The Theology of Scale: Monumental and Miniature Cult Buildings in Archaic Central Italy

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The sixth and fifth centuries BC were a transformative time for central Italic religious architecture. Whereas earlier cult buildings had closely followed vernacular design, in this period they developed a distinctive architectural grammar that made use of raised floors, exterior columns, and rooftop decorations, and underwent changes in scale to the point that sanctuaries came to hold both monumental and miniature examples.[1] To date archaeologists have accounted for the construction of these new temples in different ways, but almost none have considered why an increase and decrease in scale seem to have occurred at the same time. This paper attempts to reconcile these changes by proposing that they may have had theological significance.

The proposal that changes in the appearance of Archaic religious buildings may be connected in some way to perceptions of divinity will be presented in three parts. The first section briefly sketches the way in which cult buildings in Latium and Etruria came to have monumental form while the second summarises the evidence for the introduction of their miniature counterparts nearby. The third section draws on modern philosophies of aesthetics to suggest that the atypical scale of these buildings might not only link their interpretation but could also reflect ideas about the nature of the gods. The argument is necessarily speculative but aims to widen discussions about the hermeneutics of scale in classical antiquity by bringing them to bear on early central Italic practices.

1. The path to monumentality

1. On this transformation in the design of Etruscan and Latin cult buildings see Colonna 1985b, 60-61; Izzet 2000; Colonna 2006, 152-63; Izzet 2007, 126-42; Warden 2012, 88-92; Potts 2015, 31-61.

Architectural historians posit that religious buildings can first be recognised in western central Italy during the Iron Age, from approximately the tenth to the eighth centuries BC.[2] Prior to this, rituals appear to have been performed underground, for example at the Sventatoio thermal cave, or outside at natural landmarks, such as the Laghetto di Campoverde, with built structures playing no apparent role.[3] A topographical connection with settlements seems to have emerged only during the Late Bronze Age, when cereal offerings began to be deposited in hut compounds, and by the Iron Age the majority of known cult sites were located in or near settlements.[4] Here the dominant form of architecture was the prehistoric hut, having either a round, oval, or rectangular plan, four or six internal posts, one door, occasionally a porch, walls of wood and earth, and a thatched roof.[5] At sites including Satricum, Ardea, Rome, Anagni, and Tarquinia, one hut appears to contain, or stand in close proximity to, a votive deposit, suggesting that it may have had a distinctive religious function.[6] Comparison with other huts in these settlements suggests that these potential cult buildings had no distinctive plans or appearance and were not regularly larger or smaller than other structures.

Religious buildings seem to have remained just as visually ambiguous during the architectural changes of the seventh and early sixth centuries BC. The increasing use of rectangular plans, stone foundations, and tiled roofs brought about a change often described as the transition from huts to houses, and by the middle of the seventh century three main building types were in use: small one- or two-roomed rectangular structures (called *oikoi* after Greek architectural typologies); rooms arranged in a long line, one after the other; and courtyard complexes where lines or wings of rooms were arranged around an open space. Votive deposits indicate that religious activities were not restricted to buildings with any one plan and also took place at unusual structures such as the *casa del recinto* in Roselle, where a square exterior measuring c. 4.5 x 4.5 m concealed a circular interior.[7] While worshippers in the Portonaccio Sanctuary at Veii seem to have performed rites in connection with the rectangular building *I* measuring 9.0 x 6.2 m, the nearby inhabitants of Caere may have visited the sanctuary housed in the approximately 54 x 54 m courtyard complex in the countryside at Montetosto.[8] Size could thus vary as well as plan, and there is insufficient evidence to associate various designs with the needs of different social or political groups. The ubiquitous use of new architectural terracotta decorations likewise

2. As discussed by Bouma 1996, i. 95-99; Potts 2015, 13-30.

3. Edlund 1987, 44-62; Guidi 1989-1990, 406-07; Bouma 1996, i. 100-01 with nn.366-67; Kleibrink 1997-1998.

4. Guidi 1980; Guidi 1989-1990; Whitehouse 1995, 88-86; Kleibrink 1997-1998, 453.

5. Bartoloni – Beijer et al. 1985, 177-79.

6. For details of these structures see Potts 2015, 125-31 with references.

7. Laviosa 1965, 82-85 and pl.14; Maetzke 1979, 21-32.

8. Portonaccio: Colonna 2002, 149. Montetosto: Colonna 1985a; Belelli Marchesini – Biella et al. 2015.

precluded ready recognition of a cult building: unlike in Greece where architectural terracottas on the roof were a hallmark of religious architecture, in western central Italy they adorned the roofs of houses, shrines, workshops, and funerary chapels until the fifth century BC.[9]

In the course of the Archaic period (c.580-480 BC[10]), in contrast, religious architecture began to develop a distinctive external appearance.[11] Particular combinations of raised and stepped substructures, substantial external columns, and prominent roof-top decorations slowly became the preserve of temples. Podia and crepidomas raised cult buildings above the ground and required stairs to gain entry. The earliest securely identified podium temple in the region is the so-called Temple of Mater Matuta in the S. Omobono sanctuary in Rome, where partial remains suggest that a podium measuring approximately 1.7 m high with a torus moulding was built in c.580 BC and then enlarged and reshaped in c.535 BC.[12] The Ara della Regina Temple at Tarquinia set a precedent in Etruria from c.570 BC, and in c.510 BC podium temples also appeared in the Portonaccio sanctuary at Veii and on the plateau at Vulci.[13] Over the same timeframe the distribution of architectural terracottas changed until they became a means of conferring prominence on a select type of building: in Latium these buildings were temples, while in Etruria they included temples and large buildings with functions that cannot always be determined by finds, for example Buildings A and C of the courtyard complex in Zone F at Acquarossa.[14] The synchronous adoption and redeployment of such features effectively came to differentiate cult buildings from other structures.

At the same time that the décor of religious buildings significantly changed so did their size.[15] New temples were built on a scale that saw them dominate the settlements in which they stood (Fig. 1), such as the Temple of Juno Moneta at Segni (with a stepped podium of 40.27 x 23.91 m at the highest level), and the Casarinaccio Temple at Ardea (with a reconstructed podium of approximately 35 x 23 m).[16] The Capitoline Temple in Rome appears to have been colossal (Fig. 2). Like many Archaic temples, little of it has survived in the archaeological record other than its foundations and parts of its terracotta roof, but even these

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9. Especially in Etruria: Damgaard Andersen 1993; Winter 2009, 567-70.

10. Bartoloni 2012, 8-16 clearly sets out the periods of Etruscan history in relation to events in Greece and at Rome.

11. Colonna 1985b, 60-61; Izzet 2000; Colonna 2006, 152-63; Izzet 2007, 126-42; Potts 2015, 31-61.

12. Ioppolo 1989; Colonna 1991; Adornato 2003; Diffendale – Brocato et al. 2016.

13. Vulci: Bartoccini 1963, 9-10; Sgubini Moretti 1985. Tarquinia: Bonghi Jovino – Bagnasco Gianni 2012.

14. Damgaard Andersen 1993; Winter 2009, 567-70. On Buildings A-C at Acquarossa, see Östenberg 1975, 44-46, 165; Wikander 1985; Wikander 1986, 91-157.

15. For measurements and overview of a wide range of examples see Potts 2015.

16. Segni: Cifarelli 2003, 51. Ardea: Stefani 1954, 13 and fig. 12; Colonna 1984, 409. Other examples include the Ara della Regina at Tarquinia: Bonghi Jovino – Bagnasco Gianni 2012, 33-40; and the Capitoline Temple at Rome: Mura Sommella 2009; also see n.15 above.

partial remains indicate its immensity. The foundations are part of a platform measuring approximately 74 x 54 m with a depth of just over 12 m, meaning between 28,000 and 32,000 cubic meters of dressed stone were used in the foundations alone; the labour and skills required for the quarrying, transport, and interlocking placement of the stones establish that the substructure itself was an immense architectural project.[17] The building above may also have been gigantic. Terracottas found at the site include pieces of revetments that are far larger than those from other contemporary temples. For example, parts of a frieze with palmette leaves and a lotus calyx were recovered, which are part of standardised designs and therefore enable the reconstruction of the original anthemion frieze in proportion.[18] The fragments indicate that the original frieze had a reconstructed height of 60 cm, in contrast to a similar design measuring 37 cm high on Temple B at Pyrgi and one approximately 27 cm high on Temple II at Satricum.[19] The Capitoline temple can thus be viewed as a superlative example of the scale of religious architecture in the Archaic period and the resources invested in its creation.

The increasing size of Archaic temples is unlikely to have been driven by practicalities. Although much remains unknown about Archaic Etruscan and Latial religion, there is a general consensus among scholars that religious rituals were performed outside temples, as in later Rome, rather than in front of or amongst a congregation gathered within. The increase in the scale of these buildings thus cannot easily be attributed to demographic pressure or a surge in religiosity that saw a greater number of worshippers needing accommodation. The fact that the visibility of cult buildings was enhanced by an increase in scale as well as the use of particular external decorations instead suggests that a change had occurred in the conception or function of these buildings. It is important to remember though that the rationale for the new appearance of these buildings when constructed is only one element to consider in exploring this phenomenon. Given that the meaning of buildings is not stable but rather multivalent and established anew by use and context,[20] the effects of monumental scale and the interpretations that users may have conferred upon them are equally worth of study.

The result of these design modifications was a profound change in the visibility of religious architecture. Changes in style and size produced monumental temples that were designed to be recognised, presumably to mould religious experience, and likely to emphasize the values of the communities they served and shaped. The dimensions of these buildings are critical to many of their

17. Hopkins 2016, 99.

18. Mura Sommella 2000, 22.

19. Mura Sommella 2000, 22, 26; Hopkins 2012, 115; Hopkins 2016, 102 with n.110. For summaries of the extensive debate over the size of the original temple (often disregarding the architectural terracottas), with full bibliography, see Ridley 2005 and Potts 2015, 123-24, 145-46.

20. Jones 2000, 26-58.

roles and meanings: although their monumentality is often relative rather than absolute, their prominence conveyed import and made them emphatically present in daily life. This much can be seen in the archaeological record.

As the literature that was once part of early Etruscan and Latial cultures largely has been lost, identifying the rationale for enlarging cult buildings and the perceptions of those who encountered them requires a degree of conjecture. Scholars seeking to reconstruct the interpretive horizons of individuals and communities in the Archaic period typically have recourse to archaeological data, to information from other ancient cultures, from accounts of later Roman life, and to models used in the social sciences. In this respect attempts to understand the construction of monumental cult buildings are no different. Commitment to monumental scale is a key theme in central Italic architecture: the large burial mounds or *tumuli* built to shelter the dead during the seventh and sixth centuries BC, such as the Melone del Sodo II tumulus at Cortona (64 m in diameter), the Mengarelli Tumulus (43 m in diameter), and the Tumulus of the Colonel (37 m in diameter), demonstrate the large size achievable in funerary architecture, while the approximately 60 x 62 m plan of the Archaic courtyard complex at Poggio Civitate shows similarly grand dimensions could be found in elite residences.[21] Scholars have explored these types of large-scale buildings from both technical and social perspectives, and recognise that they required not only advanced engineering knowledge but also a culture in which size was meaningful.[22] A general consensus has emerged that monumentality had connotations that are similar to those in other complex and developing societies, principally around messages of status, power, and skill,[23] and was spurred by competition and connection between commissioners and users. In regard to temples, overt displays of piety or divine favour were also likely motivators. A complication arises, however, when one notes that Archaic sanctuaries did not only contain monumental buildings, but also miniature ones.

2. Miniaturisation

The monumentality of Archaic religious buildings makes it easy to overlook that visitors to sanctuaries may have encountered miniature examples as well. If one holds that the non-anthropocentric scale of select buildings was a factor in how they were perceived and from which they acquired meaning, then it is necessary to consider miniature buildings within sanctuaries alongside monumental ones, and to acknowledge the presence of both more generally in society.

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21. On tumuli see Naso 1998; Naso 2016. The bibliography on Poggio Civitate is enormous; for helpful overviews see de Grummond 1997 and Tuck 2016.

22. For instance, see the chapters in Thomas – Meyers 2012.

23. Trigger 1990.

Small, three-dimensional, handmade representations of buildings are a relatively rare part of the material culture of western central Italy in the Archaic period but their scarcity makes them striking.[24] The fragmentary state of many complicates quantification and chronology; to date there are roughly twelve examples thought to date between the seventh and early fifth centuries BC, five of which have relatively secure provenance from sanctuaries that also had monumental Archaic temples, namely the Portonaccio sanctuary at Veii (Fig. 3), the S. Omobono sanctuary in Rome, and the Mater Matuta sanctuary at Satricum.[25] The five range in size from 7.5 x 11 x 5.3 cm (at Satricum) to 33 x 35 x 16 cm (at Portonaccio). All belong to a tradition of miniature and small-scale representations of buildings in terracotta and bronze in central Italy that were predominantly used as cinerary urns from as early as the tenth century BC, found in roughly one percent of cremation burials from which an ossuary survives.[26] Their presence in the non-funereal context of sanctuaries consequently is anomalous, and may be connected with the larger transfer of concern and value that passes from the funerary to the civic sphere during the second quarter of the first millennium BC.

The likelihood that the miniature buildings come from votive deposits, where they would have functioned as offerings intended to forge a connection with gods, allows them to be considered part of the larger phenomenon of votive miniaturisation in central Italy.[27] At a conservative estimate, hundreds of thousands of objects have been recovered from sanctuaries where they were deposited as gifts for deities. Such items are often familiar from quotidian life and include vessels used to prepare or consume food, weapons, pieces of unworked metal, wool-working implements, organic material, and statuettes, all of which could occasionally be rendered in precious materials such as bronze, ivory, or gold.[28] Miniature items abound in the corpus, and particularly in Latium.[29] By way of example, approximately 30,000 miniature impasto vessels, the majority in the shape of two-handled pots, were found in a votive deposit at Lavinium dating from the second half of the seventh to the early sixth century BC, while the Archaic Votive Deposit I at Satricum includes more than 1,700

24. The standard reference is Staccioli 1968.

25. Three models come from Votive Deposit I at Satricum: Staccioli 1968, 44-46, cat. nos. 35-37 (Rome, Museo di Villa Giulia inv. 11609, 11610, 11612), Damgaard Andersen 2001, 250 with nn.40-41. Two models were found at Portonaccio: Staccioli 1968, 15-16, cat. nos. 1-2 (Rome, Museo di Villa Giulia, one without inventory number and another inv. 38935). Part of another model, comprising a pitched roof with a recess for an acroterion base, now in the Capitoline Antiquarium, is thought to come from S. Omobono: Mura Sommella 1993, 232 with n.22 and fig.15.

26. Bartoloni 2013, 86.

27. Phillips Jr. 1985, 7; Kleibrink 1997-1998, 447-54.

28. For an overview see *ThesCRA,* i. 328-379.

29. Miniature pottery is comparatively rare in Etruria and is found more in domestic contexts than religious ones, with exceptions such as Celle and Roselle: Damgaard Andersen 1998, i. 149.

miniature vases.[30] Miniature buildings fit well in this tradition as representations of items familiar in everyday life, but stand out for their relative rarity and their idiosyncratic designs. Like their monumental equivalents no two are alike and interpretations must balance this variation with their participation in broader practices.

The miniature buildings from sanctuaries can be regarded as models, not in the technical sense of serving as templates or prototypes for full-sized buildings but as evocations of larger structures. They do not appear to represent real buildings that stood in the sanctuaries in which they were found, with the exception of one of the two models found at Portonaccio where the design of the miniature antefixes resembles those connected with the Archaic temple.[31] The question of whether all five represent cult buildings, however defined, thus remains open. Some scholars have argued that the models recall temples, while others interpret them as imitation treasuries or store-houses, private dwellings, or structures used for sacred marriages.[32] But regardless of the function of the buildings they evoke, they appear to have been left in sanctuaries and thus to have had a religious function at one point in their biographies. They moreover contribute to scenarios in which visitors to a sanctuary would have been presented with buildings of far from human scale.

Scholars have suggested that the models had a range of meanings for their users that are reminiscent of those proffered for monumental buildings. It is unclear whether votives in central Italic sanctuaries long remained on display or were placed directly into natural or built receptacles, or if norms differed between sites, periods, and situations, but despite this uncertainty one can theorise that the rarity of the models may have made them signs of the status or disposable wealth of dedicants. They could also have derived prestige from the skill of the artisans who made them. They could honour the gods as votive objects did more generally, but also as items that were powerfully symbolic of their larger counterparts, given the argument that that some ancient miniatures were small but '*monumental in scope*.'[33] The possible commemoration of status, skill, and reverence seem to be values associated with many votives and buildings associated with the gods. One can consequently ask if the production of both monumental and miniature cult buildings is significant in itself, and whether both drew meaning from their extraordinary size. This opens up a line of enquiry into the hermeneutics of scale with regard to religious architecture.

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30. Fenelli – Guaitoli 1990, 184-85 (Lavinium); Bouma 1996, i. 128 n.154 (Satricum).

31. Damgaard Andersen 1998, i. 68; cf. Staccioli 1968, 81-83. According to Maaskant-Kleibrink 1995, 130, Gierow and Andrèn also interpret one of the Satricum models as a representation of the nearby sacred hut.

32. The purpose of the buildings, as a class of material, is debated: Staccioli 1968, 67-71 interprets them as *thesauroi*; Damgaard Andersen 1993, 75 sees them as models of private houses; Säflund 1993, 122-23 believes they are models of sacred wedding-*thalamoi*; Jannot 2005, 98 sees them as models of temples or sanctuaries.

33. Squire 2011, 277. Cf. Phillips Jr. 1985, 7.

3. The theology of scale

The hermeneutics of scale in central Italic art – of which architecture is one of the most plastic forms – have tended to be discussed more in connection with either monumental or miniature evidence than both in tandem. As described above, many of the same interpretations have been applied to one or other sets of data, largely around ideas of power and piety. Bringing the interpretive field for these two groups together, especially with regard to studying proportion, can be justified by the fact that both eschew anthropomorphic scale for one that is beyond standard and practical function or, in other words, inhuman.[34] Moreover, while buildings of either size could be understood through direct experience, it is likely that both gained fuller meaning through knowledge of the other. Situated semiotics holds that the meaning of phenomena partly derives from associations with, and experiences of, other related examples; perceptions of an object are influenced by others that are known but only indirectly present.[35] This theory has already been employed in the hermeneutics of material culture in pre-Roman Italy, for instance in the argument that miniature vessels in Latial tombs had no meaning beyond reference to those of normal size.[36] From this perspective, knowledge of cult buildings at monumental, miniature, and regular scales and comparison between them is likely to have reinforced the extraordinary scale of the first two groups and thereby connect their interpretation.

The sacred context of these buildings adds a further dimension. Modern aesthetic philosophers have argued that non-anthropomorphic scale can facilitate experiences of the metaphysical and the sublime. Kant claimed that scale can be experienced either in proportions that accord with the human body or at a magnitude that exceeds human sense and thereby surpasses comprehension, triggering a sense of intuitive greatness or the sublime.[37] Derrida subsequently theorised that disproportionate scale could stimulate imagination of what he called the '*superelevated*' or boundless and prodigious.[38] It has thus been argued that works of art in a scale that is either much smaller or greater than human have the capacity to open up contemplation of the cosmic, the supernatural, and the sacred.[39] In studies of the classical world, scholars have applied similar ideas to the interpretation of colossal statues and temples, for example in suggestions that gigantic size conveyed other-worldliness, and in miniature artworks, in discussion

34. Cf. Kee – Lugli 2015, 255.
35. Knappett 2012.
36. Attema et al. 2001-2002, 357. Cf. Moser 2019, 69.
37. Kant – Guyer 2000, 131-40, § 25 and 26.
38. Derrida 1987, 119-32 (translation of *La Vérité en Peinture* 1978).
39. Kee – Lugli 2015, 254-55.

of ancient beliefs that only god-given skill could render such marvels.[40] It is viable accordingly to speak of a theology of scale in general and in antiquity in particular and to explore how it could provide a useful avenue for understanding monumental and miniature religious architecture in early central Italy.

The theory that the scale of religious buildings may be connected in some way to concepts of divinity, either in the eyes of designers or viewers, is not uncontroversial. Architectural theorists hold a variety of opinions on the value of buildings as religio-historical data: some reject the idea that architecture can stand for anything other than itself; others view it as limited evidence; and a third group believe in its documentary potential if scholars can find appropriate methods of interpretation.[41] All three opinions can be discerned in studies of Archaic central Italy. Many histories of Etruscan and Latial religion discuss buildings as little more than shelters for cult statues, and thus belong to the first group, while others engage them as proxies for urbanisation or signs of interaction with Greece, or alternatively – particularly in Marxist-influenced schools of thought – as ways to communicate self-glorifying messages about social elites, and thus as evidence for cultural and social phenomena.[42] Far fewer hold that the design of religious buildings may suggest information about theology or cosmology, however imprecisely expressed.[43] In the context of a volume on the hermeneutics of proportion, I would like to propose that the non-anthropomorphic scale of select ancient cult buildings was not simply a visual or an aesthetic choice but in part a theological one. More specifically, non-human scale may convey an Archaic belief that while the gods in many ways resembled powerful humans, they remained at one important remove.

A range of data from the Archaic period shows that the gods were often conceived in anthropomorphic terms at this time. In art the gods were given a human appearance, for example in the statues on the roofs of the Portonaccio Temple at Veii (Fig. 4) and the Temple of Mater Matuta at Satricum, where multiple figures form ridge-pole tableaux, or in the Herakles and Athena acroteria repeatedly used on temples in Latium and southern Etruria.[44] Commemorative gift inscriptions also show a level of continuity with the mortal world. The formula used to record gift exchanges between Etruscan elites in the

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40. Squire 2011, 259-60, with references, 367-69. Cf. Adornato 2007.

41. Jones 2000, 135-47 with references.

42. For example, Torelli 1982; Colonna 1985b, 24, 60; Cornell 1995, 108-12; Zifferero 1995; Zifferero 2002; Riva 2005, 213; cf. Potts 2015, 2-3 with references.

43. Izzet 2007, 130-41 discusses temple design as a means of marking out ritual space and by implication the concept of religion as inherently set apart from profane or secular life. Cf. Torelli 1997, 37, 142 on pediments.

44. On the acroteria on the Portonaccio Temple, dating to c.510-500 BC, see Colonna 2008, 59-62 and Neils 2008. On the ridge-top statues on the temple at Satricum, belonging to the so-called Late Archaic roof and dating to the early fifth century BC, see Lulof 1996 and Lulof 1997, 94-96. On Herakles and Athena acroteria, identified on at least twelve temples now, see Lulof 2000; Lulof 2016, with n.36; Lulof – Smith 2017, 7-9.

Orientalizing period appears to have evolved into the formula for votive dedications in the Archaic period, with both making use of the phrase *mlach mlakas*, meaning 'a beautiful [gift] for/of a beautiful [person].'[45] The use of the same formula in both contexts may signal that the gods were viewed akin to privileged humans, at least in this region in these centuries.

Partial resemblances between temples and earlier elite houses further liken divinities to high-ranking mortals. As mentioned earlier, changes in central Italic architecture during the sixth and fifth centuries BC included the emergence of a distinctive aesthetic for cult buildings. In part this was achieved by a process in which temples subsumed elements of elite residences. One of the elements that slowly became the preserve of temples was a tiled roof embellished with architectural terracottas. While the wealthy inhabitants of the residential complex at Poggio Civitate in the early sixth century BC carried out their activities beneath exuberant acroteria of anthropomorphic figures, animals, and mythical creatures and before revetment plaques with images of horse races, banquets, processions, and assemblies,[46] later in the century such art could only be seen on the roofs of monumental temples, where acroteria showed the gods enacting myths and revetments depicted activities associated with elite lifestyles.[47] Temple plans could draw on high-class houses as well. Giovanni Colonna has suggested that the plans of Tuscanic temples were modelled on Late Orientalizing elite houses with tripartite rooms, wide vestibules, and internal columns, as reflected in tombs like that of the Shields and Chairs at Caere.[48] In a similar vein, *oikoi* were built in sanctuaries at Gravisca, Civita Castellana, Portonaccio, Satricum, and Pyrgi to house gods, but were also part of aristocratic complexes like that on the Piazza d'Armi at Veii in the Late Orientalizing Period.[49] It is thus possible to argue that cult buildings absorbed elements of design that were established markers of status because both were seen as dwellings for elevated members of the community.

How does atypical scale dovetail with this picture? Depictions of the gods, the language used to gift votives, and elements of religious architectural design all contribute to an anthropomorphic image of divinity, to the extent that some scholars have suggested that gods and people existed on a conceptual spectrum, especially in Etruria, that ran from mortal to noble to god, and that the boundaries between these categories could blur, for instance when nobles died and became venerated ancestors.[50] Like humans, the gods occupied houses,

45. Wallace 2008, 164, 78; Turfa 2007; Maras 2009, 20-21, 29-30.

46. For summaries see Tuck 2016 (the site), and Winter 2009, 552-53 (decoration).

47. For example, Lulof 1996; Neils 2008. Note that revetment decorations changes from figural to floral styles in c.510 B.C. as part of the "second-phase" system: Lulof 2014, 120-21.

48. Colonna 1985b, 60; Colonna 2006, 154.

49. The bibliography on the site is extensive; for recent overviews see Bartoloni 2017; Acconcia 2019.

50. Edlund-Berry 1993, 121; Tuck 2006, 133-35; Warden 2009, 209; Warden 2011, 65.

required shelter, and appreciated places in which to reside. The size of their buildings, however, were not human, being either far bigger than everyday houses or far smaller. Both extremes put them beyond human scale and beyond human existence: the gods had buildings not entirely of this world. One can accordingly suggest that it is the anomalous scale of monumental and miniature cult buildings that signal the limits of divine anthropomorphism in Archaic central Italy.

4. Conclusion

The proposal that the form of Archaic cult buildings may be shaped by perceptions of the gods, however indirectly, is unverifiable. Yet the possibility that both changed in tandem may be a useful piece in the puzzle of reconstructing notions of Etruscan and Latial deities in the sixth and fifth centuries BC on the basis of limited data. The suggestion that non-anthropocentric scale conveys the idea that the gods were human in form but superhuman in nature complements existing models and thus deepens rather than disrupts the discourse. It also promotes wider treatment of the hermeneutics of scale in early Italy, a topic that has usually been analysed in relation to monumental or miniature artefacts rather than both, especially in discussions of religion. The possibility of passing from architectural design to belief does not negate any of the other factors likely involved in the construction of cult buildings but seeks to add another dimension to the multi-faceted processes of creation and use that shaped the built environment. In essence, it simply suggests that if the gods were at home in the world, then their buildings may express at least part of their identity.

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Fig. 1 Artist's impression of Temple II and surrounding buildings on the acropolis at Satricum, c.500 BC (Maaskant-Kleibrink 1991: 107, fig. 32b).

Fig. 2 Reconstruction of the Capitoline temple in Rome, dedicated in c.510 BC. Note the size of the human figure in the left-hand side of the porch (Hopkins 2016: 111, fig. 87, 3-D reconstruction and imaging by Janis Atelbauers, with John Hopkins and Richard Beacham).

Fig. 3 Clay building model from Veii. 10.5 x 12 x 11 cm. Sixth-fifth century BC. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome. ©Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia. Archivio fotografico.

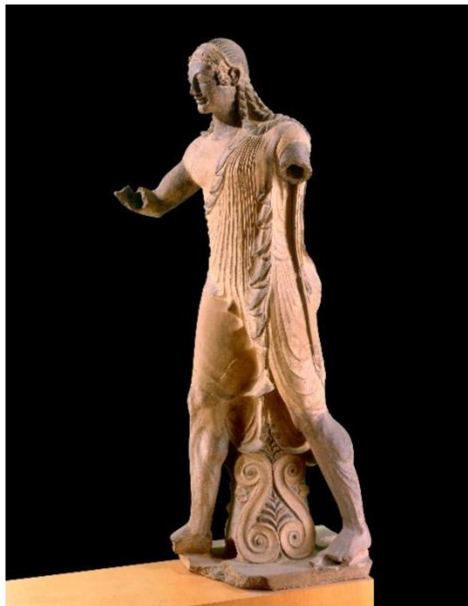

Fig. 4 Terracotta acroterial statue of Aplu/Apollo from the roof of the temple in the Portonaccio sanctuary, Veii. 181cm high. Late sixth century BC. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia. © 2020. Photo Scala, Florence - courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali e del Turismo.