

III. The Capitoline Hill



9. Overview of the Capitoline Hill

Although the smallest of Rome's seven hills in area, the Capitoline was in several important ways both the utilitarian and talismanic core of ancient Rome. Here were the early city's last-stand defensive walls as well as its chief place of contact with its tutelary imperial deity, Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Together with the hill's Asylum, the geography of the Capitoline gave topographical expression to the greatness of the state: the Temple, Asylum, and Arx respectively grounded Rome's power in the heavens, enabled and defined its means of growth, and guaranteed its survival. As such, the hill often stands in ancient literature for Rome itself [9.1 to 9.3], especially in its capacity to endure over time.

Each of the three parts into which the hill, in accordance with its contours, is traditionally divided contributes to this picture. The hill has two summits, separated by a saddle occupied now by the Piazza designed by Michelangelo. On the southwest summit above the Tiber, the great temple of Jupiter [10.] towered over the city and ultimately over the empire: "I have given the Romans rule without limit," runs the famous promise of Virgil's Jupiter (*Imperium sine fine dedi*). Appropriately, this temple was the destination point of a Roman military triumph, with the victorious general robed and painted like the cult statue of Jupiter himself.

The other summit, topped now by St. Maria d' Aracoeli, was sometimes distinguished from the rest of the hill as the Citadel (Arx) proper of the hill, although the fortifications of the hill circled the entire Capitoline Hill and not just the northeast end of it. Perhaps this end,

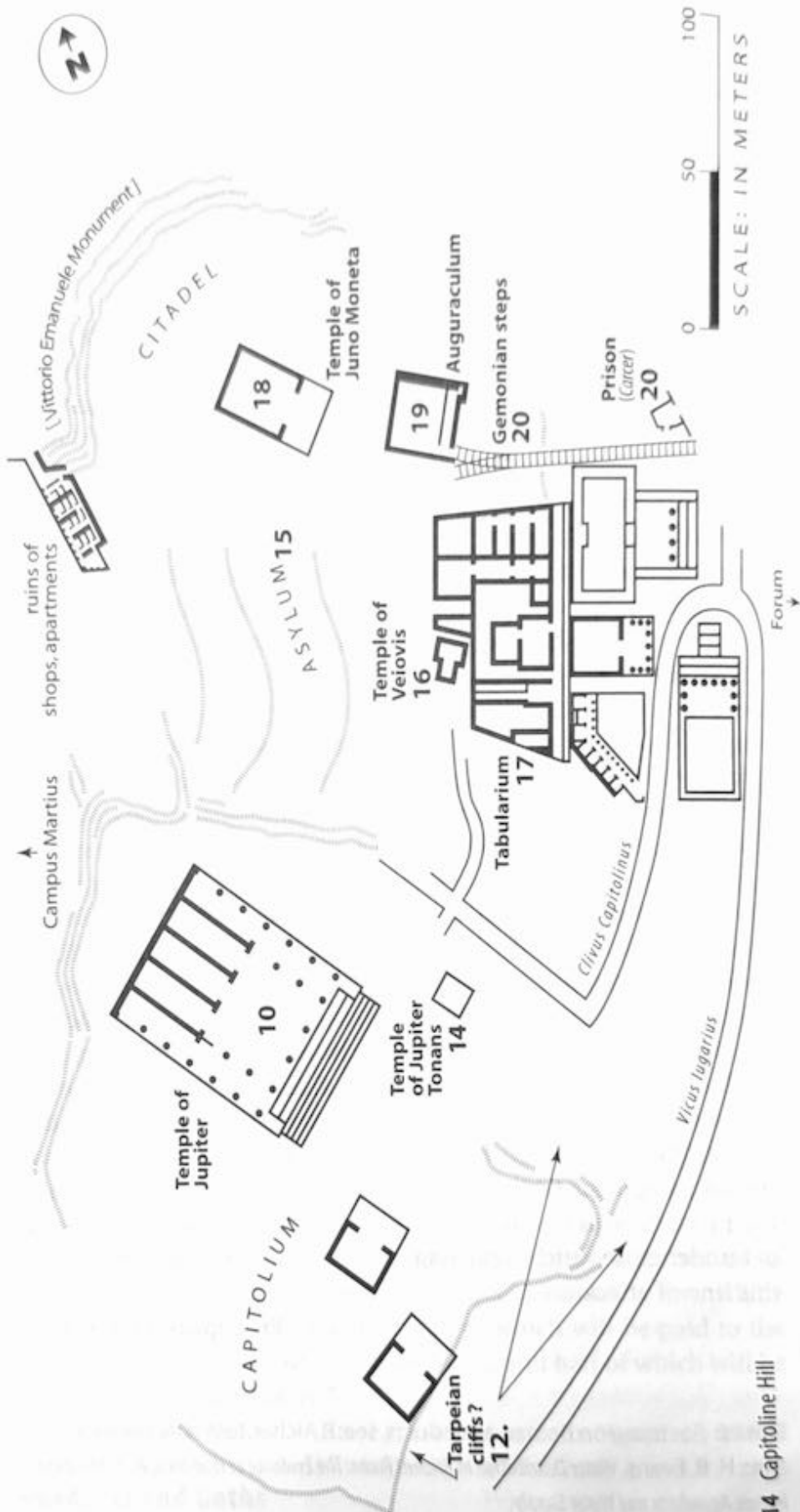


Fig. 14 Capitoline Hill

the slightly taller of the two, retained a more fortress-like character, in contrast to the eventually crowded platform of the other summit; calling it the *Arx* also served to highlight this vital function of the entire hill as the most difficult part of the city to capture, on account of the Capitoline's natural escarpments in some sections and fortifications in others. Livy's account of the Gallic sack of Rome [9.9] emphasizes the emotional significance of the uncaptured Capitoline as the vital core of the city. The northeast summit also contained the *Auguraculum*, another important site that like the Temple of Jupiter linked weighty matters of state to the divine order.

The third major area, the saddle between the two crests, contained the sacred area called the *Asylum* [15.]. Tradition had it that Romulus, in need of a larger population to fill his city, designated this area as the point of arrival for newcomers to Rome who wished to start over—a strategy, Livy comments, that was crucial to Rome's advancement and eventual greatness. The *Asylum*-legend is a parable for Rome's subsequent policy of enfranchisement, and this part of the Capitoline, which apparently remained a distinct and designated open space even in Imperial times, represented Rome's ability to grow—not, as was guaranteed by the great Temple of Jupiter, by expanding geographically under Jupiter's all-seeing eyes through the agency of Rome's generals, but by incorporating peoples of diverse origins in the protective grove of the Roman state.

As the scene of executions, the Capitoline also provided stark visual reminders of the community's ultimate power over citizens and conquered leaders, whether the condemned were pushed off the *Tarpeian* cliffs [12.], or strangled in the *Prison* [20.] at the foot of the hill, after which the corpse might be exposed to public view on the *Gemonian Steps* that led up to the Capitoline from the Forum.

Even in imperial times, crowded buildings around the Capitoline's base would have diminished the hill's earlier acropolis-like profile, and several millennia of subsequent erosion along with a compost of building-rubble many yards deep around its base have done the same. Institutional changes in imperial Rome also diminished the symbolic profile of the hill. With his new Forum, Augustus stole some of Jupiter's thunder, and he moved the *Sibylline Books* to the *Palatine* [63.], where the imperial palaces eventually established that hill as a rival to the Capitoline in locating the nucleus of Rome's power.

Even so, the Capitoline retained into modern times its special role in expressing civic power. It was here that the noble families in the Middle Ages established a city government and built a town hall as a response to Pope's power, and here Cola di Rienzo (whose statue stands on the grass between the *Cordonata* and *Ara Coeli* stairways) self-consciously invoked ancient Rome in his charismatic foundation of a short-lived republic in the 1300s. Here too beginning in the 1920s Mussolini would give speeches at elaborate ceremonies that celebrated

with renewed fervor the birthday of ancient Rome on April 21. And here, in circumstances richly ironic in the context of ancient praises of the hill, was the setting of Gibbon's epiphany: "It was at Rome, on the fifteenth of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed fryars were singing Vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." (*Autobiography*, 1897, p. 302)

SOURCES

- 9.1** I will not wholly die: in poems, much of me
Will avoid the Reaper. With future fame
I sprout up green, so long as Pontifex
And silent Vestal climb the Capitolium.
Horace, *Odes* 3.30.6-9
- 9.2** Before the battle of Actium, wrong to uncork [31 BC]
The ancestral cellar's vintage wine,
While crazy Cleopatra planned the Capitolium's
Destruction, and death to Roman rule.
Horace, *Odes* 1.37.5-8
- 9.3** Cleopatra will fall, trusting too little in her Roman mate,
And vain will be her threat to make our Capitol
Bow down to her Delta.
Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.826-8
- 9.4** The Capitoline hill gets its name from the human head [*caput*]
that they say was found when the foundations for the Temple of
Jupiter were being excavated. Before then the hill was called Mt. Tarpeius,
after the Vestal Virgin named Tarpeia, who was killed by Sabine shields
and buried on the hill. A reminder of her name endures, since the cliff
here is called the Tarpeian Rock.
Varro, *The Latin Language* 5.41
- 9.5** [Centuries before Rome was founded] Evander led Aeneas
To the Tarpeian seat and the Capitoline—
All golden now, then bristling with wild brambles.
Even then the site inspired the countryfolk
With religious dread, and they shuddered at its woods and cliff.
"This grove, this hilltop crowned in leaf," Evander said,
"A god inhabits, we know not which:
Arcadians among us think they've seen
Jupiter himself on the hill, swirling again
His black mantle to summon up the storm."
Virgil, *Aeneid* 8. 347-354

9.6 "Tribunes of the plebs and fellow citizens of Rome." Scipio said [in 187 BC], "today is the anniversary of the day on which I fought a pitched battle in Africa against Hannibal and the Carthaginians at Zama [in 202 BC], emerging victorious. This is no time to engage in trials and legal wrangling. And so without delay I will leave the *Rostra* and climb the Capitolium to pay my respects to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Juno, Minerva, and all the other gods who watch over the Capitolium and the Citadel, and I will give them thanks that on this date and on many others the gods have granted me the will and ability to carry out our nation's business with distinction."

Livy, History 38.51.7-10

9.7 On the Capitolium we can find a reminder and demonstration of early building styles in the House of Romulus, and on the Citadel, in the thatched roofs of shrines there.

Vitruvius, Architecture 2.1.5

9.8 Climb down the family tree of anyone you wish: at the bottom you will find a humble birth. Why go into individual instances when I can prove my point by calling as a witness the entire city of Rome: these hills were once entirely devoid of buildings. In fact, amidst all of today's towering structures, nothing is more respected than the humble hut of Romulus, even though the Temple of Jupiter shines out above it, gleaming with pure gold. Can you find fault in the Romans for displaying their humble origins, which today could easily be hidden, and for believing that nothing is great unless it appears to have started small?

Seneca the Elder, Debates 1.6.4

9.9 [The Gauls of northern Italy descended on Rome in 390 BC.] Since there was no hope of defending the city from the Gauls with the small force now left to them, the Romans resolved that the young men of military age as well as the able-bodied senators would withdraw with their wives and children to the Citadel and the Capitoline: from this fortification, after stocking it with weapons and provisions, they might defend the gods, the people, and the name of Rome. ...

While Camillus was being appointed general by Romans in nearby Veii, the Citadel of Rome and the Capitolium fell into grave danger: the Gauls had found the footprints of the messenger from Veii who had made it through their lines, or perhaps had noticed on their own that the cliffs by the shrine of Carmentis favored an attempt there [by the Tiber, above the Temple of Fortuna at S. Omobono]. On a moonless night the Gauls sent up a few unarmed men to scout out a path, and then began their climb. Handing weapons up to others at the steep spots and bracing themselves on men below or bracing others in turn, they pushed and pulled their way up the mountain as the terrain demanded. They gained the summit so quietly that they not only

escaped the detection of the watchmen but of the dogs as well, a creature attuned to nocturnal noise.

They did not, however, escape the notice of the geese on the hill. Because the geese were sacred to Juno, the besieged Romans, even when running out of food, had refrained from killing them. This religious observance proved to be Rome's salvation, for the sacred geese created such a uproar by honking and flapping their wings that they woke up Marcus Manlius, an outstanding soldier who had been consul three years earlier. Manlius grabbed his weapons and dashed outside, shouting for help. While other men hesitated in fear, Manlius dislodged a Gaul, just then reaching the summit, with one blow of his shield and sent him tumbling onto the men below. Terrified, the other attackers dropped their weapons and clung to the rock with both hands while Manlius went in for the kill. Soon other defenders joined him and routed the enemy with javelins and loose rocks, and the attack collapsed in total disaster for the Gauls as they were driven headlong from the cliffs. . . .

[After the Gauls withdrew from Rome, the general Camillus gave a passionate speech to dissuade the Roman people from turning their backs on the charred ruins of Rome and resettling elsewhere: "Romans, do not abandon your city.] Here, and nowhere else, stands the Capitulum; it was here that the buried human head (*capite*) was discovered and judged an omen that the Capitoline would one day be the head of the world and the summit of an empire: here is the ground that, to the joy of your ancestors, the god of Youth and the god of Borders refused to abandon when the Capitulum was being deconsecrated with augural rites to make room for Jupiter."

Livy, *History* 5.39–54, selections

Notes: The terminology for the Capitoline Hill is somewhat protean. The Roman names for the Capitoline include Mons Saturnius, Mons Tarpeius, Capitulum, Mons Capitolinus, Collis Capitolinus, and Arx Capitolina (see *LTUR* 1, p. 226f.; Richardson, 378). In addition, the term Capitulum can refer to three things: the southwestern crest of the hill, the whole hill, and the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The Area Capitolinus was the leveled precinct around Jupiter's temple, containing other temples as well. On the Capitoline's significance in literature, see especially C. Edwards, *Writing Rome*.

10. The Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus

COMMENTARY

Of the more than a dozen temples to Jupiter in Rome which singled out this or that feature of the great god's aspect and domain, the temple of Jupiter "Best and Greatest," as its name leaves no doubt, was the most central and magnificent, looming over the heart of the

city as the primary home of its presiding deity. Unfortunately, no monument exhibits a greater disparity between the splendor of its ancient appearance, as attested by the written record, and the paucity of the remains today. Parts of the massive tufa podium of the temple, however, are visible inside the Palazzo dei Conservatori which at least help situate the building, as does the corner of the podium on display outside in a little pit along the Via del Tempio di Giove. In addition to the imagination's work on the following sources, perhaps the best visual impression of the temple's profusion of sculpture, painting, marble decoration, and cult-objects in ancient times can be gathered from some of the lavishly appointed churches in Rome today, one of which (S. Maria della Pace, near Piazza Navona) does indeed display statues carved from the giant Pentelic marble columns of Jupiter's vanished temple.

SOURCES

10.1 Tarquinius Priscus [ruling 616–578 BC] undertook the construction of a temple to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, which he had vowed to the gods during his last battle against the Sabines. The hill on which he planned to place the temple needed a great deal of preparation, being neither accessible nor level, but rather precipitous and sharply peaked. Tarquinius surrounded the hill with high retaining walls and filled in the space between these walls and the summit to create a level platform able to support temples. He died, however, before he was able to lay the foundation for the Temple of Jupiter, outliving the end of the war by only four years. Many years later, Tarquinius Superbus, the second king after him (the one who was deposed) laid the foundations and built much of the structure, though he too did not complete it. ...

The Romans finished the Temple of Jupiter [in 507 BC] in the third consulship of the Republic. Built on a high podium, the perimeter of the temple is 800 feet. Each of its sides is about 200 feet; in fact, the length of the temple does not exceed the width by a full fifteen feet. Although rebuilt a generation ago after it burnt down [in 83 BC], it rests on the same foundations and differs from the old temple only in the costliness of its materials. The front of the temple, towards the south, has three rows of columns; there is a single row of columns down each side. Inside there are three chambers, although they are under one pediment and one roof. Each of the side chambers—one for Juno, and one for Minerva—shares a wall with the center one, which is dedicated to Jupiter.

Dionysius, *Early Rome* 3.69 and 4.61

10.2 After taking control of Gabii, Tarquinius Superbus [ruling 534–510 BC] made peace with the tribe of the Aequi and renewed the truce with the Etruscans. Then he turned his attention to urban concerns, the first of which was to leave behind him, as a monument to his own

reign and name, the Temple to Jupiter on the Tarpeian mount. Both of Rome's Etruscan kings, he proclaimed, were responsible for the temple: the father, because he vowed it, and the son, because he completed it. In order that the whole area might be free from competing cult-sites, reserved for Jupiter and his temple alone, Tarquinius decided to deconsecrate the existing temples and shrines there which Tatius vowed earlier at a critical moment in his battle against Romulus, and which Tatius later consecrated and inaugurated.

At the very start of this project it is reported that the gods signified their will assuring the solidity of the great empire to be. For although the birds gave signs approving of the deconsecration of all the other religious sites, they refused it in the case of the shrine of Terminus, the god of the Border. This divine omen was taken to mean that the immovability of Terminus, alone of all the gods in not vacating the site consecrated to him, portended that the realm would be strong and stable.

After this auspice of Rome's longevity, a second portent of the empire's greatness occurred: it is said that those digging the foundations of the temple to Jupiter came upon a human head with its features intact. This was a clear sign that this spot would be the citadel of the empire and the head of the world, and was interpreted thus by soothsayers, both those residing in the city and those brought in from Etruria to consider the matter. ...

In his eagerness to finish the temple, Tarquinius Superbus summoned workmen from all parts of Etruria, and not only used public funds but levied extra work from the plebs on top of their military duty.

Livy, *History* 1.55–56.1

10.3 The first Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which was built by Tarquinius Superbus but consecrated by Horatius, burned down in the civil wars [in 83 BC]. Sulla built the second temple, but Catulus got the credit for its dedication. This temple was likewise totally destroyed, this time in the rebellion of Vitellius [in AD 69], after which Vespasian began and finished the construction of a third temple. ... Shortly after Vespasian died the Capitoline burned down again [in AD 80].

The fourth and present temple was both built and dedicated by Domitian [in AD 89]. ... Even the gilding alone of this temple's roof, costing more than 12,000 talents, is beyond the means of the richest private citizen in Rome today. Its columns were cut from Pentelic marble and were originally of beautiful proportions, as I saw for myself in Athens. When they were shaped and polished in Rome, however, they didn't gain as much in smoothness as they lost in symmetry and beauty, and now appear too thin and meager.

Plutarch, *Publicola*, 15.1–4

10.4 In all of Roman history since the founding of the city, the burning of the Capitoline in the fighting between Vitellians and Flavians [in AD 69] was the most distressing and disgraceful event that ever befell the republic of the Roman people. Not by any external enemy, but with the gods kindly disposed (if that were possible, given our behavior!), the very seat of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, which was founded with good omen by our ancestors as our guarantee of empire, and which neither Porsenna, when the city had been surrendered, nor the Gauls when it had been captured, were able to desecrate, was now destroyed by the madness of our emperors.

The temple was first vowed by King Tarquinius Priscus during the war against the Sabines; he too laid the foundations of it, on a scale that accorded more with the hope of future greatness than with the modest means available to the Roman people at that time. Soon Servius Tullius, with the aid of allies, and then Tarquinius Superbus, with spoils gained from the capture of Suessa Pometia, constructed the building. The honor of the work, however, was reserved for liberty, since only after the kings were expelled did Horatius Pulvillus dedicate the temple in his second consulship; since that time the immense wealth of the Roman people has ornamented the temple's magnificence more than it has increased it. After it burnt down 415 years later in the consulship of L. Scipio and C. Norbanus, the temple was rebuilt on the same footprint. The victorious Sulla undertook the task of reconstruction, but did not dedicate the new temple (in this alone Fortune failed him), and the name of Lutatius Catulus endured among all the great monuments of Caesars down to the time of Vitellius.

Vespasian assigned the work of restoring the Capitolium to Lucius Vestinus, a man of the equestrian class but among the leading men for his authority and prestige. The haruspices employed by him warned that the remains of the earlier temple should be carried away to the swamps and that the new temple should have the same dimensions as before: the gods did not want the old plan changed.

Tacitus, *Histories* 3.72; 4.53

10.5 [After the fire had destroyed the temple,] the Emperor Vespasian himself played an active role in the restoration of the Capitoline. He was the first person to begin the task of clearing away the rubble, carrying off a load of it on his own shoulders. In addition, he undertook the reproduction of three thousand bronze tablets that had also been destroyed in the fire, after a thorough search for other copies. These tablets were very old and precious documents of Roman rule, containing decrees of the Senate and votes of the people concerning alliances, treaties, and privileges granted at anytime to anyone, dating back almost to the beginning of the city.

Suetonius, *Vespasian* 8.5

10.6 With the exception of the Temple of Jupiter, whereby mighty Rome lifts itself into eternity, there is nothing more magnificent in all the world than the Serapeum in Alexandria.

Ammianus, History 22.16.12

10.7 There are five kinds of temples: ... of these, the araeostyle temple has columns more widely spaced than they should be. ... In the araeostyle temple it is not possible to use stone or marble architraves to span the columns; continuous wooden beams must be used. Moreover, the look of such temples is squat, top-heavy, low, and wide, and the pediment is ornamented in the Etruscan fashion with terra-cotta or gilt bronze statues. Such are the Temple of Ceres near the Circus Maximus, Pompey's Temple of Hercules, and the Capitoline Temple of Jupiter.

Vitruvius, Architecture 3.3.1, 5

10.8 As heard and reported by Varro, Catulus, who was in charge of rebuilding the Temple of Jupiter [after it burned in 83 BC], said that when he wanted to lower the ground level of the large foundational platform of the Capitoline so that more steps could lead up to the temple on a taller podium that corresponded better with the size of the pediment, the existence of subterranean rooms beneath the precinct prohibited this alteration. These were underground chambers and cisterns in which the Romans were accustomed to store old statues that had fallen off the temple and other religious items that were part of consecrated offerings.

Gellius, Attic Nights 2.10

10.9 Tarquinius Priscus summoned the sculptor Vulca from Veii to make the cult statue of the Capitoline Jupiter. The statue was made of terra cotta, though commonly painted red with cinnabar. The four-horse chariot on the roof of the temple was also of terra cotta.

Pliny the Elder, Encyclopedia 35.157

10.10 Wealth is more important now than for early Romans.
When the people were poor and Rome was new, Jupiter
Could barely stand up straight inside his humble temple,
And the thunderbolt his right hand held was made of clay.
Garlands were his decorations then, not gems.

Ovid, Fasti 1.197–203

10.11 The practice of coating ceilings with gold first began in Rome with the Capitolium, after the overthrow of Carthage [in 146 BC]. ... The contemporaries of Catulus held differing opinions about him, as

the one responsible for gilding the bronze tiles of the Capitolium's roof [76 BC].

Pliny the Elder, *Encyclopedia* 33.57

10.12 Times were more peaceful when we were poor; we fought our civil wars only after the Temple of Jupiter was gilded [in 146 BC].

Seneca the Elder, *Debates* 2.1.1

10.13 The eagles supporting the pediment, which were made out of old wood, spread the fire [in AD 69].

Tacitus, *Histories* 3.71.4

10.14 Marcius found Hasdrubal's shield when he captured his camp [in 207 BC]; this shield hung above the doors of the Capitoline Temple right up to the time of the first fire [in 83 BC].

Pliny the Elder, *Encyclopedia* 35.14

10.15 In his term as censor [in 179 BC] M. Aemilius Lepidus contracted to have the Capitoline Temple of Jupiter and the columns around it smoothed and whitened. He also removed statues that were inappropriately placed among these same columns, and took off the shields and all manner of military insignia that had been affixed to the columns.

Livy, *History* 40.51.3

10.16 [Quintus, Cicero's brother, argues in favor of divination:] "When the statue of the thunder god Summanus (which was still made of terra cotta at that time) was struck by lightning on the pediment of Jupiter Optimus Maximus [in 278 BC], no one was able to find its head, until the soothsayers said it had been knocked off into the Tiber—where indeed it was found, in the exact spot the soothsayers predicted."

Cicero, *On Divination* 1.16

10.17 The books of the Sibylline oracles were kept in a stone chest beneath the Temple of Capitoline Jupiter, under the guard of ten men. When the temple burned down [in 83 BC] (whether by accident or, as some believe, by arson), the fire destroyed these books along with the other offerings consecrated to Jupiter.

Dionysius, *Early Rome* 4.62.5–6

10.18 Nicomachus painted the Rape of Persephone, which hung in the temple of Minerva on the Capitolium, above the shrine of Youth.

Pliny the Elder, *Encyclopedia* 35.108



15. The Grove of Asylum

COMMENTARY

The Asylum, apparently at one time a grove itself between two other groves on the slopes either side of it, remained a separate walled enclosure into imperial times. Ovid [16.2] suggests it was adjacent to the Temple of Veiovis (also "Vediovis"), which was at the northwest corner of the Tabularium platform that monumentalized the saddle of the Capitoline facing the Forum. This would locate the Asylum in the area around the steps of the current day Palazzo Senatorio (the seat of today's City Council).

The Asylum is one of several monuments in the city that insisted on Rome's humble beginnings. Its primary importance, however, may have been as a memorial to the Roman belief that their nation was founded not by a pure, homogeneous people "native to the land," (as Greek and other accounts commonly mythologize communal origins) but rather as a collection of diverse people. The myth of the Asylum's foundation, especially in Livy's version, has in it the experience of Rome's subsequent history of incorporating as citizens both ethnically diverse peoples and former slaves.

SOURCES

15.1 The city's defensive works kept expanding to incorporate one location after another, since they fortified the town with an eye on future population rather than the existing numbers. Then, lest large parts of the city remain empty, they had recourse to an old tactic used by city-founders for increasing population: they attract outsiders of obscure and humble origin who they then claim are native to the land. To this end, they designated a location (now an enclosure between the two

groves as you ascend the Capitoline) as an asylum; a crowd of commoners, both free and enslaved, poured in from the neighboring territories, eager for new conditions. This was the first step towards the strength Romulus envisioned for Rome.

Livy, *History* 1.8.4-6

15.2 Romulus made the city large and populous in the following manner. First, he required all citizens to raise all of their male children as well as the first-born girl, and forbid them from killing any of their children under three years old, unless the children were maimed or deformed from birth, in which case the parents could expose them, provided they had shown the child to five neighbors who concurred with the parents' assessment. ...

Next, knowing that many of the surrounding cities in Italy were under oppressive rule by tyrants and oligarchies, and that there were many fugitives from such rule, Romulus attempted to attract them and transfer them to his own rule, regardless of their misfortune or luck, provided they were not slaves; in this manner he hoped to increase Rome's strength while diminishing the strength of her neighbors. By consecrating an Asylum for suppliants in the area between the Capitoline and the Citadel, he accomplished his plan even as he gave it the appearance of piety.

The Romans still designate this space as "between two groves," a phrase which then did accord with the landscape, when thick woods on the flanks of each hill-top overshadowed the saddle between them. He also built a temple there (its god is not known), and to those who fled there as suppliants he guaranteed safe haven from their enemies as well as citizenship and a share of whatever land he subsequently acquired in battle. People came running from every direction, fleeing bad conditions at home. Nor did these new-comers later resettle elsewhere after arriving in Rome, but remained there, retained by Romulus's constant care and attention.

Dionysius, *Early Rome* 2.15.1-4

16. Temple of Veiovis

COMMENTARY

Remains of the Temple of Veiovis can be seen from corridors of the Tabularium/Palazzo Senatorio that are accessible from the Capitoline museum. The unorthodox design of the temple (approached by stairs on its long side, like the Temple of Concord) belongs to rebuilding of the original temple and can be dated to the time of the Tabularium's surrounding construction.

SOURCES

16.1 [Cypress, beyond all other woods, retains its polish in good condition.] Proof of this is the cult statue of Jupiter Veiovis on the Citadel, which has lasted [the 250 years] since the temple's dedication [in 192 BC].

Pliny the Elder, *Encyclopedia* 16.216

16.2 [On the Seventh of March, only one event: the dedication]

Of the Temple of Veiovis in front of the two groves.

Romulus, surrounding a grove with a lofty wall,

Said, "Flee to us, whoever you are, and you will be safe."

How small the start from which the Roman people arose!

No cause for another's envy back then in *that* population.

But, should the name Veiovis mean nothing to you,

Learn who he is ...

Veiovis is Jupiter when he was young; witness

The youthful face of his statue, then notice

He holds no lightning in his hand yet. ...

And note the goat beside him—they say a goat

Gave milk to the infant Jove. ... So why should I not conclude

That the Temple of Veiovis is the Temple of Jupiter

Not-yet-great?

Ovid, *Fasti* 3.429–448

17. Tabularium (Archives)

COMMENTARY

The remains of the Tabularium, best seen from the Forum, form the substructure for the present Palazzo Senatorio. Two levels of the ancient building are visible as the massive wall of gray tufa closing the Forum off on its northern-most end. The lower level, pierced by windows opening into small chambers backed by the foot of the hill, formed a substructure for an arcade above that runs along the length of the building. Two of the arcade's archways remain unbricked, framed with Doric half-columns and a travertine architrave. Ruins found at the base of the wall suggest that there was at least one other arcade on top of the one remaining. Behind the remaining arcade are numerous hallways, rooms, and stairs dating to ancient times, made with concrete and faced with tufa stones.

The identification of this building as the *tabularium*, or "record office," rests on the inscription below, found near the Tabularium in the fifteenth century AD and since lost. *Tabula* are writing tablets, and many buildings had a *tabularium* to store records and archives. This Tabularium was apparently a major one with perhaps other functions as well, but we know little more about it.

SOURCES

17.1 Quintus Lutatius Catulus, son of Quintus, grandson of Quintus, when consul [in 78 BC] undertook by senatorial decree the construction of the substructure and record office (*tabularium*), and he certified the work.

ILS 35 = CIL 6.1314

17.2 [Living the good life in the countryside, the farmer]
Plucks the fruit that the trees and the Earth of its own accord
Bestow upon him freely, blissfully unacquainted with Rome's
Iron laws, the frenzied Forum, and the Bureau of Public Records.

Virgil, *Georgics* 2.500-2

18. Temple of Juno Moneta

COMMENTARY

Several basic questions persist concerning the Temple of Juno Moneta; its location, and the lack of vestiges, have been called "one of the great enigmas in the topography of ancient Rome" (Richardson, 215). That it stood on the summit of the Citadel rather than on the other two areas of the hill is certain, but some topographers place it under the church of S. Maria d' Aracoeli, while others place it closer to the edge of the hill in the direction of the Forum, on the ancient substructions visible in the little park there today alongside the stairway up to the back of the church.

Secondly, what is the relationship between the Temple of Juno Moneta and her earlier presence on the hill? Later tradition gave Juno a precinct on the Capitoline at least back to the time of the Gallic invasion in 390 BC, when her sacred geese honked their way into history, but tradition also has it that the temple dedicated in 344 BC was built on the site of the house of the patrician hero Manlius, not on the site of a previous temple or sanctuary.

As the ancients (incorrectly) understood the word, the epithet "Moneta" originated from Juno's role in warning (*monere*) the Romans. Subsequently, the temple also contained Rome's mint for four centuries, before it was moved to a new location near the Colosseum in Domitian's reign. *Moneta* thus came to mean "mint" in Latin, and was the origin of the English words "monetary" and "money."

SOURCES

18.1 [The Gauls climbed up the Capitoline at night without a single person noticing them,] but some of the sacred geese being raised in the sanctuary of Juno gave the alarm by honking and rushing at the intruders.

Dionysius, *Early Rome* 13.7.3

18.2 They say that on June 1st the Temple of Juno Moneta (vowed, Camillus, by you) was dedicated on the summit of the Citadel. The site was once the home of Manlius, who drove The armies of Gaul away from Jupiter Capitolinus.

Ovid, *Fasti* 6.183–86

18.3 Since the Aurunci had begun the hostilities and were not shying away from battle, Lucius Furius Camillus, the appointed dictator [in 345 BC], decided that the aid of the gods ought to be summoned for the conflict and accordingly vowed a temple to Juno Moneta. Victorious and under the vow's obligation, he returned to Rome and resigned from his post.

The senate appointed two commissioners to build this temple in a style suited to the greatness of the Roman people. A site was chosen for it on the Citadel, where the house of M. Manlius Capitolinus had been. ... The Temple of Moneta was dedicated one year after the vow.

Livy, *History* 7.28.4–6

18.4 [Cicero's brother Quintus argues for the validity of divination.] "According to many accounts, one time after an earthquake occurred, a voice was heard coming from the Temple of Juno on the Citadel, saying that an expiatory sacrifice of a pig had to be performed. This Juno was henceforth called Moneta [the "Warner"]."

Cicero, *On Divination* 1.101

18.5 The home of Manlius was located where the temple and mint of Moneta are located today.

Livy, *History* 6.20.13

18.6 I have written to Philotimus in Rome about getting money from the Moneta for my journey.

Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 8.7.3

18.7 The Books of the Magistrates are written on linen and deposited in the Temple of Juno Moneta.

Livy, *History* 4.20.8

20. The Prison (*Carcer*)/Gemonian Steps (*Gemoniae Scaelae*)

COMMENTARY

Rome's only known state prison, called simply *Carcer* ("the Prison") or the *Tullianum* (its lower chamber) in antiquity, has already figured in accounts of the Roman triumph as the place of execution for captured leaders [11.3, 11.7]. Other places of detention and execution must have existed in the city, but this was *the* Prison, situated at the heart of Rome's public space and, with the Gemonian Steps where corpses were exposed, part of the Forum's political theater (see Overview of the Roman Forum below).

Today the "Mamertine" Prison (its post-classical name of unknown origin) is a popular shrine commemorating the alleged incarceration there (but not execution) of Saints Peter and Paul.

SOURCES

20.1 [Under King Ancus, c. 630 BC, many of the Latins defeated in battle were settled in Rome as citizens, especially on the Aventine.] The population grew enormously with these additions. When, as a result of this rapid growth in population, opinions grew confused over the right and the wrong way to do things, clandestine crime began to appear. In response, a prison was built overlooking the Forum in the middle of the city, countering the growth in daring with the threat of incarceration.

Livy, History 1.33.8

20.2 They say that the Tullianum, which refers to a specific part of the Prison, was built by Servius Tullius [c. 550 BC].

Festus 490

20.3 [On Cato's recommendation, the Senate passed the death sentence on the Catilinarian conspirators.] Cicero, as consul [in 63 BC], decided to carry it out before nightfall to forestall any further developments, and ordered the prison officials to prepare everything necessary for execution. After stationing guards around, he personally led Lentulus into the prison; praetors escorted the other conspirators.

There is a part of the prison which is called the Tullianum, where you ascend a short way on the left. The Tullianum is sunk into the earth about 12 feet and is constructed of stone walls on all sides; above this is a room with a ceiling of vaulted stone. Foul from neglect, darkness, and stench, it is an altogether terrifying sight. Into this chamber Lentulus was lowered, and the executioners of those who commit capital crimes did as they were told and strangled him. Thus did a patrician of the distinguished family of the Corneli and former consul in Rome end his life, in a manner worthy not of his birth but of his character and his own deeds. Cathegus, Statilius, Gabinius, and Caeparius died in the same way.

Sallust, War against Catiline 55

20.4 C. VIBIUS C. F. RUFINUS M. COCCEIUS M. F. NERVA COS. EX S. C.

The Consuls Gaius Vibius Rufinus, Son of Gaius, and Marcus Cocceius Nerva, son of Marcus, [repaired the Prison in AD 22] by order of the Senate.

CIL 6.1539

20.5 There on the Gemonian Steps, witnessed with horror by the entire Roman Forum, lay the body of Quintus Caepio, mangled by the deadly hands of the executioner [in 103 BC].

Valerius Maximus, Sayings 6.9.13

20.6 [Bad omens abounded as Sejanus, the right-hand man of Emperor Tiberius, approached his end in AD 31.] When Sejanus had finished sacrificing on the Capitoline and was descending to the Forum, the crowd of people surrounding him was so dense that his bodyguards were unable to follow, and they turned down the way that leads to the Prison. As they descended the flight of stairs on which the condemned criminals are thrown, they slipped and fell.

Dio, History 58.5.6

20.7 [Sejanus, accused of plotting against the imperial house, was executed in AD 31.] It was decided to move against his two surviving children next. And so they were carried off to the Prison, the boy old enough to understand what lay in store for them, the girl however so innocent that she kept on asking what she had done wrong and where she was being taken; she promised she would never do it again—a spanking had always seen to that in the past. Writers of that time say that because it was unheard of to apply capital punishment to a maiden, the girl was first raped, with the rope at her side. Afterwards, she and her brother were strangled and thrown out, young as they were, on the Gemonian Steps.

Tacitus, Annals 6.5.9

20.8 [After the Vitellian forces took the Capitoline during the civil war of AD 69, they killed the city prefect Sabinus] and dragged his stabbed, mutilated, and headless body onto the Gemonian Steps.

Tacitus, Histories 3.74

Notes: For a description of the prison, and commentary on the sources, with bibliography, see Wilkins, "*Sallust's Tullianum*."