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## **Moving with time and space at the sanctuary of Juno, Gabii (Italy)**

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In his 1969 novel *Slaughterhouse 5*, Kurt Vonnegut imagines an alien race capable of four-dimensional perception. The Tralfamadorians, as he names them, experience time as if it is all happening at once: past, present and future are indistinguishable (Vonnegut, 1969: 21). They may be fictional, but Tralfamadorian ways of perceiving and experiencing time are not as far removed from human realities as might be expected. Studies of the senses have, for instance, pointed towards how sensory perception of the material world can ‘bring into existence multiple times simultaneously’ (Hamilakis, 2013: 103). Similar ideas have also been advanced for the types of Roman archaeological contexts that form the focal point of this chapter: ‘periodic, repeated Republican Roman sacrifice at an altar’, suggests Claudia Moser (2019: 6), was ‘a means of integrating a community’s sense of its materially remembered ritual *past*, its experiential *present*, and the *future* consequence of its current practices’ (original emphasis). Likewise, evidence from indigenous archaeologies points towards the existence across diverse human communities of ontological perspectives on time that differ from the strictly linear, chronological ones favoured by Eurocentric archaeological discourse (Cipolla and Quinn, 2017; Crellin, 2020; Lucas, 2021). Of course, indigenous ontologies cannot be applied wholesale to other contexts, and attempts to do so involve the problematic colonisation of those concepts, but their existence – along with the thought experiment prompted by Vonnegut’s Tralfamadorians – should nevertheless encourage archaeological researchers to investigate alternative ways of engaging with time. This includes asking questions such as those posed in this chapter about the potential of sensory manifestations of the past to generate affect in the present.

Affect is defined in the context of the present study as a form of agency that prompts certain responses or causes something to happen, and which emerges from relations largely, but not exclusively, between people and the non-human material world (Jervis, 2019: 44). In many instances, affect is generated as a consequence of people's sensory interactions with the distinctive affordances and qualities of different material things (Graham, 2024). Classical archaeology has long used the combination of this sort of sensory affect and memory to explore the role of the past in the ancient present. Only rarely though has it been suggested that these pasts involved anything other than the sensorially-prompted mental recall of individual and shared experiences or knowledge, with memory sometimes used to promote curated or even largely imagined communal pasts (Dignas et al., 2012; Galinsky, 2014). This is also true of initial work on the topic of sensory archaeologies by Yannis Hamilakis (2013: 119) in which he stressed that time is 'material memory itself, memory evoked and activated through the sensorial interaction with matter'.

Importantly, however, in a much less-frequently cited piece (at least within sensory studies of the Greek and Roman worlds), Hamilakis (2017) clarified his definition of 'sensorial assemblages' and their relationship with the past and the present with reference to philosophical concepts concerning the 'virtual' and the 'actual' (terms which do not appear in Hamilakis 2013 and which are discussed in more detail below).<sup>1</sup> He proposes that 'All pasts co-exist virtually with the present, but only certain pasts are actualised at specific occasions'

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<sup>1</sup> The concepts of 'virtual' and 'actual' were adopted and developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2013 [1980]) in their work on relationality and assemblages, which has gained considerable currency within recent discourse on archaeological theory as part of a so-called relational or new materialist turn, despite remaining regrettably under-applied to ancient Mediterranean contexts (Jervis. 2019; Crellin et al.. 2021; Graham. 2021a; Harri.s 2021).

(Hamilakis, 2017: 174). Put another way, Hamilakis suggests that the past is not merely recalled or represented but, as part of particular sensory assemblages of people and things, manifests as something with tangible affordances that have the potential for affect in the present. As far as human experience is concerned, Hamilakis (2017: 174, original emphasis) notes that ‘sensoriality and affectivity are crucial’ for the actualisation of these pasts at particular moments when ‘certain planes of the past, or temporal occasions embedded in matter, voluntarily or involuntarily, acquire *sensorial intensity and affective weight*, and they thus become actual pasts’. In other words, sensory assemblages present the means through which people not only remember the past but through which they can experience it sensorially in the present.

This more complex aspect of Hamilakis’s characterisation of sensory assemblages has been largely overlooked in scholarship on the senses in antiquity, which often employs his terminology of ‘sensory assemblage’ as shorthand for the intersection of sensory modalities or affordances and the subsequent generation of multisensory experiences. As such, ‘sensory assemblage’ has become a way of describing or enumerating a collection of smells, sounds, tastes and so forth that can be associated with a place, object, activity or experience, losing its arguably more compelling aspects and its connections with time. This chapter addresses this misunderstanding head-on. It pioneers a new approach to engaging with the interpretative possibilities opened up by assemblages that involve the sensorial actualisation of the past, to demonstrate how sensory assemblages can be employed more productively as an analytical tool for archaeological research. Accordingly, it argues for the development and application of sensory methodologies that fully incorporate the differential affordances of time as well as space and establishes how these can be used to generate valuable new interpretations of complex ancient sites, including the sanctuary of Juno Gabina at Gabii (Italy).

## The sanctuary of Juno Gabina

The archaeological remains of the monumental sanctuary at the heart of this chapter are located approximately 18 km (11 miles) from Rome in the Latin city of Gabii (Latium) (Figure 4.1). Dedicated to the goddess Juno, and constructed within the inhabited area of the city, the sanctuary was located almost directly adjacent to the ancient Via Praenestina. A secondary road ran along its eastern side towards a now-drained crater lake known from the Mediaeval period as Lago di Castiglione. Excavations conducted in the 1950s and 1960s by Martin Almagro Basch and Alberto Balil Illana on behalf of the Escuela Española de Historia y Arqueología en Roma were subsequently published by Martin Almagro-Gorbea (1982, with specialist contributions). The following summary of the sanctuary's features and chronological development is derived from this report, which remains the only comprehensive archaeological study of the sanctuary.<sup>2</sup> [Insert Figure 4.1 near here]

This location was the setting for ritual activity from the late sixth century BCE, prior to which it had been used for habitation, probably from the ninth century BCE. The earliest evidence for activity with a clear sacred character was detected in traces of structures probably connected with a *lucus* (sacred grove). Almagro-Gorbea (1982: 605) suggests that the grove and its associated structures provided the focus for small-scale religious activities until the construction in the fourth or third century BCE of a more formalised *sacellum* (shrine) dedicated to the goddess Fortuna. The archaeological remains that dominate the site today, however, reflect the substantial reorganisation, reorientation and monumentalising of the sacred area over a relatively short period between 160 and 150 BCE (Figure 4.2). Indeed, Almagro-Gorbea (1982, 616) indicates that the transformation of the site was 'rápida e

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<sup>2</sup> Current excavations centre on other aspects of the city: The Gabii Project n.d.; Becker et al., 2009; Samuels et al., 2022; Banducci and D'Acri, 2023.

ininterrumpida' ('rapid and uninterrupted') and may not have taken much longer than a year to complete. An elevated podium temple (*peripteros sine postico*) was flanked on three sides by symmetrical porticoes, the ends of which aligned with the temple façade, and a rectangular altar was placed centrally a short distance from the temple's frontal staircase. The newly designed sanctuary, which was now associated with Juno, lay within a *temenos* wall extending from the pi-shaped portico to enclose the area directly in front of the temple. This wall was interrupted by five points of entry/exit: two within the east and west wings of the portico (not shown in **Figure 4.2**), two in the southeast and southwest sections of the *temenos* wall and one via a second enclosed space surrounding a semi-circular theatre-like structure of around 12 rows of stepped seats located at a lower level. Much of the building work of this phase was carried out using *Lapis Gabinus*, a locally sourced hardwearing and durable volcanic stone commonly known as 'peperino' that was used in construction at Rome for many centuries (Marra et al., 2022). **[Insert Figure 4.2 near here]**

This phase probably coincided with the closure and abandonment of the *sacellum* associated with Fortuna at the southwest edge of the new sanctuary, although it is unclear whether this resulted in a partial or complete burial of the *sacellum* and its carefully arranged votive deposits (Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 606–607, 610). Although the *temenos* wall was superimposed on its eastern end, and the western area has since been lost through quarrying activity, the *sacellum* was certainly not destroyed: mid-twentieth-century excavation photographs suggest that inscribed *cippi* naming Fortuna remained in place and upright on its façade, their texts facing outwards (Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: Plate VII.5).<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it

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<sup>3</sup> The partial reburial of the remains that were once excavated at the site, and its current state of preservation and presentation (large areas are now fully grassed over) make it difficult to visually assess these relationships *in situ* today, and it is therefore also unfortunately not

appears to have been intentionally excluded from the main area of the reorganised sanctuary, and a new flight of steps led from the cobbled surface in front of the shrine to the equally new southwest gateway (Jiménez, 1982: 58). Importantly, however, despite the reorientation of the entire sanctuary, the original alignment of the *sacellum* was mirrored by the staircase, which was built immediately adjacent to it at an oblique angle with the new wall (Jiménez 1982, 58). This is especially notable in the context of a new sanctuary where symmetrical precision and principles of axuality were a marked priority (Coarelli, 1987: 13; Rous, 2010: 167–168).

A different response to the presence of an existing area of ritual significance can be detected in the vicinity of the southeast entrance where the *temenos* wall deviated from its otherwise straight course. In the corner created as a result of this deviation are the remains of a very poorly preserved pi-shaped structure (3.40 m x 2.80 m) built using *Lapis Gabinus*, with evidence of a worn moulding suggestive of the plinth of an altar (Jiménez, 1982: 58; for parallels see Moser, 2019). The ground immediately in front of the structure was paved, from which a path comprising two parallel lines of peperino slabs led to the southeast corner of the temple steps. The slabs of both the pavement and the path were arranged at an oblique angle that appears, from the excavation plan, to be similar to that of the *sacellum* of Fortuna and definitely not aligned with the strict axuality of the newer structures (Rous, 2010: 167–168). These may therefore have preserved the alignment of an earlier sacred area. However, the possible altar and its own associated paving, appears to have been constructed on top of the earlier pavement, making it a later feature (most likely a replacement or renovation of an existing feature in the same position), and although it is also not in perfect alignment with the

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possible to provide further visual reference materials for the key features discussed in this chapter.

new structures, its orientation is much more closely allied to them (Jiménez, 1982: 58–59).

Although the absence of detailed stratigraphic data for this combination of features prevents a definitive account of their use and development, it is reasonable to conclude that the *temenos* deviation was intended to respect an earlier feature that was later replaced (Rous, 2010: 168; Coarelli, 1987: 16 proposes that two separate shrines were placed side by side in this area).

However, rather than excluding it from the *temenos*, as happened for the *sacellum* of Fortuna, this existing feature was deliberately incorporated within it.

The mid-twentieth century excavations also revealed that the open area behind and to the sides of the main temple structure was occupied by regular rows of roughly square pits in which trees, bushes, or shrubs were planted to create a simulated sacred grove, seemingly recalling the earlier *lucus* (Jiménez, 1982: 52–55). The arrangement of pits, some of which cut through each other, indicates at least two phases of planting (Coarelli, 1987: 16; Carroll, 2018: 23). It has been proposed that a quadrangular pit recut multiple times at the base of the temple's rear wall was the location of a (repeatedly replanted) tree that in its earliest phases was part of the original sixth century BCE *lucus* (Jiménez, 1982: 54–55; Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 590). In a previous study I explored this artificial grove from a multisensory perspective, using it to illustrate the temporal aspects of place and their role in generating lived religion (Graham, 2021a: 71–75). This drew close attention to the multisensory capacities of the regular rows of plants between the portico wings and behind the temple, while demonstrating how movement wove their affordances into a meaningful experience: the plantings of the grove 'afforded as well as constrained movement in particular ways and via specific routes in the same way as was afforded by the colonnades and other material structures of the sanctuary' (Graham, 2021a: 71). As well as moving bodies, the grove itself was subject to a form of movement or 'flow', as plants altered their form and potential affordances on a number of temporal scales, ranging from the daily to the seasonal. The two



entrances and the dynamic grove provide a first glimpse of the potent combination of material, sensory and temporal aspects of place with which this chapter is concerned.

Architectural terracotta fragments indicate that the new sanctuary underwent both systematic and unsystematic restorations and interventions over the following 150 years, focused especially on the temple façade and roof, although none were as substantial as the work conducted in the second century BCE. The final major phases of architectural interventions can be connected with a period between the late first century BCE and early first century CE, probably associated with the emperor Augustus's restoration of traditional cult areas (Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 618). From the first century CE, construction activities were restricted to essential maintenance before the sanctuary was abandoned in the mid third century CE (Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 624).

### **Sensorially assembling movement, matter and the past**

Time and space at the sanctuary of Juno are typically characterised with reference to the series of discrete phases outlined above. However, the opening remarks of this chapter prompt other questions about how interactions between these complex overlapping structures and the people who frequented and moved around this sacred landscape drew those features into other meaningful sensorial relationships that blurred such neat chronological divisions: to what extent did engagements with the affordances of the sanctuary involve sensory assemblages that also enabled its past to generate sensory affect in the present, and what were the consequences? To answer such questions, it is necessary to establish how customary approaches for identifying sensoriality and affect using archaeological data can be combined into a new methodology with concepts concerning virtual/actual pasts.

### **Memory and the past**

This chapter is not the first to consider relations between ritual, time and the materiality of place in the sanctuaries of Republican Rome and Latium (Moser, 2019; Graham, 2021a). Claudia Moser (2019: 3), for example, has demonstrated that matter and movement were crucial to how past, present and future were experienced and negotiated in relation to ancient religious place. According to Moser (2019: 10), through repeated ritual and kinaesthetic engagements with the materiality of altars, successive generations of worshippers replicated previous practice, thus enabling the re-experience ‘of the ritual past in the present by an extended community of individuals, monuments, objects, and gods, concertedly responding in the here and now to the material memory of past practices, and continually maintaining the ways of the past for future generations’. What is more, when sanctuaries underwent alterations involving the renovation, replacement or burial of features such as altars these temporal and material connections became even more significant as ‘sequences of once visible and then later hidden transmitters of memories of what lay buried yet further beneath’ (Moser, 2019: 135).

At the heart of Moser’s work lies a focus on the power of memory and on cultural understandings of the past that emphasise its apparent stability and durability: despite aesthetic and material changes, altars and their locations represent ‘the coalescence of centuries of ritual memory’ (Moser, 2019: 10) and are the setting for practices involving ‘timeless and enduring behaviours’ (Moser, 2019: 7). These concepts play a similarly significant role in Hamilakis’s original work on sensorial assemblages. Crucial for Hamilakis (2013: 122) was Henri Bergson’s suggestion that matter is durable, and as such ‘embodies various times at once’, times that become accessible to people through ‘reanimation and reactivation by sensorial and experiential processes’. Hamilakis went on to propose that human memory is vital for determining which of those stable pasts become available to the senses when he suggests that ‘every given present carries with it all pasts, but, of course,

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through the selective process of memory, only specific pasts are conjured up at any specific present moment' (Hamilakis, 2013: 123). Therefore, in his initial formulation of sensorial assemblages at least, Hamilakis privileged human memory as the sole means through which the past can be sensorially experienced in the present, reducing the role of matter to that of a fixed prompt or stimulus and side-lining the real, dynamic capacities of the virtual and actual pasts that he acknowledges in his subsequent work (Hamilakis, 2017).

### **Virtual and actual pasts**

The 'virtual' and 'actual' were briefly introduced in the opening sections of this chapter, but to be built into a usable sensory methodology for analysing complex multi-period settings such as the sanctuary of Juno they require further unpacking. Ben Jervis (2019: 57–58) explains these concepts as follows:

The virtual and the actual are different modes of reality and do not simply equate to realised and unrealised potential (as the virtual consists of everything that has been as well as everything that might have been and might be), nor to tangible and intangible (ideas, for example, are intangible but actual).

Expanding on this, Oliver Harris (2021: 236) defines the actual as 'the empirical world we can measure around us, the size, weight and dimensions of objects, the current occupant of a seat, what a computer is being used for right now, not what it might be used for later'. As something empirical, the actual is therefore a form of reality that can be encountered via the senses (or 'measured' in Harris's terms). Correspondingly, the virtual is 'the part of an assemblage that is not currently actual', and which 'captures those things that are absolutely real but not currently present: the capacity of an empty mug to hold coffee, for a silent phone to ring, for a blank page to be filled' (Harris, 2021: 241; DeLanda, 2016: 5–6, 108–109). In other words, an actualised world possesses detectable sensory affordances or qualities; a

virtual one also possesses those qualities, but they cannot be directly encountered. Virtual capacities must therefore be ‘actualised’ in order for their sensory affordances to be perceived and for their qualities to affect: the empty mug must become filled with coffee, a process that allows the discrete haptic, olfactory and gustatory affordances that were previously merely virtual to affect a person’s sensorium. This actualisation of the virtual is described as an ‘intensive process’, which combines (or ‘territorialises’) things into assemblages that in turn generate affect (Harris, 2021: 239).

The virtual and actual have been used to frame discussions about the pasts that archaeologists themselves actualise in the course of research (Harris, 2017). Accordingly, ‘the Roman period’ about which archaeologists write can be considered a distinctive actualisation of the past arising from the assembling of particular types of knowledge and forms of evidence, rather than an objective ‘reality’ meaningful to someone in the first century BCE. These actualised pasts have empirical affects in the present: they affect the sharing and creation of knowledge and understanding, ways of acting and new research.<sup>4</sup> This is important because it shows how concepts of the virtual and actual also have the potential to

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<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that the actual never becomes fixed but continues to change, creating ‘potential for new intensities to emerge ... as other interventions in the past lead to new processes of actualisation’ (Jervis, 2019: 58; Harris, 2021: 236). The coffee in the mug might be drunk, actualising different virtual aspects of the mug: a mug that recently contained coffee. This means that, despite appearances, actualised pasts including ‘the Roman period’ remain in flux and available for ongoing actualisation in alternative ways, in this case as archaeological research develops. Although they do not frame it in these terms, see Padilla Peralta and Bernard, 2022 for a demonstration of a newly actualised ‘middle Roman Republic’.

be valuable in investigations of ‘the past in the present’ within those historical settings that archaeologists investigate (see also Bell, this volume). That is to say that, if through intensive processes modern archaeologists can actualise the deep past in the present and be affected by it, ancient people – including those visiting the sanctuary of Juno – could potentially do the same. The discussion below will explore just one way in which this can be detected within the archaeological record, through an assessment of the role of moving bodies in actualising the virtual past of the sanctuary of Juno.

### **Movement as intensive process**

This chapter adopts and develops what has become a fairly standard methodology within ancient sensory studies: the identification of all potential sensory affordances associated with the objects, materials, places, substances and other things within a definable assemblage, the subsequent interpretation of the possible (individual and collective) impact of those affordances on the human sensorium, and an assessment of the behaviours, knowledge or other responses that resulted (Betts, 2017; Graham, 2021a; 2021b). In many ways, this finds connections with the sort of ‘desk top’ approaches outlined in the Introduction (Hamilton, this volume). In the present context, what is newly proposed is that movement can be responsible for the generation of very particular assemblages in which the identifiable sensory affordances associated with some components comprise those of the virtual past actualised in the present. Movement, kinaesthesia and proprioceptive experiences are also well-established components of work within sensory archaeologies as well as research that does not necessarily adopt explicitly sensory or phenomenological standpoints (Edgeworth, 2011; Leary, 2014; Lash, 2020; Aldred, 2022). As Ryan Lash (2020: 135) notes, ‘Much of our sensory experience is achieved through movement’, while movement also ‘activates and

accentuates the synaesthetic character of all sensorial experience'.<sup>5</sup> Building on the above account of the virtual and actual, this chapter proposes that movement is also an example of an intensive process.

Intensive processes are essentially those processes that prompt relations between things, including between the sensing capacities of a person and the more-than-human world. As an intensive process, for instance, movement brings physically distanced objects and things into relational assemblages: a body moving from a shaded, enclosed portico into a brightly lit open space prompts the assemblage of a new collection of diverse affordances. The sensorial can also become foregrounded within the assemblages formed by intensive processes such as movement in ways that allow aspects of the virtual to become actual, or in other words to become directly accessible to the human sensorium. As an example, imagine a person entering the sanctuary of Juno via the southeast gateway described above (see [Figure 4.2](#)). Their bodily movement (an intensive process) could cause them to assemble with the tactile and acoustic qualities of the peperino paving beneath their feet, its visual misalignment with the gateway, wall and temple and its disappearance under a differently aligned altar in the corner of the *temenos* wall. Rather than merely remembering previous uses of this area, their act of movement simultaneously engaged them directly and sensorially with the past as actualised matter that had the capacity to affect (the pavement, the location of the altar, earlier orientations of the sacred space) *and* with the actualised matter of the present that also had the capacity to affect (the wall, the current altar, their own body). This is what Hamilakis (2017: 174, original emphasis) refers to when he writes about how 'certain planes of the past, or temporal occasions embedded in matter, voluntarily or involuntarily, acquire *sensorial intensity and affective weight*' that allows for the virtual to be actualised, and for the past to be actively engaged with via sensory modalities in the present.

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<sup>5</sup> See also Hamilakis, 2013:, 79–80 on 'the glance'.

However, actualised pasts remain continually subject to change, since matter is inherently vibrant and does not remain static (Bennett, 2010; Crellin, 2020): stone pavements and altars are liable to become differentially worn, polished, repaired and replaced, potentially offering other affordances to human sensoria. Subsequent movement might therefore generate alternative sensorial assemblages and involve alternative actualised pasts. It should therefore be evident that this framing of sensorial assemblages with reference to the virtual and actual differs quite substantially from one predicated on a fixed or stable past recalled via memory alone: the visitor to the sanctuary did not merely remember its earlier material form but instead engaged sensorially with the dynamic matter of the past as its material affordances were continually actualised in the present through that person's intensive acts of movement.

### **Sensorial assemblages and the past at the sanctuary of Juno**

Let's now return to the sanctuary of Juno to assess more closely the virtual and actual sensory affordances that might have been made available to an ancient person moving around this monumental complex. The southeast and southwest gateways were explicitly designed to facilitate movement in and out of the sanctuary. Movement and kinaesthetic experiences were therefore not only frequently at play at these locations but were especially heightened, making them ideal settings for an analysis of movement as an intensive process.<sup>6</sup> Each

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<sup>6</sup> The opening in the wall at the summit of the theatre *cavea* provided another potential point of entrance/exit for the sanctuary. This also entailed particular forms of movement and was in use contemporaneously with the southeast and southwest gateways. The inclusion of some form of theatre *cavea* was also typical of other monumentalised sanctuaries of Latium in the late Republic, including Tibur, Praeneste, and Fregellae (Coarelli, 1987: Figure X.1). A full

gateway was nonetheless materially and sensorially different from the other, meaning that movement caused people to assemble with the very discrete affordances associated with each: one incorporated steps, the other did not; one involved encounters with a shrine outside the wall, the other with one inside the wall; one incorporated a cobbled surface, the other flat paving slabs. Having already briefly discussed some aspects of the actualisation of the past in relation to the southeast gateway, this section concentrates on applying the same

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examination of the *cavea* at Gabii is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it should be noted that using this entrance/exit involved negotiating a series of stone steps in an upwards or downwards movement that territorialised the visitor with specific material aspects of the sanctuary. People entering via this route moved from a wide, open space (perhaps with distinctive acoustics) through a narrow opening in the wall, which will have significantly slowed and disrupted the movement of a large group, potentially focusing attention on the wall as a point of division or separation between spaces of different status. They then emerged into another open, but nonetheless architecturally controlled, space dominated by the temple façade and its surrounding shrubs or trees. They were also required to make further lateral movements in order to move around the main altar placed close to and immediately in front of the opening, briefly halting forward movement. Such movements territorialised visitors into assemblages with the altar in ways that involved changing visual, acoustic and haptic experiences that affected the sacred character of the site and actualised aspects of its past and present use. It is not clear how often or under what circumstances this point of entry/exit was used, or by whom, and whether it was only significant if/when the theatre was the setting for communal ritual, or other non-ritual events, such as political gatherings. Like the southeast and southwest gateways, however, the comparative narrowness of the opening in the wall suggests that it did not afford processional movement.



methodological and theoretical approach advanced above to a detailed evaluation of the southwest gateway (Figure 4.3). [Insert Figure 4.3 near here]

### Sensory encounters: the staircase

We can begin by following established sensory archaeology methodologies to consider what the archaeological data reveals about sensory affordances and movement in this area of the sanctuary. A visitor approaching from the southwest in the period after 150 BCE could gain access to the newly enclosed sanctuary via a flight of nine *opus quadratum* steps constructed on an area of cobblestone paving immediately adjacent to the apparently abandoned *sacellum* (Jiménez, 1982: 58). The non-monumental staircase was 4.50 m long and, despite being narrow (1.50 m), was wide enough to accommodate two people walking abreast or passing one another on steps with a run ('going') of 0.45 m and a rise of 0.20 m (Jiménez, 1982: 58). To help contextualise and better understand how this affected particular types of sensory experience, the staircase dimensions can be cross-referenced with modern building regulations. Its dimensions are slightly above those permitted for 'institutional and assembly' stairs intended for 'a place where many people gather' by modern UK government building regulations, and closer to those acceptable for 'private' single-dwelling stairs (Building Regulations BS 5395-1:2010 Stairs, see Approved Document K 2013). This suggests it lent itself primarily to routine forms of movement by individuals or very small groups, rather than large numbers of people. The pitch of the staircase was probably around 24°, towards the lower end of the acceptable range for modern public stairs (20°–35°, with 30°–35° recommended). The staircase was also not as steep as those at other sanctuaries, including the precipitous central staircase of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at nearby Praeneste (Coarelli, 1987: 35–84; Graham, 2021a: 57–66; Graham, 2021b). As a consequence, the steps were potentially accessible to a range of people, although individual experiences will have

differed, especially for those who experienced physical impairments or disabilities (Graham 2021b). Based on current knowledge of the construction and use of steps in antiquity it seems unlikely that the staircase included a handrail, potentially placing further restrictions on its use by some individuals (Hollinshead, 2015; Graham, 2021b).<sup>7</sup>

People encountering the staircase therefore experienced the transition from one space to another through multisensory kinaesthetic sensations which emphasised the physical, muscular exertions and proprioceptive sensations of changing elevation and balance involved in ascending or descending a set of stone steps without a handrail, as well as the changing visual and aural prospects afforded by movement. In contrast to walking on the cobbled pavement outside the sanctuary, or the partially paved surface within it, the bodily changes of position and level of exertion required to walk up or down the steps made movement an intensive process capable of generating distinctive and situational sensorial assemblages. In other words, as well as possessing cognitive knowledge about how moving up or down the stairs would bring them into a different type of space, and cultural knowledge that led to the assignment of particular significance to that movement, the visitor will also have felt and

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<sup>7</sup> Although this chapter draws on the work of Hamilakis for its overall theoretical framework, it is important to point out that, along with scholarship on archaeological phenomenology by other researchers, aspects of Hamilakis's approach have been rightly criticised for their normative approach to 'the human' sensorium and sensory experience. Many such studies assume that the sensory experiences of white, able-bodied, heterosexual, Western/European, adult males reflect a baseline of shared experiences from which representative generalisations can be drawn. For the importance of incorporating more diverse perspectives, such as those foregrounded here, see Graham, 2021b; Ward, 2023.

understood this transition through the sensorial affects that were generated when movement caused them to assemble with the specific materiality of the southwest gateway steps.

The staircase was probably not used for processional purposes since its dimensions afforded neither the easy movement of communal groups nor quadrupeds destined for sacrifice at the sanctuary's altar. Sacrificial victims more probably entered via the southeast gateway before proceeding along the linear pavement towards the altar, where a metal ring set into the temple steps was used for temporary tethering (Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 594; Coarelli, 1987: 15). The sensorial assemblages produced by movement up and down the southwest steps therefore featured primarily human individuals and small groups. That persons with physical or mobility disabilities may have been among them has already been mentioned, and the recovery from the site of anatomical votives (broadly dated between the third to first century BCE) also attests to the possibility of a range of vision impairments among the community who made use of the sanctuary. A considerable number of eye votives (129 examples), potentially associated with requests for divine healing, were recovered from 'Favissa III' at the southern end of the western portico close to the southwest gateway. Eyes were the most common anatomical votive (a total of 286 examples) within all three 'favissae' deposits and elsewhere across the site (98 examples), making them four times as numerous as ears, the second most frequently dedicated body part (96 examples) (Elvira Barba, 1982; Hasselin Rous, 2023). It is probable, therefore, that blind persons, or those who had low vision or visual impairment, also engaged with the southwest gateway area in distinctively personal ways, their movement generating sensorial assemblages in which visual affordances and visible distinctions between older and newer structures were not prioritised.

Movement up and down the steps, with all its individualised nuances, can therefore be identified as an intensive process that sensorially assembled differentially sensing kinetic human bodies with the actual affordances of the stone steps, the surrounding structures, the

*temenos* wall (including the opening within it) and gravity, as well as with cultural knowledge about how movement towards, through and beyond the gateway entailed entering or exiting a sacred space.

### ***Sensory encounters: the sacellum***

Extending this analysis to incorporate the apparently abandoned *sacellum* suggests ways in which the sensorial assemblages generated via these intensive processes of movement could also involve sensory engagements with the affordances of actualised pasts, in similar ways to those already described for the paving and shrine at the southeast gateway. Moving up or down the steps, and into or out of the sanctuary via this gateway, entailed moving exactly parallel and immediately adjacent to the façade of the *sacellum*. Sensorial relations forged between this feature and the moving body were undoubtedly further enhanced by the conspicuously oblique angle of the stairs, which very explicitly responded to the presence and orientation of the shrine rather than to the *temenos* wall. Even a person concentrating only on using the steps could not help but find themselves sensorially assembled with the affective materiality of the *sacellum*, since its presence actively affected their movement.

The visual attention of a visitor climbing the stairs was most likely drawn to the shrine's obviously excluded, distinctly abandoned but not entirely destroyed structures pressed close to the side of the staircase. The act of upwards movement also brought continually changing visual perspectives that gradually allowed that visitor to look down into the open spaces enclosed within it. Additionally, the remains of other abandoned features connected with earlier stages of the sanctuary's development might have been detectable immediately behind the *sacellum*, at least one area of which was possibly used during the second century BCE building work for the ritual disposal of unwanted materials from previous structures ('Favissa II': Almagro-Gorbea, 1982: 608). Equally complex sensorial

assemblages will have emerged as a person descended the steps, with movement bringing them progressively closer to the shrine structures. As a result, what moving visitors engaged with were aspects of the material and sensorial capacities of a past *sacellum* actualised in the present, capacities which retained the possibility of generating affect whether they were recognised as the past or not. For instance, by bringing people into kinaesthetic relations with the affordances of the inscribed *cippi* at the base of the steps, which perhaps prompted visitors to trace the incised lettering with their fingers, or to read and possibly speak out loud the name of the goddess Fortuna, movement actualised the virtual past of this location as one that had and continued to provide access to the goddess, and which had and could continue to prompt certain ritual gestures because of its affect on the sensing body. It was not (only) the present ruins that visitors' senses responded to, but to the actualisation in the present of aspects of the virtual past of the *sacellum*.

It was movement, as an intensive process, that territorialised these multiple materials, structures and complex temporalities into sensorial assemblages that actualised elements of the physical materiality of the sanctuary's virtual past and made their affordances accessible to the human sensorium in the present. These were sensorial assemblages that foregrounded different actualisations of the shrine's continually becoming status in the past and present: as a recognisable *sacellum* that through its visible inscriptions remained overtly associated with a goddess, that through its tangible material presence retained its significance as a potential location for ritualised activities, and that continued to affect particular forms of movement through its influence on the staircase, but which manifestly played no active role in the sanctuary's present ritual practices and was excluded from the new *temenos*.<sup>8</sup> Of course, the

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<sup>8</sup> The sensorial exclusion of the *sacellum* might additionally have been reinforced by the absence of the typical sounds and smells of ritual activity encountered there in the past (ritual

very specific affect of these sensorial assemblages will have differed for all visitors, including the blind people and people with vision impairments noted above. In those instances, the matter of the past *sacellum* was also actualised by movement, but the lack of an unequivocal visual distinction between the *sacellum*, other older structures and the new staircase and sanctuary wall may, for example, have led to a number of alternative experiences and rationalisations of their varied affordances. Furthermore, since actualisation is a continually becoming state and therefore always temporary, when people were *not* moving up and down the steps to the sanctuary the sensorial capacities of the *sacellum* remained virtual. They nevertheless continued to be available to a host of future potential actualisations.

The specific aspects of the past and present *sacellum* actualised through intensive processes of movement via the staircase were also subject to constant change. As noted above, it is not certain how ruinous the shrine's structure became as a result of the mid-second-century BCE building programme. The date (189–180 BCE) of the latest coin in the votive deposit associated with the *sacellum* ('Favissa I') led Almagro-Gorbea (1982: 607) to suggest that it was around the beginning of the second century BCE that the *sacellum* was 'closed'. This would indicate that it was already out of (formal) ritual use by the time it was excluded from the sanctuary. However, it is arguable that that the coin could have been deposited at any time after 180 BCE, making it problematic as evidence for the full closure of

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utterances, prayers, chanting or singing, incense, blood, food and liquid offerings, animal faeces and so forth), or their replacement by other acoustic and olfactory affordances. Those same ritual sounds and smells might still be available within the new *temenos*, becoming more or less pronounced as a person moved up or down the staircase, towards or away from them, but they also always had the potential to be actualised once again at the *sacellum* through the performance of ritual activities and movements.

the *sacellum* prior to the new building programme, even if the absence of later coins may indicate that its use for this type of offering, or its popularity more generally, had declined. Similarly, there is no evidence to indicate a formalised ritual closing of the *sacellum*: there are, for instance, no obvious ritual closure deposits (Edlund-Berry, 1994; Glinister, 2000) and no evidence for a complete or even token burial of its structures or prevention of access to the shrine. In fact, it appears to have remained readily accessible from the cobbled area at the base of the steps. If those responsible for the new sanctuary had intended that Fortuna's presence no longer be evoked, they could easily have removed, buried or erased the inscriptions. The *sacellum* was perhaps slowly abandoned and no longer maintained, becoming subject to the effects of its own vibrant materiality and that of the wider environment, as plants, weeds and insects, each with their own variable visual, olfactory and acoustic affordances, colonised the cracks between its stones and soil gradually infiltrated its open-air spaces. After all, abandoned structures do not remain static, and ruination need not be caused by anthropocentric action alone. This means that the matter of the *sacellum*, and its affordances, were always changing, before and after it was no longer actively used for ritual activities. Both the 'past' and 'present' shrine that movement caused people to assemble with were constantly becoming. The potential consequences of this vibrancy have already been demonstrated with reference to the parallel ways in which the sensory affect of the past *sacellum* might be experienced differently by people with vision impairments. In essence, those people engaged with actualisations of the virtual *sacellum* that were different from those who could visually detect that it belonged to a previous phase of activity. The same principles hold true for those who encountered it at different moments in the year or when it was in a more or less ruinous state. These are just some examples of how multiple actualisations of the virtual were possible even for the same feature.

### **The significance of sensing the past in the present**

The *sacellum* was therefore not merely a remembered aspect of the sanctuary landscape that people may have thought about as they walked past it. Instead, in these moments it was a tangible and sensorially affective actualised aspect of the sanctuary's past, something empirical with which people continued to engage in forms that extended beyond its ruination. When analysed from this perspective it becomes possible to investigate more closely what might have happened when people moving in and out of the sanctuary via the southwest steps were not prompted simply to recall the shrine as it once was (or as they had been told it once was), but instead sensorially encountered it as it had been, currently was and could still be.

What was the significance of these multitemporal sensorial encounters in the context of engagements with the religious setting of the sanctuary of Juno? The outcomes of engagements with actualised pasts in the present such as those described here will of course have varied from person to person. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suggest that most generated broad forms of knowledge concerning the religious and ritual status of the *sacellum* as a continuously revered, respected, important and potentially still ritually powerful feature of the sacred landscape. For some visitors, the affordances that become available to them via a sensorial assemblage into which were territorialised both unmaintained structures undergoing material decay and newer monumental sanctuary architecture might have reinforced understandings of the importance of the latter within their own lived religious experiences. It might have emphasised the specifically localised character or power of the new titular deity Juno compared with others, including the goddess Fortuna whose ongoing presence continued to be actualised in a distinctively different manner through sensorial engagements with the *sacellum*. Movement up and down the southwest steps ensured that Fortuna and her shrine were continually actualised as components of the sanctuary at Gabii, but in ways that sometimes compelled her to play second fiddle to Juno, to whom the



elaborate architectural dedications within the new sanctuary walls were dedicated. Fortuna and her shrine may therefore have been ritually abandoned, but intensive processes ensured that these aspect of the sanctuary's past continued to be actively affective components of the present landscape. At times, such knowledge may also have had a role to play in heightening local forms of identity and competition with neighbouring communities: Fortuna was, after all, the goddess associated with the another architecturally impressive sanctuary built around a generation later at nearby Praeneste (probably 110–100 BCE).

It seems very probable that similarly complex relationships involving the actualisation of the past were also formed with other material elements of the sanctuary, especially those which connected people with past ritualised activities. The altar and pavement in the vicinity of the southeast entrance were briefly explored from this perspective earlier in this chapter. The reorganised grove and the continually replanted tree immediately behind the temple, as well as the theatre *cavea*, might also be analysed through a sensorial assemblage framework that considers the actualisation of virtual pasts in the present. This example and others deserve more sustained investigation than is possible here. Nevertheless, even without these other instances it is apparent that not only human and non-human, but also past and present, were assembled in multiple ways at the sanctuary of Juno, an observation that substantially complicates and adds four-dimensional nuance to the apparent simplicity of its precisely phased chronology and symmetrical two-dimensional plan.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has demonstrated how incorporating concepts of the virtual and actual into established sensory methodologies and studies of movement and kinaesthetic experience make it possible to reinterpret the archaeological remains of the sanctuary of Juno at Gabii. From this perspective the sanctuary is revealed as the setting for direct sensorial encounters

with the affordances of actualised pasts in the (ancient) present. By applying Hamilakis's (2017) 'sensorial assemblage' approach in accordance with its intended theoretical underpinnings, new ways of assessing the sensory power of the past for generating experiences in the present have therefore been revealed. It has shown that under certain circumstances virtual pasts could – and still can be – actualised in ways that render them materially and sensorially accessible in the present, where they continue to be part of ongoing relations. The example of the *sacellum* of Fortuna at the sanctuary of Juno Gabina has highlighted how the application of this methodology can generate more complex, multi-layered interpretations of multi-period ancient sanctuary landscapes. Furthermore, this chapter has engaged in the ongoing actualisation of the sanctuary's past in our own present, via another intensive process: that of archaeological research and theoretical discourse.

As a result, it can be stated that both the pasts that were sensorially experienced by ancient visitors to the sanctuary at Gabii, and those that we actualise as part of contemporary research practices, retain the potential to affect, and consequently to always be potent in the present. Accepting this position and finding ways to incorporate it into well-established sensory methods for assessing archaeological landscapes, allows us to advance new interpretations of ancient sites, structures and artefacts. These extend far beyond the typical designation of certain features as unchanging symbols or material signs of a stable past with a fixed meaning transmitted through memory. Equally, such observations should encourage archaeologists to revise their temporal characterisations of archaeological sites as a series of discrete 'phases', as we discover that all of those moments could potentially be encountered concurrently via the senses.

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Figure captions

**Figure 4.1** Map of monumentalised sanctuaries in Republican Latium (drawing by Matilde Grimaldi).

**Figure 4.2** Plan of the excavated remains of the *temenos* area of the sanctuary of Juno at Gabii, including the planting pits around the temple podium (drawing by Matilde Grimaldi).

**Figure 4.3** Plan of the excavated remains of the structures associated with the *sacellum* of Fortuna and the staircase leading to the southwest gateway of the sanctuary of Juno at Gabii (annotated detail of Figure 4.2, original drawing by Matilde Grimaldi).

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