CHAPTER VIII

GENERAL VIEW OF THE BUILDINGS ABOUT THE FORUM
—THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER

The Forum was to the ancient city what the atrium was to the early Italic house; it was used for every purpose for which a special place was not provided elsewhere. And as sleeping rooms, dining rooms, and storerooms were grouped about the atrium and opened into it, so around the Forum lay the edifices which served the requirements of the public life,—the most important temples, the municipal buildings, and market houses or exchanges for different branches of business.

Three temples adjoined the Forum at Pompeii. In addition, there was a sanctuary of the City Lares; and the temples of Venus Pompeiana and Fortuna Augusta were but a short distance away. These religious edifices are representative of the different periods in the history of the city.

In very early times the Oscans of Pompeii received from the Greeks who had settled on the coast the cult of Apollo, and built for the Hellenic god a large, fine temple (C, in Plan II) adjoining the Forum on the west side.

Several centuries later, the divinities of the Capitol—Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva—were enthroned in the temple that on the north side towered above the area (H).

On the east or right side followed, in Roman times, the edifices erected for the worship of the emperors. The oldest is the unroofed building, with a broad, open front, dedicated to the Lares of the City and to the Genius of Augustus (L). Further north, in the first block at the right beyond the Forum, is the temple of Fortuna Augusta, the goddess who guarded the fortunes of Augustus, erected in 3 B.C. A chapel for the worship of Claudius and his family was placed in the Macellum
(K, 5); this seems to have sufficed also for the worship of Nero. After Nero's death and after the brief Civil War, a temple (M) was built close to the shrine of the Lares in honor of Vespasian, the restorer of peace, the new Augustus. This was the last temple erected in Pompeii; it was not entirely finished at the time of the eruption.

Three buildings at the south end of the Forum were used for city offices (P-R). They were much alike, each containing a single large hall. They were seemingly built in the early years of the Empire, and repaired after the earthquake of the year 63. There is also a structure at the southeast corner, south of Abbondanza Street, which we may identify as the voting place, the Comitium (O). At the northwest corner was apparently the city treasury, built in the latest years of Pompeii, perhaps on the site of an earlier structure of the same kind (F).

At a comparatively early period the area was found to be too small for the increasing volume of business; and the demand for roofed space made itself felt. In the second century b.c. the large and splendid Basilica (B), serving the double purpose of a court and an exchange, was built at the southwest corner.

Diagonally opposite, near the temple of Jupiter, a provision market, the Macellum (K), was constructed; this also at an early date. It was entirely rebuilt in the time of the Empire, perhaps in the reign of Claudius. Previous to this rebuilding, the priestess Eumachia had erected an exchange for the fullers on the same side of the Forum, further south (N).

On the west side, from pre-Roman times, stood a small colonnade in two stories, with its rear against the rear of the colonnade on the north side of the court of the temple of Apollo; only the first story, of the Doric order, has been preserved. Probably this structure and the small open space in front were at first used as a market; later, in the imperial period, shops (D') were built upon the open space, and the colonnade was made over into closed rooms, the purpose of which, except in the case of one, is unknown (6, 7, 7). In the last years of the city, a large market building (D) was erected between this small place and the Forum. It was connected both with the city treasury and with a latrina.

The temple of Jupiter dominates the Forum, and more than any other structure gives it character. As we have seen, its orientation accords with that of the colonnade of Popidius. It probably dates from the pre-Roman period, the columns being of tufo covered with white stucco. The earthquake of the year 63 left the temple in ruins, and at the time of the eruption the work of rebuilding had not yet commenced. In the meantime, it was used as a workshop for stonecutters. The journal of the excavations reports the finding here of the torso of a colossal statue out of which a smaller statue was being carved. A place for the worship of the divinities of the temple must temporarily have been provided elsewhere.

The temple stands on a podium 10 Roman feet high, and including the steps, 125 Roman feet long (Fig. 18). Very nearly a half of the whole length is given to the cela; of the other half, a little more than two thirds is occupied by the portico, leaving about a third (20 Roman feet) for the steps. The pediment was sustained by six Corinthian columns about 28 feet high. This arrangement—a deep portico in front of the cela—is Etruscan, though the canon of Vitruvius, that in Etruscan temples the depth of the portico should equal that of the cela, is violated. The high podium also, with steps in front, is characteristic of Etruscan, or at least of early Italic religious architecture. On the other hand, the architectural forms of the superstructure are Greek, and these in turn have had their influence upon the plan; the intercolumniations are not wide, as in the Tuscan style with its wooden architrave, but narrower, as in the Greek orders. Vitruvius speaks of temples such as this, in which Greek and Etruscan elements are united, at the end of his directions for the building of temples; they are a development of Roman architecture.
The arrangement of the steps is peculiar. Above is a series of long steps reaching nearly across the front (Fig. 19); below are two narrow flights near the sides, and between them is the projecting front of the podium, used as a tribunal, which has already been mentioned (p. 48).

That an altar stood at the middle of this platform is proved by a relief with a representation of the north side of the Forum, found on the base of a chapel of the Lares in the house of the wealthy Pompeian, L. Caecilius Jucundus. At the left we see the arch near the façade and a strip of wall connecting it with the temple; next a corner of the platform with an equestrian statue; then a flight of steps, and the front of the platform with an altar at the middle; finally the other flight of steps and another equestrian statue in a position corresponding with that of the first. The columns shown in the relief do not agree in number or style with those of the façade of the temple, but such inaccuracies are common in ancient representations of buildings, and there can be no doubt that the temple of Jupiter is represented; the relief has, in fact, been used in making our restoration of the arch at the left (Fig. 13).

Both the portico and the cella no doubt had a coffered ceiling. Just in front of the doorway, which was fifteen Roman feet wide, are the large stones with holes for the pivots on which the massive double doors swung (indicated in Fig. 18); the doors here were not placed in the doorway, but in front of it, and were besides somewhat larger, so that the effect was rendered more imposing when they were shut.

The ornamentation of the cella was especially rich. A row of Ionic columns, about fifteen feet high, stood in front of each of the longer sides; the entablature above them probably served as a base for a similar row of Corinthian columns, the entablature of which in turn supported the ceiling. On the intermediate entablature, between the columns of the upper series, statues and votive offerings were doubtless placed. The floor about the sides was covered with white mosaic, of which scanty remains have been found; the marble pavement of the centre (inside of the dotted line, Fig. 18) has wholly disappeared.

A section of the wall decoration, in the second Pompeian style, is shown in Fig. 20. We notice here the characteristic elements—imitation of marble veneering, with large red central panels and a cornice above. The base with its simple dividing lines upon a black ground was painted over in the third style; originally it must have been more suggestive of real construction, with a narrow painted border along the upper edge.

Against the rear wall of the cella stands a large pedestal, three times as long as it is broad. It was originally divided by four pilasters—two at the corners and two on the front between them—into three parts. Later the pilasters and the entablature over them were removed, and the whole was covered with marble veneering. Inside were three small rooms, entered by separate doors from the cella. The pedestal was thus built for three images; three divinities were worshipped here, and in the little chambers underneath were
perhaps kept the trappings with which on festal occasions the images were decked.

A head of Jupiter, of which we shall speak later, was found in the cela, as was also an inscription of the year 37 A.D., containing a dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, the ruling deity of the Capitol at Rome. It is thus proved beyond question that the Capitoline Jupiter was worshipped here; and it will not be difficult to ascertain what other divinities shared with him the honors of the temple.

As the Roman colonies strove in all things to be Rome in miniature, each thought it necessary to have a Capitolium—a temple for the worship of the gods of the Roman Capitol, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva; and this naturally became the most important temple in the city. That the worship of the three divinities was established at Pompeii is evident from the discovery of three images representing them, in the little temple conjecturally assigned to Zeus Milichius. These are poor images of terra cotta, and the temple itself was altogether unworthy to be a place of worship for the great gods that shaped the destinies of Rome. We are warrant in the conclusion that the temple of Zeus Milichius was used temporarily for the worship of the three divinities of the large temple till the latter could be rebuilt; and that Juno and Minerva stood on the great pedestal beside the king of the gods.

It seems strange that the Pompeians should have erected a temple to the gods of the Capitol in the pre-Roman period. It must be remembered, however, that the worship of the three divinities was by no means limited to Rome and her colonies. The Etruscans, as Servius informs us in his commentary on Virgil, thought that a city was not properly founded unless it contained sanctuaries of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Vitruvius, also, in his directions for laying out a city, makes the general statement that the most prominent site should be set aside for the temples of the same divinities. If we consider further that the opposition of the Italians to Rome found expression only in the Social War, and that previously they had looked upon the attainment of Roman citizenship as the highest object of ambition, the gradual adoption of Roman customs at Pompeii and the erection of a temple to the Capitoline divinities are seen to be less remarkable. The building of such a temple was a natural expression of political aspirations; it was in complete harmony with the use of Latin in the inscription of Popidius (p. 50).

There is, however, another possibility that may be stated. The remodelling of the Forum was certainly commenced in the pre-Roman period; but it is not impossible that the work was interrupted by the breaking out of the Social War and that the colonists completed it, dedicating the temple to the gods of the Capitol. The use of several brick-shaped blocks of stone,—such blocks are not found in other buildings of the pre-Roman time,—the lack of any trace of the wall decoration of the first style, the form of the egg-and-dart moulding on the capitals of the Ionic columns in the cela, and the correspondence of certain dimensions with the Roman scale of measurements may be alleged in favor of this hypothesis. The evidence at present does not warrant a positive decision against it.

The fact that we have here a Capitolium may explain the special prominence of the altar in front, which might just as well have been placed in the area of the Forum at the foot of the steps. In Rome the Capitol lay upon a summit of a hill; perhaps the aim in this case was to place not only the temple but also the altar upon an elevation so that here, as there, the priest should go up to offer sacrifice.

The podium of the temple contains vaulted rooms which can be entered from the Forum through a narrow door on the east side. Their use is unknown. We are reminded of the temple of Saturn in the Forum at Rome, the podium of which served as a treasury, acerarium. The vaults, favissae, may have been used as a place of safe keeping for treasure, or for furniture of the temple, or for discarded votive offerings.

The beautiful head of Jupiter found in the cela deserves more than a passing mention. In order to appreciate its character we may view it in contrast with the Otricoli Zeus, with which it is closely related. In both heads we feel the lack of that majestic simplicity, that ineffable and godlike calm, which rested
on the features of the Zeus of Phidias. Here man has much more obviously made God in his own image; the face shows less of the ideal, with more of human energy and passion.

It is not for us to decide whether the Otricoli mask is from the school of Praxiteles, or shows more of the influence of Lysippus; it is sufficient here to notice that the type was developed in the second half of the fourth century B.C., the century after Phidias. The similarity between these two examples of the type is apparent at first glance. The shape of the two heads is, in general, the same, and there is the same profusion of hair and beard, symbolic of power; but the differences in detail are striking.

In the Otricoli Zeus the peculiar shape of the forehead—prominent in the middle up to the roots of the hair and retreating at the sides—seems to suggest, not so much the power of a world-encompassing and lofty intellect, as absorption in great, unfathomable thoughts. In the lines of the massive face irresistible force of will is revealed, and the capability of fierce passion lurks beneath the projecting lower part of the forehead and uneven eyebrows, threatening like a thundercloud. But for the moment all is deep repose, and the lids seem partly closed over eyes that look downwards, as if not concerned with seeing. The sculptor has conceived of Zeus as the occult power of nature, alike the origin and law of all things, or as the personification of the heavens veiled by impenetrable mists.

Great force of will is seen also in the face of the Pompeian god; but it is will dominated by alert and all-embracing mind. The forehead expands in a broad arch; the eyes, wide open, look out with full vision under sharply cut brows. Here we have no secret brooding; a powerful yet clearly defined and comprehensible personality is stamped upon features carved in bold, free lines. And this personality is not lost in mystical self-contemplation; the god is following with closest attention the course of events in some far distant place, affairs that in the next moment may require his intervention; excitement and expectancy are seen in the raised upper lip. The ideal of this artist was the wise and powerful king, whose watchful and all-protecting eye sees to the furthest limits of his kingdom. Surely this variation of the Otricoli type must have been conceived in a monarchical period, the period when the Greek world was ruled by the successors of Alexander.

The Pompeian god is more a sovereign; the Zeus of Otricoli is more poetic, more divine.

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Fig. 21.—Bust of Zeus from Otricoli, now in the Vatican Museum. After Tafel 130 of the Brunn-Breckmann Denkmäler.

Fig. 22.—Bust of Jupiter, found at Pompeii. Naples Museum.