximus*). Thanks to their location and elevated position, these earlier temples were a particularly prominent part of the cityscape. The first sanctuary of substantial size was fashioned from a local white limestone and erected during the early 1st century B.C. It consisted of four prostyle temples arranged next to one another on a single podium. From a decorative perspective this sanctuary featured a range of contemporary elements, including Attic bases, pilasters topped with Italic Corinthian capitals in the *pronaos* and lavish Second Style wall paintings inside the *cellae*[64]. There are a few arguments to suggest that the forum piazza was present during the Late Republican period[65], but the area was first monumentalised during the reign of Augustus, when new and elaborate architectural structures enclosed the square. These included a transversely positioned basilica to the south and, presumably, porticos to the east and west, although little is known about the architectural features of these buildings[66]. The older sanctuary remained largely unchanged during the Augustan phase, especially with respect to the interior design. The addition of elevated lateral porticos, which were directly connected to the sanctuary, accentuated the unity of the building ensemble and established a central axis, as only three of the four *sacella* were still visible[67]. The redevelopment of the area during the Flavian period maintained many of the elements from these previous arrangements, but transformed them into a more uniform design, with increased monumentality. At the same time, the architectural design of the forum area and the Capitolium reflected the main decorative principles of Flavian architecture[68].

Symmetry, axiality and the central position of the temple were conventional decorative principles of Roman *fora*. However, the implementation of these principles did not necessarily guarantee aesthetic uniformity in different urban settings; indeed, variability was fostered by local adaptations to these general decorative conventions. Two brief comparative studies will illustrate the extent to which architectural ensembles could be adjusted to local circumstances, as well as the designs that were considered particularly appropriate by the respective cities' elites[69]. In the *fora* at Verona and Pompeii it is possible to explore how older temples were intentionally preserved and restaged in a manner suitable to new urban environments. In the following, observations are limited to the main features of the exterior design, which shaped the perception of the temple as seen from the forum area.

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63 Gabelmann 1971, 144 f. Pl. 32, 1. 2.

64 The Late Republican sanctuary, which dates to around 80 B.C., was covered by the Flavian complex and therefore preserved in large parts; cf. Cavalieri Manasse 2002; Dander 2014b; Sacchi 2014b. For the earlier, modest sanctuary of the 2nd century B.C., see Dander 2014a and Sacchi 2014a.

65 Gabelmann 1971, 141; Rossi 1995, 335 f. Fig. 5; Rossi – Garzetti 1995, 80.

66 Cf. Dander 2014c; Sacchi 2014c, 292–301 Fig. 7.

67 The western portico was placed directly in front of the western *sacellum*. For the Augustan phase, see Cavalieri Manasse 2002, 98. 107 f.; Dander 2014c; Sacchi 2014c. Rossi (2012, 366) and Furio Sacchi (2014c, 297) argue for a cult of the Capitoline Triad located here (at the latest) from the Augustan period. For the western *cella*, in which one of the four Republican deities was venerated, there is no evidence of any other use. Therefore, it must remain an open question as to whether the cult of the deity worshipped there continued or was abandoned. Sacchi (2014c, 297 with n. 34) considers the possibility that it was later used by the imperial cult.

68 Gabelmann 1971, 145.

69 A critical and detailed analysis concerning various aspects of Capitolia and Roman *fora* as a concept of an urban model, which includes numerous examples from Italy and the provinces as well as a discussion of criteria for identifying Capitolia, is provided in Quinn – Wilson 2013, 117–173 with Tab. 1.
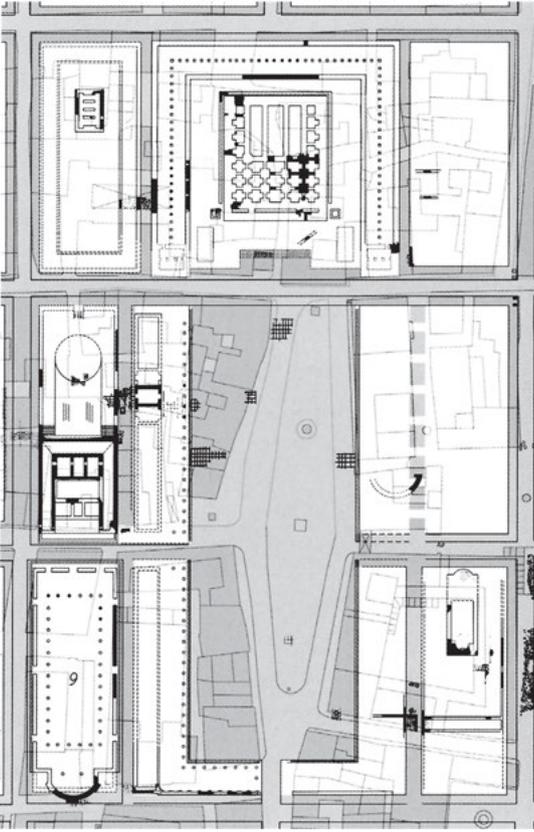
At Verona (Fig. 11), the forum and Capitolium were built along a bend in the river Adige sometime after 49 B.C. As at Brescia, the elongated forum and the Capitolium area were separated from one another by the *decumanus maximus*[70]. The monumental temple, erected during the 3rd quarter of the 1st century B.C., was positioned on a high platform and thereby elevated in relation to the forum piazza; the Capitolium was also framed by a three-sided portico. Due to their respective architectural decorations, the temple and the portico stood in stark contrast to one another. The columns of the two-aisled portico were topped with Doric capitals along the exterior colonnade and Ionic capitals along the interior. The entire structure was positioned on an elevated podium and contained a *cryptoporticus*, in line with contemporary models[71]. The monumental Capitolium, on the other hand, adopted the Tuscan *peripteros sine postico* form, with a deep *pronaos* and three *cellae*. The outdated character of this design is evident not only in the building's layout and proportions, but also in its architectural decoration, which was produced partially in terracotta[72]. The choice of certain decorative elements, such as the combination of Attic bases with Tuscan capitals and Ionic columns with architectural terracotta, was definitely a local *pasticcio*[73]. The design of the temple should be seen as an intentional choice on the part of the local elite, as no buildings of this type

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70 Apart from the location and size of the forum, however, no reliable information can be given about its surrounding buildings. Cf. Cavalieri Manasse 2008b, 293.

71 Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 85–103; 2008c, 320–326; 2012, 250.

72 Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 76–85 esp. 82–85; 2008c, 307–319; Strazzulla 2008; Cavalieri Manasse 2012, 250 with fig. The Capitolium of Verona was approximately 30 % smaller than the Capitolium in Rome; see Cavalieri Manasse 2008c, 307.

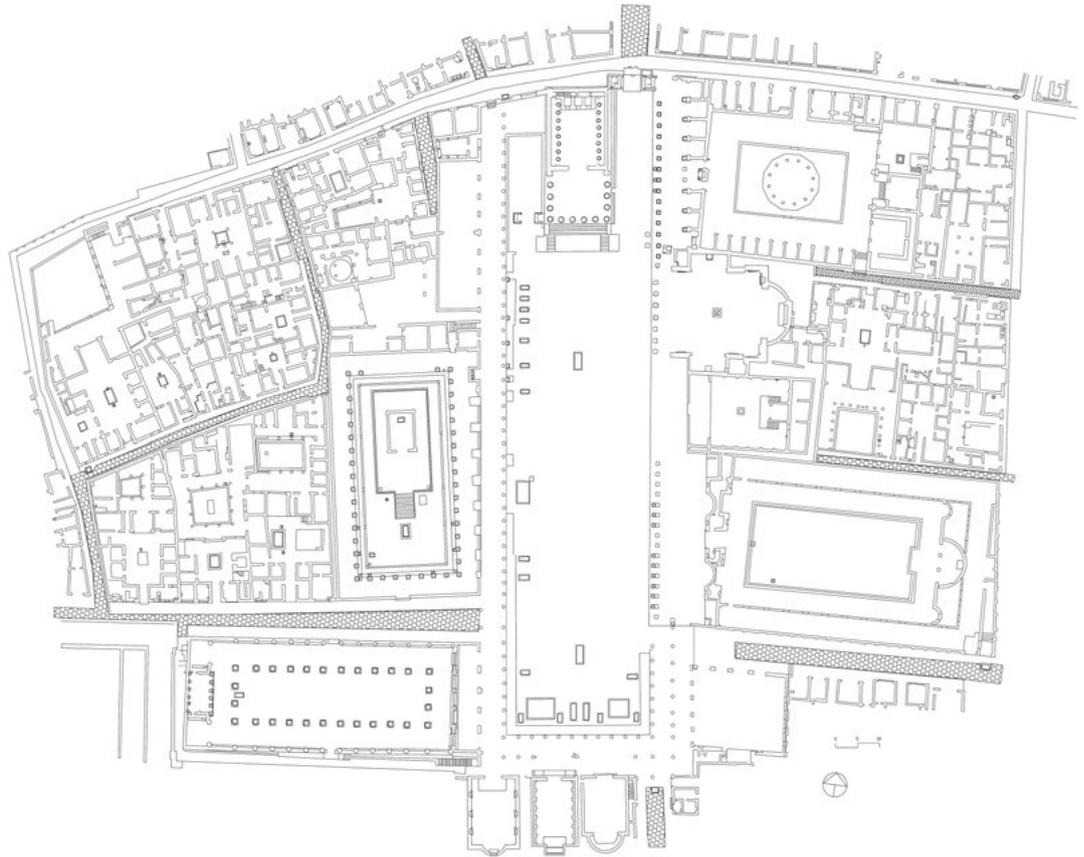**73** Bianco 2008, 174 f.; Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 83; Strazzulla 2008.

Fig. 12: Pompeii, layout of the Capitolium and the forum area in A.D. 79.

were built in northern Italy at this time[74]. Moreover, the old-fashioned Capitolium continued to exist throughout the Imperial period without major interventions[75].

In contrast to the Capitolium area, the forum piazza and porticos were later refurbished, probably during the Claudian period[76]: the east and west sides of the forum were occupied by new structures, which stood in opposition to the antiquated temple on the terrace. While remains on the east side are limited, they suggest the presence of heterogeneous buildings, including a monumental apsidal structure[77]. The elevated portico on the west was characterised by a richly decorated entablature and, above all, the range of materials used for the columns. Attic bases of Greek marble were combined with capitals fashioned from Botticino limestone, while various polychrome stones – cipollino, giallo antico, africano and bigio antico – were employed for the smooth column shafts[78]. The forum itself was repaved in white and pink slabs of local limestone, in an irregular, but colour-intensive pattern that covered the whole of the square[79].

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74 Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 103; 2008c, 316 f.; Kreuz 2013, 459 f.

75 Fragments of a marble revetment may have been part of the interior decoration of the *cellae*. It is uncertain whether they were part of a renewal dating to the Imperial period or already part of the original building; see Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 106 f. In the first half of the 1st century A.D., new structures were created in the immediate vicinity of the temple, which accentuated its front. The erection of a small edifice (interpreted as a *sacellum*) on the terrace in the southwest could indicate the presence of a second symmetrical building in the southeast. Cf. Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 106 f. and 85 Fig. 21. In addition, two large statue bases, perhaps Tiberian in date, were placed at the corners in front of of the temple podium: see Cavalieri Manasse 2008a, 107.

76 Cf. Bianco 2008, 211 f.; Cavalieri Manasse 2008b, 298; 2012, 254 f.

77 Cavalieri Manasse 2008b, 301 f. Fig. 12.

78 Cf. Bianco 2008, 210 f. Pl. 16, 2; 125, 1–4; 128, 2 and Cavalieri Manasse 2008b, 298. For the numerous decorative elements of the entablature, see Bianco 2008, 210. 212 f. Pl. 16, 3; 126, 3–4; 127, 5; 128, 1–2.

79 Cf. Cavalieri Manasse 2008b, 297 f. Fig. 8 ('calcare bianco e rosato di misure variabili').

The situation was different in Pompeii (Fig. 12), where the layout of the forum was already determined before the Imperial period. The impression made by the temple was enhanced by its monumental dimensions (17 × 37 m) compared to those of the square (142 × 38 m), with the building occupying a large part of the northern forum area. The temple was erected no later than 80 B.C., and thus the Corinthian hexastyle design and the single *cella* followed contemporary models[80]. When it was erected, the temple appeared amidst a growing list of building types visible around the forum, all of which differed significantly with respect to their size, height, orientation and architectural decoration[81]. Only in the southern part of the forum the buildings (consisting of the basilica on the west and presumably houses and *tabernae* on the south and east sides) were screened from the piazza by the two-storey colonnades of the so-called Portico of Popidius[82]. The presence of the latter led to a more uniform enclosure of the square in the south. Nevertheless, individuals in this area who looked northward towards the Capitolium – during cult ceremonies, for example – would have been presented with a vista in which the temple was flanked by the irregular designs of the Sanctuary of Apollo to the west[83] and a row of *tabernae* and the *macellum* to the east.

This heterogeneity in the spatial organisation of the forum was reduced during the early Imperial period. The Corinthian hexastyle temple of the early 1st century B.C. remained largely unchanged – the only modifications involved the altar, which was positioned on a platform integrated into the stairs leading up to the top of the podium (having been located previously in front of the temple), and two statues that were placed on either side of the podium, thereby accentuating the symmetry of the building's façade. The stuccowork applied to the exterior of the Capitolium also seems to have been renewed at this time[84].

The forum area, in contrast, was altered quite profoundly, with the entire piazza paved in bright white slabs of travertine[85]. On the forum's west side, a two-storey portico built in travertine concealed the irregular façades of the buildings behind, and the Doric and Ionic orders that were employed borrowed from visual themes that had already been established by the Portico of Popidius[86]. To the east, the situation in front of the new buildings (the reconstructed *macellum*, two buildings linked to the imperial cult and the Eumachia Building) is more complex[87]. At least in

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80 The predecessor was transformed into a Capitolium no later than 80 B.C., when the city of Pompeii became a Roman colony: cf. D'Alessio 2009, 51; Wolf 2009, 303; Lippolis 2017, 122–125. 129 f. An earlier date for the Capitolium (c. 100 B.C.) was considered in Lauter 1979, 431–434. Valentino Gasparini (2014, esp. 59–66) argues for a different chronological development. On the main elements of the temple's layout and architecture, see D'Alessio 2009, 51–53; Wolf 2009, 299–303; Lippolis 2017, 123–125.

81 The chronological development of the forum between the 2nd century B.C. and the Imperial period is complicated, with the dates of some buildings still up for debate. A good overview of the current research regarding the forum's development is presented by Fabrizio Pesando (2016, esp. 53–59 with Fig. 5). Cf. Kockel – Flecker 2008, esp. 275–277; Olivito 2013, 88–156. The chronology of the forum's eastern buildings was considered in detail by Kurt Wallat (1997).

82 Cf. Kockel – Flecker 2008, 277–288 and Kockel 2012, 16 f. Fig. 10. For the new results concerning the so-called *comitium* and the previous structures located in this area, see Kockel – Flecker 2008, 296–300 Figs. 23–24 and Flecker et al. 2015.

83 The possibility of an older continuous colonnade on the forum's west side is discussed in Olivito 2013, 95 Fig. 68.

84 D'Alessio 2009, 53–55; Wolf 2009, 299–304; Lippolis 2017, 125–127.

85 In addition, an inscription made of bronze letters was embedded in the pavement; see Kockel 2005, 53 f. with n. 9. The numerous honorific statues are analysed in Kockel 2005, 54–63 Figs. 4–5; esp. 61; Kockel – Flecker 2008, 284 Fig. 12; 290 f. Figs. 19–20; Olivito 2013, 139–147 Figs. 102–110.

86 While the southern and the eastern parts of the older colonnade remained in place, the area in front of the basilica was rebuilt. In contrast to Brescia, the porticos flanking the forum in Pompeii were not characterised by a uniform design. To the west, the Ionic capitals of the colonnade were adapted to the individual forms of the older portico. In addition, the entablature above the Doric columns of the new colonnade did not include a frieze with metopes and triglyphs, but instead an architrave with *fasciae* and a frieze zone; see Lauter 1979, 416 f. Fig. 13 and Kockel – Flecker 2008, 278 with n. 35.

87 The older *tabernae* on the forum's east side were removed and replaced by representative buildings with elaborately designed façades opening on the forum piazza (Wallat 1997).

the final phase, the individual components were characterised by different forms of architectural decoration. The colonnade in front of the Eumachia Building, for example, was built of travertine in the Doric style, while the colonnade in front of the *macellum* was produced in the Corinthian order using white marble[88]. Thus, the architectural ensembles erected at the forum's sides created a new urban setting for the Capitolium, but one that was far from homogeneous in its aesthetic and representational design[89].

Concluding thoughts

Roman temples, with their monumental and lavishly decorated architecture, set the stage for the ritual practices that took place there. These activities included the *sacra publica* (during which sacrifices were made at the altar in front of the temple), as well as personal prayers and offerings that were made inside the *cella*. The architectural arrangement of the temple and the urban setting in which it appeared affected individuals' perception of space. At Brescia, distinctions in the design of the forum and Capitolium were manifested by the use of varying materials, with their particular colours and surface structures on display, as well as the difference in height between the two areas. Distinct spatial qualities were created through the Capitolium's decorative programme, with the white limestone employed on the exterior contrasting dramatically with the polychrome arrangements that appeared inside. Once inside the *cella*, the colossal cult statue, which was placed in an axial position on the rear wall, immediately drew the attention of the viewer; the position of the statue on a high podium must have made this effect even more impressive.

Thus, the Capitolium shows how certain Roman decorative principles – symmetry and axiality, openness and unity, polychromy and monochromy, large and small-scale design – could relate to one another. It is evident that these principles were conceived for specific viewing positions and could be adjusted to a moving viewer. Naturally, ritual activities represent the chief actions associated with Capitolia in particular, and thus must be considered when seeking to understand perceptions of the built architecture from various locations. However, symmetry, axiality and the temple's position in the forum did not necessarily guarantee architectural uniformity. The brief comparison between the Capitolia of Brescia, Verona and Pompeii has shown that these temples, despite being symbols of Rome's imperial domain, did not necessarily follow a canonical type. On the contrary, these examples demonstrate that temple design and the urban setting could differ from city to city, influenced by the respective whims of urban elites.

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88 Different solutions regarding the architectural design of a two-storey colonnade have been discussed: cf. Wallat 1997, 33 f. Pls. 6–14; 217 f. and 153. 156. 224 Pls. 83–86; 87 Fig. 181. A continuous colonnade in front of the various buildings is not certain; see Wallat 1997, 129. 220. 222. A recent proposal by John Dobbins suggests a one-storey colonnade consisting of eight columns in front of the building next to the *macellum*, the so-called Sanctuary of the Public Lares, which would have underlined the heterogeneous architectural design on the eastern side; see Dobbins 2007, 161–163; Olivito 2013, 119–122 Fig. 86.

89 For a limited period of time, the newfound frontal emphasis on the temple was reinforced when arches were erected on either side of the building. This architectural ensemble existed only temporarily, however, as the eastern arch was soon removed. The two arches are analysed in Müller 2011.

Illustration Credits

Fig. 1: A. Kleineberg.
Fig. 2: After Gabelmann 1971, Pl. 21, 2.
Fig. 3: After Rossi 1998, Fig. 21.
Fig. 4: Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Bergamo e Brescia.
Fig. 5: After Rossi – Morandini 2015, 134 with fig.
Fig. 6: After Bacchetta 2008, 43 with fig.
Fig. 7: After Sacchi et al. 2011, Fig. 10.
Fig. 8: Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Bergamo e Brescia.
Fig. 9: Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Bergamo e Brescia.
Fig. 10: Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Bergamo e Brescia.
Fig. 11. After Cavalieri Manasse 2012, 254 with fig.
Fig. 12: After Dobbins 2007, Fig. 12.1.

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