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MATER MATUTA, 'FERTILITY CULTS', AND THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ITALY IN THE FOURTH TO FIRST CENTURIES BC

by Maureen Carroll

INTRODUCTION[1]

Historical scholarship on the religious activities of Roman women has often been limited to discussions of specific cults in which, the Latin sources suggest, only women participated or from which they were excluded; equally, women are seen as actors exclusively in the worship of female gods (Scheid, 1992; Boëls-Janssen, 1993; Prescendi, 2000: 123-4). Since the work of Georg Wissowa, there has been a tendency as well to label some Roman goddesses as a '*Frauengottheit*', '*Geburtsgottheit*', or '*déesse-mère*', inferring that such deities were of relevance only to women and that women's sole interests were in the realm of marriage and child-bearing (Wissowa, 1912: 110-1, 186; Champeaux, 1982; Le Glay, 1986: 279; Boëls-Janssen, 1993: 345). In all of this, there has been a disproportionate focus on Roman literature (written by male authors) which is not without serious problems of reliability or interpretation. A significant exception to these approaches is the recent work of Celia Schultz who, by examining various strands of evidence, demonstrates the importance of a wide range of female religious activities and forces us to reassess what we think we know about women's participation and roles in cults of both female and male deities in early Roman Italy (Schultz, 2006a; see also Hemelrijk 2009; Richlin, 2014: 28-31; Di Luzio, 2016).

Archaeological research, on the other hand, has underplayed the complexities of the votive phenomenon as it manifests itself in early Roman religion. The deposition of terracotta votives in the form of human feet, hands, eyes and so on are sometimes enough to qualify the deity worshipped in a temple as 'a typical healing god' (Rüpke, 2001: 160). By the same token, ex-votos in the form of wombs and female genitalia, for example, have prompted the interpretation of shrines in which they are found as sites of female fertility cults or even 'the ancient equivalent of fertility clinics' (Bonfante, 1984: 1). Rather than being 'typical' or 'universal', however, the concepts of 'healing' and 'fertility' could have meant different things to different people, and both men and women appealed to the gods for a variety of reasons and with different intentions. Scholars also commonly feel compelled to identify the so-called tutelary god or goddess of a sanctuary and to characterise his or her divine 'specialism', without considering that more than one divinity could have inhabited any shrine at any one time and that all of them may have possessed

[1] The research for this paper was conducted from April to June 2016 at the British School at Rome where I was the Hugh Last Fellow with the project 'Mater Matuta and Related Goddesses: Guaranteeing Maternal Fertility and Infant Survival in Italic and Roman Italy'. For this opportunity I am very grateful to the BSR. I am, as always, also extremely indebted to the wonderful staff and scholars at the BSR who made my stay and work so pleasant and rewarding. I am also grateful to Emma-Jayne Graham and Daniele Miano for fruitful discussions about the content of this paper, to the two anonymous reviewers for their comments, and to Alison Cooley for all editorial suggestions. For assistance in securing photos or publication permission of images, I should like to thank Stefania Peterlini, British School at Rome; Ida Gennarelli, Museo Archeologico dell'Antica Capua, Santa Maria Capua Vetere; Anna Imponente, Ministero per i beni e delle attività culturali, Polo Museale della Campania; Jan Kindberg Jacobsen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen; Sandra Gatti, Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per l'area metropolitana di Roma, la provincia di Viterbo e l'Etruria meridionale; Alessia Argento, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome; Ines Bialas, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; René van Beek, Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam. Abbreviations of Roman primary sources follow the guidelines of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

a range of qualities and powers enabling them to assist worshippers.

I am interested here primarily in the phenomenon of appeals to the gods for assistance with very human issues of conception, pregnancy, and sexual health in early Roman Italy, and I concentrate in this paper on the archaeological, historical, literary, and epigraphic evidence for so-called fertility cults in the period from the fourth to the first centuries BC. In order to move away from the idea of '*Frauengottheiten*', this study critically assesses the divinities traditionally associated with female fertility, motherhood, and childbirth, and some gods who were not, and it reviews the relevant archaeological material from a range of sanctuaries. Special attention is paid to the goddess Mater Matuta, who is often cited in modern scholarship as a goddess of maternity and birth. A further avenue of enquiry is the reciprocal nature of Roman religion, of human supplication, vow, and required offering to the gods. In this context, terracotta votive offerings, so ubiquitous in the last centuries BC, are examined to extract the information that such votives provide on the identity of the deities worshipped and on their particular properties related to health and wellbeing. Although ex-votos associated with female reproductive and sexual health are the main focus here, it is obvious that reproduction and the survival of the family was an important concern, not just for Roman women, but also for men. It is worth considering whether fertility could have had other dimensions of wider social importance, including the political dimension of creating new citizens and safeguarding future generations of citizens. It is of special interest here how women participated in religion and what role they played in commissioning and dedicating thank offerings to their divine helpers in the last centuries BC. This pertains not only to the thousands of terracotta ex-votos of central Italy, but also to the numerous votive stone statues of mothers with infants in Capua that demonstrate the crucial role of women in the religious life of that city. In taking this multi-tiered approach, we can further the healthy tendency started by Schultz to explore women's religious activities in a nuanced way which goes beyond overly simplified considerations of 'fertility cults' and 'women's concerns'.

LOCATING MATER MATUTA

An array of deities commonly associated with fertility and reproduction is attested in the last centuries BC in Italy. Many of them had different names, but they possessed similar characteristics common to Romans, Greeks, Etruscans, and Phoenicians. In the translation of divine names in polytheistic societies such as these, identity was based on a common semantic universe and equatable elements between two or more deities, allowing the interpretation of gods of other cultures to be contextualised within one's own cultural framework (Assmann, 1997: 45; Assmann, 2008: 54; Ando, 2008: 43-4, 58; Bettini, 2016: 31; Miano, 2018: 158). The Romans recognised some shared qualities in various goddesses such as Mater Matuta, Juno Lucina, Bona Dea, Hera, Uni, Aphrodite, and Turan, and they inferred that they were closely related. The equational relationships were never very clear or straightforward in antiquity, however, and this is mirrored in modern, often confused or confusing, assessments of the commonality of various gods, for example when the goddess Mefitis is said not only to have been associated with Leukothea, but also to have had qualities similar to those of Feronia, Mater Matuta, Angitia, and Vesona (Poccetti, 2005: 96-7). What is known today about many of these so-called women's deities and their polysemic roles is rather patchy. Some of them are documented through epigraphic sources at particular sites, as the sanctuary at Pyrgi, the port of Caere/Cerveteri in coastal Etruria, where, from the sixth century BC, Greek, Roman, Etruscan, and Phoenician gods

and goddesses were worshipped (Halberstadt, 1934: 45-53; Turfa, 2004; Recke, 2013: 1073; Baglione and Marchesini, 2013). Most relevant in the context of female fertility at Pyrgi are the goddesses Uni, Hera, Astarte, Eileithyia, Ino, and Leukothea, all of whom in some ways were thought of as deities able to help women in childbirth and to protect children.

One of these goddesses, Leukothea, was called Mater Matuta by the Romans (Plutarch, *Camillus* 5.1). Mater Matuta is one of the most enigmatic female deities in the Etrusco-Italic pantheon (Halberstadt, 1934; Dumézil, 1956: 9-43; Radke, 1965: 206-9; Bouma, 1996: 250-62). Even though snippets of information are preserved in various Roman texts, it is prudent to remember that all of the primary sources for Mater Matuta are of late Republican and Imperial date, and some of them are 'a fraught reflection' on a cult that, by that time, was no longer entirely understood or perhaps had ceased to be practised as it might have been in the past (Langlands, 2006: 44). Earlier written testimonies are absent. Cicero also equated Leukothea with Matuta (*Tusc.* 1.12.28), and in Ovid's *Fasti* (6.545-6), we learn further that Ino was 'called Leukothea by the Greeks and Matuta by our people'. Ino was the daughter of King Cadmus of Thebes; her sister Semele, having been impregnated by Zeus and given birth to Dionysos, was driven mad by Hera, jealous wife of Zeus. The child Dionysos was rescued by Ino who fled to the sea and was washed ashore in Italy where she was welcomed into the company of marine gods and renamed Leukothea, 'white goddess' (Ovid, *Fast.* 6.485-550; Farnell, 1916). This blending or conflation of the Greek goddess Ino/Leukothea and the Latin deity Matuta, however, may be a late phenomenon, possibly of the second or first century BC (Coarelli, 1988: 244-53; Bouma, 1996: 251-2). Another late phenomenon might be the association of Mater Matuta with the sea or seafaring, perhaps on account of the maritime flight of Leukothea (Becatti, 1970-1971: 43-50; Castagnoli, 1979: 145-6; Kaizer, 2005: 201). Because the translation of divine names was based on distinct attributes of the gods, 'once a translation of divine names was established and commonly accepted, a deity might attract meanings or characteristics of his/her counterpart, especially in multilingual contexts' (Miano, 2018: 159). Mater Matuta was an indigenous Italic deity, and a flight from Thebes cannot have been part of her 'story', but some common elements of Mater Matuta and Leukothea, perhaps the connection to motherhood and the protection of children, allowed the two to be translated and equated.

A further explanation of the goddess's name is provided by Lucretius (*Rer. nat.* 5.656-62) who wrote that 'at a fixed time also Matuta diffuses the rosy dawn through the regions of ether and spreads out her light…'. Her name is related to the Latin *mane/matutinus*, meaning 'morning', so symbolically she appears to have been associated with bringing children into the light of the world. In modern scholarship, she is sometimes associated with Aurora, goddess of the dawn, who may have been assimilated with the Greek goddess Ino-Leukothea (Dumézil, 1956: 16-43; Boëls-Janssen, 1993: 342, 345-7; Scheid, 2012: 32).

As Bouma noted (1996: 250), 'archaeology has mostly been left out' in scholarship on Mater Matuta, so it is important here to consider not only the written sources, but also the archaeological and artefactual evidence from sanctuaries where she was venerated. The festival of Mater Matuta, the *Matralia*, celebrated annually on 11 June, is attested in the Roman calendar, as it survives in literary sources and in the fragmentary *Fasti Antiates maiores* painted in the 60s BC; the festival of Fortuna took place on the same day (Varro,

Ling. 5.106; Ovid, *Fast.* 6.475-6, 481-4, 533; Plutarch, *De frat. amor.* 21; Degrassi, 1957: 23-41, no. 9; Boëls-Janssen, 1993: 341-53; Rüpke, 1995: 43-4, fig. 1). The Roman calendar is attributed by later Roman writers to the days of the Roman kings, specifically to Numa Pompilius (late eighth-early seventh century BC) who was credited with adjusting the earlier calendar of Romulus, but this may be literary elaboration, rather than absolute fact (Plutarch, *Numa* 18-19; Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.13.20; Rüpke 1995: 192-209; Rüpke, 2011: 38-43, 64-6). According to Ovid (*Fast.* 6.480), the sixth king of Rome, Servius Tullius, personally consecrated her temple in the *Forum Boarium* (S. Omobono) in Rome (sixth century BC). Presumably the *Matralia* were celebrated in conjunction with that sanctuary at that time. Certainly, Mater Matuta was an object of worship and supplication from the seventh century BC as indicated by her temple in Satricum and, on the basis of her temple in the *Forum Boarium*, at least from the sixth century in Rome (Castagnoli, 1979; Coarelli, 1988: 205-44; Pisani Sartorio, 1995; Bouma, 1996: 262; Smith, 2000; Gnade, 2002; Gnade, 2007; Terrenato *et al*., 2012; Daniels, 2015; Diffendale *et al*., 2016).

The earliest temple at Satricum (Temple O) was in use from *c*.640-535 BC; it was replaced with a monumental stone-built temple (Temple I) which itself was replaced by a third even larger temple (Temple II) in the early fifth century (Knoop and Lulof, 2007: 34-5; Bouma, 1996: 200-5). Roman historical sources say that the sanctuary of Mater Matuta was spared in 377 BC and 346 BC when first the Latins then the Romans attacked Satricum, and that the temple had been struck by lightning in 206 BC (Livy 6.33.4-5, 7.27.8, 28.11.2; Bouma, 1996: 205). It may be that this last event signalled the end of the temple, although its roof may have been damaged earlier and patched up (Knoop and Lulof, 2007: 36, 39-40). One votive assemblage (Votive Deposit II) at Satricum can be attributed to the fifth and fourth centuries BC, the other, and larger, deposit (Votive Deposit III) dating to the fourth and third centuries (Attema and De Haas, 2007: 68-70; Heldring, 2007: 80-1; Van der Krujif, 2007: 82-4; Bouma, 1996: 81-4). A painted dedication on a black-slipped *skyphos* of the late fourth to early third century in Votive Deposit III is very interesting in that it not only names Mater Matuta, but it does so in Greek (*SEG* XLIII, 1993: no. 670; Bouma, 1996: 264-6, figs 2-3; Heldring, 2007: 81; Colonna, 2007: 98-9, cat. no. 638a-d). The name of the goddess is transliterated from Latin into the Greek alphabet, illustrating and underscoring the possible variations of divine translatability. A fragmentary stone inscription of the late second or early first century BC also names Mater Matuta, in Latin, as the recipient and a Cornelius, a *duumvir*, as the dedicant (*CIL* I^2 1552; Bouma, 1996: 264-6, figs 2-3; Colonna, 2007: 99, cat. no. 640).

Recent excavations and analysis of earlier fieldwork at the *Forum Boarium* site in Rome place the first temple of Mater Matuta chronologically in the period around 585-575 BC, with a second phase and rebuild around 530, and a final destruction at the end of the sixth century (Diffendale *et al*., 2016: 10-4, 14-21). Literary sources imply that her temple was rebuilt after the Roman victory over Etruscan Veii in 396 BC, but the archaeological evidence indicates that twin temples on an impressive stone podium, one to Mater Matuta and one to Fortuna, were constructed considerably earlier, at the beginning of the fifth century (Ovid, *Fast.* 6.475-80, 569; Plutarch, *Camillus* 5.1; Diffendale *et al*., 2016: 25-9). According to Livy (24.47.15-16, 25.7.5-6), the buildings in the *Forum Boarium*, including the twin temples, were ravaged by a fire in 213 BC and rebuilt the year after; this is supported by archaeological evidence (Diffendale *et al*., 2016: 34-7). Arches with gilded statues were erected near or in front of the temples of Mater Matuta and Fortuna in 196 BC, although

they may not have been embellishments of the temples themselves; the dedication of a painting or panel by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus recording in pictures his campaigns in Sardinia in 177 BC, however, was associated with the temple of Mater Matuta (Livy 33.27.4 and 41.28.8). Interestingly, the panel was dedicated to Jupiter. No ex-votos of the fourth century BC and later have been found thus far at the temple of Mater Matuta, making a discussion of the nature of the goddess or the type of supplications made to her here in the period relevant to this paper impossible (Virgili, 1989; Diffendale *et al*., 2016: 19-20). Mater Matuta may also have had another temple in the northern part of Rome in the imperial period, as a funerary inscription commemorating a musician named Eucerus seems to locate his place of work at a temple of this goddess in *regio sexta* (Bruun, 1996).

Various inscribed votive *cippi* of third- and second-century BC date from Pesaro on the northeast coast of Italy and Cora south-east of Rome indicate her worship at these places as well (*CIL* X 8416; *CIL* X 6511; Harvey, 2006: 121; Ehmig, 2013). In the Roman imperial period, Mater Matuta had a temple at Cales in Campania; the local magistrate and Roman senator, M. Vinicius, 'paved with his own money the street from the alley of the temple of Juno Lucina all the way to the temple of Matuta' in the mid-first century AD (*CIL* X 4650, *CIL* X 4660 = *AE* 1929: 166, *AE* 1987: 250; Bruun, 2014: 86-7; Laird, 2015: 262-3). She was revered also in Praeneste and even in Beirut where there was a Romanised (and local) version or interpretation of Greek Leukothea, or even of a Semitic deity, in the Roman colony (*CIL* XIV 2997, *CIL* XIV 3006; *CIL* III 6680 = *ILS* 3490; Halberstadt, 1934; Bouma, 1996: 262; Kaizer, 2005; Ando, 2007: 436). Some temples that have been attributed to Mater Matuta, such as Temple D at Cosa on the west coast of Italy, on the other hand, cannot be shown definitively to have belonged to this goddess, given the lack of substantive evidence (Lundeen, 2006: 48). In fact, the two goddesses named epigraphically at Cosa are Bona Dea and Juno Lucina, not Mater Matuta (Lundeen, 2006: 48).

What we know about any specific rituals associated with Mater Matuta is sparse. According to Varro (*Ling.* 5.106), Roman matrons made cakes in clay pots during the *Matralia*. Ovid (*Fast.* 6.473-84) also refers to mothers offering 'to the Theban goddess the yellow cakes that are her due'. Delving further into rituals of the cult, Plutarch's *Quaestiones Romanae* 16 claims that 'it is forbidden for slave-women to set foot in the shrine of Matuta' and they were to be excluded from the *Matralia*; yet an exclusion of female slaves seems contradicted by his question 'why do the women bring in one slave-woman only and slap her on the head and beat her'? Ovid attributes this strange custom to the tale that Ino's husband had deceived her with a slave whom Ino despised and who deserved punishment (*Fast.* 6.551-7). This is a nice bit of embroidery on a story, but hardly an explanation for an ancient prohibition that may have been directed at excluding women of slave status from participating in the cult. *Quaestiones Romanae* 17 also asks 'why is it that in the shrine of this goddess', Roman mothers 'do not pray for blessings on their own children, but only on their sisters' children?'. Plutarch's *De fraterno amore* 21 again repeats that women during the *Matralia* 'take in their arms and honour not their own, but their sisters' children'. Lundeen (2006: 45-6) suggested that we might be seeing a manifestation of women caring for their nephews and nieces (like Ino/Leukothea did for Dionysos?), and 'temporarily standing in for the children's mothers and preserving and strengthening matrilineal family relationships'. Boëls-Janssen (1993: 351) proposed that women who had given birth were tainted with pollution for a period afterwards, prohibiting their participation in presenting their newborns to the gods in their sanctuaries; in this scenario,

the mother's sister, who was important for the matrilineal line, stepped in to seek the blessing of Mater Matuta (see also Dumézil, 1956: 11-6).[2] While there is some indication in Graeco-Roman antiquity that women who had given birth were not to enter sacred space, perhaps for up to forty days, according to Censorinus (*DN* 11.7), there is no evidence that a newborn was presented publicly in a sanctuary, the rituals surrounding birth instead largely being limited to post-natal cleansing, swaddling, and the naming ceremony in the home, the *dies lustricus* (Lennon, 2013: 58-61; Carroll, 2018: 63-6). Boëls-Janssen's allusion to Christian baptism, when the godmother, rather than the mother, presents the baby in a church ceremony, is problematic and anachronistic. In the end, these interpretations, or any other we might offer today, are speculation, and it is impossible to unpick myth and legend from fact in this case. It may well be that the exact meaning of earlier rites had become lost by the time the Roman authors were writing their accounts about the *Matralia* festival. Furthermore, these literary texts, as Denis Feeney has shown (2011: 138-142), cannot be understood as descriptions or impartial accounts of religious practice, but are interpretations of religion and manifestations of the divine from the Roman past.

Ovid tells us that the *Matralia* was a festival for *bonae matres*, married women of good standing (*Fast.* 6.475). Of course, the sources only really deal with the cult of Mater Matuta as practised in Rome, but at her other sanctuaries women do appear as cult officials and donors. The inscription on a stele of the early second century BC from the *Lucus Pisaurensis* at Pesaro refers to *matronae* as donors: 'To Mater Matuta, the matrons gave (this) as a gift. Mania Curia and Pola Livia are the donors' (*CIL* I^2 379 = *CIL* XI 6301 = *ILS* 2981; Schultz, 2006a: 55). An office in the cult of Mater Matuta includes that of *magistra*, an official who took part in the maintenance of cult sites and the organization of activities, whom Schultz (2006a: 70) characterises as semi-professional cult personnel assisting priests. At Cora, for example, Cervaria Fortunata made a donation as a *magistra* of the goddess (*CIL* X 6511 = *ILS* 3488; Schultz, 2006a: 55, 171 n. 28; Palombi, 2012: 392). Publicia Similis from Praeneste was a *magistra* of Mater Matuta in the late first or second century AD, and her husband had a statue of her erected with that information on the statue base (*CIL* XIV 2997 = *ILS* 3489; Agnoli, 2002: 187-8, no. II.19, figs. 19a-b; Schultz, 2006a: 74, 177, n. 97). Another *magistra* of this goddess in Praeneste is known from her funerary inscription (*CIL* XIV 3006; Schultz, 2006a: 177, n.97). The adherent of the cult of Mater Matuta who dedicated an altar to her in Beirut, on the orders of the goddess Juno, also was a married woman, Flavia Nicolais Saddane, who has Latin, Greek, and Semitic names (*CIL* III 6880 = *ILS* 3490; Kaizer, 2005; Ando, 2007: 435-6).

The epigraphic and historical information seems to suggest a cult for women by women, and by *particular* women, those who were married. None of the late Republican or early Imperial sources say that these women had to have been married only once (*univira*); that information comes from a much later source, namely the early Christian writer Tertullian (Herbert-Brown, 1994: 147-8). According to Tertullian (*De monog.* 17), 'on Fortuna Muliebris, as on Mater Matuta, none but a once wedded woman hangs the wreath' (on the image of the goddess?). This notion of restricted access to *univirae* might be drawn or borrowed from an earlier (Augustan) source recording a ritual in the cult specifically of Fortuna Muliebris. This source, Dionysios of Halicarnassos (*Ant. Rom.* 8.56.4), wrote that

[2] This appears related to Bachofen's (1948) idea of *Mutterrecht* and the importance of sisterhood and maternal kinship in ancient Mediterranean cultures.

in 488 BC the first priestess of this goddess established a custom whereby no women who had been married a second time were allowed to crown the cult statue with garlands or touch it (Di Luzio, 2016: 85-9). Tertullian, writing in the late second and early third centuries AD, grouped Fortuna Muliebris and Mater Matuta together, in contrast to the earlier literary source. The reliability of Tertullian, therefore, is weakened, but even if the rite of decking out the statue in the sanctuary of Mater Matuta really was carried out only by an *univira*, that restriction might apply only to those particular individuals who had obviously privileged access and this specific sacred duty to perform. As Schultz (2006a: 62) has demonstrated, the modern assumption need not be true that an ancient restriction on an individual rite extended to the general cult. For example, there was a restriction on female participation in the worship of Hercules, but it was not a universal exclusion; women were not allowed to participate in sacrifices at the *Ara Maxima* of Hercules in the *Forum Boarium* in Rome, but, as we shall see in the next section, they certainly were participants in the cult of Hercules elsewhere (Schultz, 2006a: 66-9). *Matronae* in general, as we have seen, crop up often in the context of Mater Matuta and in other early Roman cults and ritual contexts (Staples, 1997; Langlands, 2006: 46-9). In Roman society, various forms of collective worship and annual observances in cult ritual were structured not only on social grounds, but also on the basis of sexual status; *matronae*, *univirae*, concubines, and prostitutes all had either privileges granted to them or restrictions imposed on them in some way or other (Schultz, 2006a: 147; Di Luzio, 2016: 118). Thus, any restrictions on particular groups of women as cult participants of Mater Matuta could be seen simply as reflecting general and common practice. 'Women' as cult participants probably were not just a homogeneous and undifferentiated group, as we sometimes think, and it might be that particular groups of women, rather than all women, were included in the activities of popular cults.

Diffendale *et al*. (2016: 19-20) claimed to be able to recognise the participation of both men and women in the sanctuary of Mater Matuta in the *Forum Boarium* in the sixth century, but it is unclear how the authors came to this conclusion. The wooden spindles, spindle-whorls, and other spinning and weaving instruments in the relevant votive deposit here may well point to women dedicants, but we cannot know whether women or men deposited the sheet bronze figurines, miniature drinking cups, bronze tweezers and hair-rings, and bone pendants, among other items, in that assemblage. Bouma (1996: 285-90) concluded that the exclusivity of women as cult participants also at Satricum is contradicted by the nature of the votive offerings to the goddess. In Votive Deposit II of the fifth and fourth centuries, spinning and weaving materials and female statuettes appeared along with weaponry and metal utensils. He regarded spinning and weaving materials as typical offerings of women, weaponry in metal as typical of men (in the same vein Ginge, 1996: 96-7). This may be the case, but it is not entirely certain, and this deposit also contained some anatomical votives in the form of wombs and male genitalia (Attema and De Haas, 2007: 70, also cat. no. 359). Among the votive offerings dating to the fourth and third centuries BC (Votive Deposit III) at Satricum are terracotta heads, both male and female, male and female statuettes, and male and female reproductive organs (Bouma, 1996: 288-90, figs 16-18; Van der Krujif, 2007: 82-3, also cat. nos. 360-75, 444-8, 453). This votive material is probably a better indication of the participation of women and men in the cult. What directly relates to female fertility and motherhood at the temple of Mater Matuta in Satricum are the votive wombs, figurines of women with children, and

terracotta swaddled infants (Bouma, 1996: 270-95, figs 7-8, 17, 19; Van der Kruijf, 2007: 82-3, also cat. nos. 379-82, 385). The terracotta uterus found, along with a terracotta head and a foot, in a kiln in which votives and pottery were produced outside the sanctuary, is also indicative of female reproductive concerns (Nijboer *et al*., 1995: 4, fig. 4; Attema and De Haas, 2007: 70).

In the end, Mater Matuta might have had the primary role of a protectress of marriage, in which both men and women had a vested interest, and only secondarily of childbirth and children. The epigraphic evidence and the archaeological remains of votives suggest that men did take part in her cult. Certainly, both married men and women celebrated another goddess associated with child-bearing, Juno Lucina, on her festival day (Ovid, *Fast.* 2.425), and husbands concerned about their family made dedications to Juno Lucina on behalf of their children (*CIL* I^2 359 = *ILS* 9230; Schultz, 2006a: 55-7).[3] On the other hand, the fact that the festival of Mater Matuta was known as the *Matralia* and was in Rome's calendar potentially since the sixth century BC suggests that her maternal properties were some of the oldest features of her character, but not necessarily her only qualities. And different qualities might be emphasised to different degrees depending on the cult communities; adherents in Satricum might emphasise something slightly different from those in Rome. As we shall see in the next section, gods and goddesses had a range of different roles to fulfil, rather than a single one, and the votive offerings given to a plethora of deities reflect the broad nature, polyvalency, and translatability of the gods.

TERRACOTTA FERTILITY OFFERINGS AND THEIR DIVINE RECIPIENTS

Tens of thousands of mould-made votive offerings of terracotta were dedicated at sacred sites in southern Etruria, Latium, and northern Campania and neighbouring areas from the fourth to the second or early first centuries BC (Flemming, 2017: 112-13, fig. 6.1; Schultz, 2006a: 97-102; Hughes, 2017: 67-77). At one sanctuary alone, at Ponte di Nona near Rome, for example, 8000 terracotta ex-votos, mostly in the form of various body parts, were found (Potter and Wells, 1985; Potter, 1989). Votive offerings in general enable us to infer the simple rituals of supplication and offering after receiving help (or believing to have received help). The giving of votives can be understood within the contractual relationship between humans and gods in Roman religion. Something was requested through supplication to the gods and a vow (*votum*) was sworn by the suppliant to reciprocate with an offering upon the granting of that request; that vow or promise had to be fulfilled (Derks, 1998; Turfa, 2006: 91-2; Rüpke, 2007: 163). The promised thank offering was made at the successful end of the petitioning process, and once that offering had been given, the contract was fulfilled and completed. As Jörg Rüpke (2007: 163) maintained, if divine assistance was not forthcoming after a petition, no votive gift was necessary in return; it would have made sense to those seeking divine assistance, therefore, to dedicate an offering only when the favour had been granted, and not at the beginning when a petition was being lodged (as sometimes has been suggested).

Whilst throughout the early first millennium BC, votive offerings to the gods might involve items such as weapons, jewellery, and other costly gifts, from the fourth century

[3] The adoption of Tiberius by Augustus was said to have instilled a new positivity in the population at Rome, with parents hopeful of a bright future for their children and husbands seeing their marriages prospering, suggesting that men and women jointly were interested in family matters (Velleius Paterculus 2.103).

worshippers appear to appeal to the gods much more directly about their very personal concerns and physical needs. This phenomenon manifests itself in the deposition of terracotta thank offerings in the shape of heads, eyes, ears, throats, hands, feet, fingers, toes, and internal organs, among other things, as well as penises, wombs, vulvas, and breasts (Recke, 2013; Flemming, 2016; Graham and Draycott, 2017; Graham, 2017a) (Fig. 01). The latter group is related to sexual health and reproduction, and it is on the group of votives representing parts of the female anatomy that this section primarily focuses (Fig. 02). The giving of anatomical terracottas is a rather sudden development and a highly visible religious practice in this period; the phenomenon, according to many scholars, predates the introduction of the Greek healing cult of Asklepios to Rome in 291 BC (Glinister, 2006: 21; Turfa, 2006: 78; Fabri, 2010: 30-1; Bendlin, 2013: 466; contra De Cazanove, 2015: 56-8). Rous (2009: 58) refers to 'a veritable explosion of archaeologically identified cult places' in urban and rural locations in Latium in the fourth and third centuries BC, with a clear decline, and in some cases abandonment, in the second century. Votive offerings were coming into sanctuaries in such quantities during this period that they sometimes had to be cleared away and deposited in large votive pits, occasionally with other material tidied up in the precinct (Attema and De Haas, 2007).[4]

Also associated with offerings pertaining to sexual health and reproduction are terracotta swaddled infants (Graham, 2013; De Cazanove, 2017; Glinister, 2017; Carroll, 2018: 70-81) (Fig. 03). Emma-Jayne Graham (2014) has suggested convincingly that these thank offerings were deposited in sanctuaries by the parents of infants to mark the child's release from its swaddling bands, after 40-60 days of life according to Soranus (*Gyn.* 19.42). In this interpretation, these votives celebrated a rite of passage, the transition in an infant's life from the dangerous first weeks and months to a phase of the child's increasing mobility and development. It is important to remember that anatomical votives and swaddled infants in Italian sanctuaries do not always appear in the same quantities at all sanctuaries, and that there may be regional preferences for certain types at certain times. For example, although anatomical votives are found in sanctuaries in the Apennines, Scopacasa (2015: 14-15) claims that there is not such a broad range of organs and limbs there as in the sanctuaries in south Etruria and Latium; furthermore, Tyrrhenian sanctuaries have comparatively large numbers of reproductive organs and swaddled infants and might reveal a greater emphasis on the sphere of child-bearing. On the other hand, he does not include the Tyrrhenian votive deposits at either Ponte di Nona or at Fregellae in his study, both of which have very large numbers of hands and feet (Graham, 2017b: 255).[5] This may alter his findings, but variability is nonetheless clear. The sanctuary outside Porta Nord at Vulci has a large assemblage of 46 terracotta swaddled infants which dominates every other kind of ex-voto here (Pautasso, 1994: 33-44).

It is impossible to know for certain whether anatomical ex-votos relating to sexual and reproductive health were given by female or male devotees, but two surviving terracotta wombs from the Fontanile di Legnisina shrine at Vulci have an inscription from a female dedicant naming the Etruscan goddess Vei (Ricciardi, 1992: 189, fig. 48). This organ is part of the female body, and it may well be that this and all ex-votos of women's body parts

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[4] On the difficulty of identifying the ancient Latin term used for such deposits (*favisae*, *stipes*), see Schultz, 2006a: 97.

[5] Ponte di Nona has 2,368 feet and Fregellae has 1,654. I thank E.-J. Graham for pointing this out to me.

were donated by women. Of course, we cannot rule out that a husband might dedicate a womb on behalf of his wife who had not been able to conceive or a breast if she had been unable to produce milk; husband and wife might also have made a thank offering jointly if their wishes had been granted in these areas. But, in agreement with Schultz (2006a: 116), I consider it likely that most such female body parts were donated by women. For male reproduction or men's sexual ailments, the penis would be the obvious body part offered by men as an ex-voto. A votive deposit of the third and second centuries B.C. at Corchiano contained a large quantity of male genitals, some circumcised, some old, some young, and some showing abnormal conditions of the foreskin (Baggieri, Alessandro Margariti, Di Giacomo, 1999). Surely the donors of these votives are more likely to have been men. Other parts of the human anatomy, such as hands, feet, legs, and so on, could be donated by both men and women and are not gender-specific. What terracotta votive offerings, either gender-specific or not, in general reveal is that they were deposited in mixed contexts in sanctuaries, suggesting strongly that women and men worshipped the same gods and goddesses. Gender-inclusive cults, therefore, appear not to have been uncommon at all in Roman religion (Schultz, 2006a: 117).

A votive offering not made of terracotta, but which we might associate with women dedicants, are textiles related to childbirth. Literary, epigraphic, and visual sources indicate that it was common for women to dedicate a variety of textiles and items of dress on various occasions in the female life-course in the Classical world. Arnobius (*Adv. Nat.* 2.67) mentioned that the Romans dedicated the *togulae* of their daughters to the goddess Fortuna Virgo at an important stage in the life-course, when the girls had reached puberty and marriageable age. The dedication in Greek sanctuaries of specific textiles in conjunction with childbirth is also relevant here, although we lack concrete evidence that this also was practised in early Roman sanctuaries. Greek textile and garment offerings are treated comprehensively by Cecile Brøns, and she illustrates a votive relief of the fourth century BC from Echinos in which two women approach a goddess, possibly Artemis or Demeter, with one of them presenting her baby to the goddess for her blessing (Brøns, 2015: 72-3, fig. 5). On the wall behind the worshippers hang various textiles, including 'a tunic, two pieces of textiles with fringes and an undefinable fringed item' (Brøns, 2015: 72-3). Perhaps some of these textiles might be interpreted as the infant's dedicated swaddling clothes, but that remains speculative. Women's belts were given to Artemis and/or Eileithyia especially, in connection with either marriage or childbirth; Artemis and Eileithyia might be conflated as Artemis Eileithyia, Eileithyia's sole function, care for childbirth, coinciding with one of the functions of Artemis (Parker, 2017: 22). An epigram of the third century BC records a woman's gift to Artemis of a belt and another garment as a thank offering for delivering 'her heavy womb of a live child' (*Palatine Anthology* 6, no. 202; Brøns, 2015: 60). Given the popularity of terracotta votives in the form of swaddled infants in central Italian sanctuaries from the fourth to second centuries BC, we might wonder whether mothers there might have dedicated the actual swaddling bands of their infants who no longer needed this form of protection (Graham, 2014: 41). That is not to say, however, that swaddling bands would be given exclusively to female gods or deposited in sanctuaries frequented only by women.

Who were the divine recipients of the terracotta votive offerings under discussion here in the last four centuries BC? Mater Matuta was one of them, as we have seen at Satricum, and we can piece together some evidence about the identity of other deities who were

given votive offerings associated with reproduction and fertility, but it is actually fairly meagre. Morel (1991: 165-7) notes that the titular divinity of a sanctuary is usually unknown to us now, and it is noticeable that there was a diversity of gods with different properties demanded by the faithful, often at the same cult site. This was the case, for example, at Gravisca, the port of Tarquinia, where a cult complex held deposits to Etruscan (Uni, Turan, Vei) and Greek (Hera, Aphrodite, Demeter, and Apollo) gods and goddesses (Comella, 1978; Fiorini, 2005; Mercuri and Fiorini, 2014; Hughes, 2017: 70-3) (Fig. 04). Established in the sixth century BC, three centuries later this sanctuary had shrunk in size, but large numbers of terracotta offerings nevertheless were being deposited at this time.[6] The offerings include wombs, breasts, hearts, hands and ears, as well as female statuettes and swaddled babies. They were found concentrated in particular rooms of the cult buildings, with 145 wombs and 22 swaddled infants, as well as breasts and other body parts (including a vulva with a clitoris), and 17 figurines of men, women, and couples in Room M; 11 statuettes of both sexes and 24 wombs in Room G; and 91 statuettes of women, men, and couples, 74 uteri, 2 breasts, and 2 swaddled infants in Room I. The building in which Room G is located has been identified by Comella as belonging most likely to Demeter or Kore, the building in which Room M is found has been attributed to Aphrodite/Turan and Hera/Uni; a bronze *situla* inscribed with the name Uni found in Room M certainly lends support to this interpretation (Comella, 1978: 89-92). This clustering perhaps represents the original place of dedication by women and possibly men and couples. It could, however, also reflect the clearing away of votives according to types by cult officials. This evidence is useful in shedding light on how and where votive offerings were deposited and managed.

Although votive offerings of terracotta were by far the standard ex-voto in the period under discussion here, votive offerings of metal still appear in smaller numbers, as the deposit from Caniò di Sezze in Latium indicates (Cassieri, 2004).[7] Here, from the late fourth century BC onwards, terracotta anatomical votives, such as a womb and penises, as well as hands, feet, eyes, and ears, were dedicated, but ex-votos also include bronze figurines of Mars, male figures in armour, and miniature weapons which do not immediately suggest a female divinity with obvious fertility associations. On the other hand, a bronze swaddled infant in small format was also retrieved here which has much more obvious connections with reproduction and childbirth. The names of the god or gods worshipped here do not survive. Nicoletta Cassieri (2004: 178) suggested that it was a female divinity, Juno Regina, based on an inscription found out of context in the vicinity, but she did not exclude the possibility that male gods (also) were worshipped here. Diversity is furthermore apparent at the Punta della Vipera sanctuary at Santa Marinella near Civitavecchia, where male and female genitalia, swaddled infants, anatomical votives, and other offerings were found; epigraphic evidence for Minerva, as well as figurines representing Aphrodite and Dionysos, were part of this assemblage (Comella, 2001). Clearly, more than one cult was present at this site, and the votive assemblage is gender-inclusive. Moreover, each deity could receive a fairly wide range of votives.

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[6] I cannot judge whether the votive offerings were being placed 'in the ***ruins*** of the cult rooms', (my emphasis) as Turfa, 2006: 67, suggests.

[7] Also, at the temple of Juno Lucina in Norba terracotta votives were deposited along with metal statuettes, jewellery, foil figurines, and iron tools from the fourth to the second century BC: Perrone, 2003.

The votive assemblage rescued from clandestine excavations in 2012 at Pantanacci outside ancient Lanuvium is an exciting one, as it was not deposited in a built sanctuary, but in a grotto with springs, the water of which may have been believed to possess curative or therapeutic properties (Ghini and Attenni, 2015; for an artificial grotto at Veii, see Comella and Stefani, 1990: 203-16). Unfortunately, the votive material does not preserve any names of the deity or deities revered. On the other side of Lanuvium the great and famous sanctuary of Juno Sospita was situated, a goddess who may have been connected with women and childbirth, although she primarily had a military and political character (Schultz, 2006b; Hermans, 2012; Santi, 2014). The relationship between the grotto sanctuary and the sanctuary of Juno Sospita is unclear. Hundreds of votives were found at Pantanacci, representing figurines and a range of anatomical offerings, including heads, hands, and other body parts, such as the very unusual representations of the oral cavity and throat, as well as male genitalia, vulvas, and wombs. Swaddled infants are also in the repertoire of dedicated offerings.

Where does this leave us in regard to so-called fertility cults? If large numbers of worshippers turned to a *particular* cult for a *specific* kind of cure or medical aid, we might imagine that the facilities at those sanctuaries somehow had a reputation for furnishing specialized care or medical information. One of those specialisms would be the restoration or maintenance of reproductive health. Instead, it appears that just about any Etruscan, Italic or cross-cultural deity could cure a wide range of diseases or assist in bodily matters. In fact, these deposits indicate that the gods possessed various meanings and powers. Anatomical votives of sexual and reproductive organs, as well as swaddled infants, are associated with a variety of deities, both female and male. If Apollo was the only god worshipped at the sanctuary at San Giuliano in Etruria or if Mars was the only one in the sanctuary of Tessenanno near Vulci, both must have answered gynaecological and fertility requests too, as there are breasts, uteri, and swaddled babies in votive deposits at these sites (Turfa, 2004: 362-3; Hughes, 2017: 74-7). Terracotta wombs and breasts were also found in a votive deposit in the sanctuary of Hercules at Praeneste, a male god whose connection with women also is not immediately obvious, but to whom women clearly appealed (Pensabene, 2001; Schultz, 2006a: 66-9, 115). Hercules is the recipient in the Roman imperial period of a dedication by Numisia Aphrodite as thanks for the health of her son and family, and there is considerable evidence for women's participation in his cult (*CIL* VI 286; Schultz 2006a, 61-9).

Recke (2013: 1073) concluded that 'in the Etrusco-Italic region practically all the deities worshipped were offered such votives', thus particular specialist services or gods with very focused skills are not recognisable (cf. Glinister, 2006: 23). Because 'cult places were not the exclusive abode of any single deity' in the period under discussion here, we might think of a co-existence between any possible principal deity of a sanctuary and a multitude of other gods and goddesses to whom appeals could be made on a day to day basis (Rous, 2009: 71). In discussing religious pluralism, Bendlin suggested that gods did not have a monopoly, and this resulted in competition regarding the broadly similar services on offer (Bendlin, 2000: 133-4). In this sense, worshippers seeking assistance in matters of personal health and wellbeing, and with heterogeneous needs, could tap into a wide range of divine 'service providers'. Because temples and cults offered a wide range of services in a standard polytheistic context, perhaps those sanctuaries with a large visible assemblage of thank offerings were able to compete effectively because the offerings were visible

proof of the efficacy of the gods inhabiting the site. Rous (2009: 76) postulated that 'an advantageous location and the number and importance of services on offer' were of primary importance in attracting worshippers. But is this business model too market-driven, simplistic, and anachronistic? Gods and goddesses meant many things to many people, and not all worshippers will have had the same understanding or relationship to the deity or deities residing in cult places, but by visiting the shrines, appealing to the gods, and thanking them with a range of votive gifts, they were able to share and negotiate the meanings of their individual and collective experiences with the divine.

Returning to Mater Matuta, she seems to be elusive as a particular or exclusive recipient of votives associated with conception, childbirth, and infant health. If she was one of the inhabitants of a sanctuary, she very likely would not have been the only one, and this increases the difficulty of detecting her in the archaeological and material record. Particularly interesting here is a donation of a statue of Jupiter to Mater Matuta by Magia Prisca, possibly a freedwoman (the patronymic is lacking), in Cora (*CIL* X 8416 = *ILS* 3487; Schultz, 2006a: 200, n. 24; Palombi, 2012: 392-3). Clearly it was possible to dedicate a statue of one god in the sanctuary of another. We have already seen a similar combination in the *Forum Boarium* in Rome where Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus dedicated a painting(?) to Jupiter in the sanctuary of Mater Matuta (Livy 33.27.4, 41.28.3-4). The inscription on the altar to Mater Matuta in Beirut, mentioned in the previous section, indicates that it was the goddess Juno who gave the order to Flavia Nicolais Saddane to make a donation to Mater Matuta, indicating that deities were somehow related and did not demand exclusive attention (*CIL* III 6880 = *ILS* 3490; Kaizer, 2005; Ando, 2007: 435-6). We have also seen that Mater Matuta was worshipped in a sanctuary at Pesaro in north-east Italy, where a Roman colony was established in 184 BC, but she was not the only presence there (Agnati, 1999). Based on the inscribed stelae from this site, she shared the sanctuary with a wide variety of other gods and goddesses, such as Apollo, Salus, Diana, Feronia, Fides, Juno Lucina, Juno Regina, Liber, and Marica (*CIL* XI 6290–6303; Trevisiol, 1999). In such a situation, it is virtually impossible to know who were the divine recipients of terracotta votive heads and half-heads, of males and females, as well as arms, hands, legs, feet, breasts, wombs, penises, and swaddled infants found in this sanctuary (Agnati, 1999: 202-9). The assessment of the surviving archaeological, epigraphic, and artefactual evidence allows us to conclude that Mater Matuta shared properties and skills with many other deities, making her rather typical of the period and at home in a polytheistic religion with polyvalent gods. Strictly speaking, she cannot be said to have been a 'fertility goddess' or a 'mother goddess'; she may have been able to help mortals in those contexts, but so could many others, apparently of both sexes.

Terracotta votives of sexual and reproductive organs and swaddled infants are always in mixed deposits that contain other kinds of anatomical votives. This does not suggest a specific desire for fertility at any one site, but it reflects a broader need for therapy or cure. The polyvalent nature of the gods is thereby demonstrated again. Comella (1981: 762) divided the anatomical votives into two groups, one she related to 'health', the other to 'fertility', although no sanctuary has just one or the other type. There may have been a conceptual difference between fertility and healing, unless the inability to conceive was viewed as an illness. The Greek Hippocratic medical texts show that the basic responsibility for fertility lay with women, although men could help in various ways, including by staying sober for intercourse (Flemming, 2013: 574-5). As these medical texts imply in discussions

of ailments related to the uterus, it was viewed as unhealthy for a woman not to reproduce (Flemming, 2017: 128). By looking at a range of terracotta wombs and contextualising them within this Greek medical discourse, which the Romans adopted, Flemming (2017: 127-8) proposed that these objects may have been dedicated either as a request for a healthy uterus or in response to problems in conceiving or carrying to term or giving birth to a baby. Either is possible, but the nature of a *votum* and the reciprocal giving of an ex-voto upon completion indicates that the dedication of a terracotta womb follows a positive divine response to any request of this kind. A healthy womb would enable the woman to generate so that she and the infant could survive and the reproduction and continuity of the family would be safeguarded, surely an important issue for women and for their husbands. In this case *healing* something that was not working correctly and, thereby enabling conception, could be closely related to *protecting* maternal and infant life. We might argue the same for terracotta swaddled infants. The infants were not necessarily *cured* of anything to enable them to survive early life; they were *protected*. But for the first days, weeks, and months of its life, the vulnerable newborn will have struggled with a variety of potential health problems and external attacks on its life, so that protection again might be closely related to healing (Prowse *et al*., 2010; Carroll, 2011).

One thing, however, appears certain. We must resist the temptation to refer to sites where anatomical votives are found as healing sanctuaries or specialist medical centres, and we need to be particularly cautious in referring to sanctuaries in which votives associated with fertility and childbirth are found as something akin to fertility clinics or 'the ancient equivalent of….departments of gynaecology or paediatrics' (Bonfante, 1984: 1).[8] Neither approach does justice to the material or the ideas and beliefs evident in the practice of cult in early Roman Italy.

FERTILITY EXPRESSED IN A MAJOR VOTIVE ASSEMBLAGE AT CAPUA

Oscan-speaking Capua in Campania was known to the Romans as a wealthy community, mainly because of its position controlling a large and fertile plain and an important navigable river connecting the coast with the mountainous interior (Frederiksen, 1959; Frederiksen, 1984: 292-9). It was considered 'the largest and richest city in Italy' (*urbs maxima opulentissimaque Italiae*) in the fourth century BC and was still referred to by Florus in the early second century AD as having been one of the three greatest cities in the world, along with Rome and Carthage (Livy 7.31; Florus, *Epitome* 1.16.6). Capua was also a rival of Rome, with the most significant conflict ensuing in 216 BC when the city took Hannibal's side, resulting in its defeat by Rome in 211. A Roman colony was established here in 59 BC.

Outside and immediately east of the ancient city, an important sanctuary of pre-Roman and early Roman date was illegally excavated in 1845 and 1873 by the Patturelli family who owned the land, the so-called Fondo Patturelli (Koch, 1907; Adriani, 1939; Sirleto, 2009).[9]

[8] Critical of healing sanctuaries: Glinister, 2006: 13. Potter, 1989: 93-4, refers to the sanctuary at Ponte di Nona as a healing sanctuary, but without any concrete evidence.

[9] An ancient cemetery very near the sanctuary used to be thought to be part of the sanctuary. Von Duhn (1876: 182-3) claimed that the statues were not those of mortal women, but were goddesses nurturing the souls of the dead. The idea of the supposed chthonic character of the god(s) worshipped here was taken up again by Trotta, 1991: 274, Coarelli, 1995: 373-7, and Carafa, 2008: 95. The cemetery, however, has nothing to do with the sanctuary. It is simply in a typical extramural location near the sanctuary, and it is quite likely that the original clandestine excavations went beyond the sanctuary limits and disturbed those burials, as

Evidence for monumental structures came to light in the digging of the site, but these were partly destroyed to cover up the family's clandestine activities and artefact sales, a situation referred to by Carlo Rescigno (2009: 29) as 'uno degli episodi più dolorosi della ricerca archeologica in Italia meridionale alla fine dell'Ottocento'. A limited (official) excavation took place here again in 1995. There is no ancient literary mention of this sanctuary, nor is there any epigraphic evidence naming a deity or alluding to a fertility cult. Although this is lacking, there is a vast array of terracotta and stone votive offerings. These include the usual range of anatomical votives in terracotta, for example breasts, penises, feet, legs, as well as swaddled infants and seated toddlers in terracotta and in tufa, the volcanic stone quarried at Monte Tifata, the combination of swaddled infants and seated toddlers having also been a feature of the votive assemblage outside the Porta Nord at Vulci (Koch, 1907: 413-4, pl. 11; Bonghi Jovino, 1971: 70-1, cat. No. 51-2, pl. 37; Venosta, 1974; Pautasso, 1994: 59-63). The votive offerings of the fourth to second centuries also include large numbers of terracotta female figurines holding or suckling an infant, but also other male and female figurines, as well as terracotta *oscilla* (Bonghi Jovino, 1971: 52-8, cat. no. 16-30, pls. 19-26; Fischer-Hansen, 1992: cat. no. 123; Migliore, 2011; Falcone, 2011) (Fig. 05).

But the most remarkable finds from the sanctuary are the small, medium, and large tufa statues of women holding babies on their laps (Adriani, 1939; Petrillo, 2016) (Fig. 06).[10] The smallest statues are less than 30 cm in height, the largest are 1.35-1.45 m tall, with many grouped around the 50-60 cm, the 80-95 cm, and the roughly 1 m size ranges. About 160 of these statues are known, and they are unique in Italy. They are difficult to date, as there is no stratigraphic or contextual evidence to work with, but they may start as early as the fifth century BC; the latest have been assigned to the early first century BC on linguistic and palaeographic grounds. In their present state the statues look rather crude, but in antiquity the roughness and irregularity of the volcanic stone was covered up by applying plaster onto the surface of the figures, and this was then painted. Traces of white, yellow, red, and pink paint survive on the skin, clothing, and chairs of many of the statues (Figs 07-08).

There were negative judgements of the statues following their discovery, as indicated in the surviving correspondence between Patturelli and others who tried to sell them where they could. They were referred to as 'unpleasant', and as 'squat and monstrous as toads' ('tozze e mostruose come rospi') (Sirleto, 2009: 119). A letter dated 9 February 1874 records a sale to Orazio Pascale 'who agreed to pay 500 lire for those monsters called tufa statues' (Sirleto, 2009: 121). Because of the commercial impetus in the dispersal of the statues, several of them can be found today in various European museums. The Berlin museums purchased a quantity of finds from the Fondo Patturelli in 1876, including seven tufa statues (Thiermann, 2012: 41-2). There are other statues in Naples, in the Louvre in Paris, and in the Glyptothek in Copenhagen (Koch, 1907: 362; Fischer-Hansen, 1992: cat. no. 124). Two statues were donated in 1876 from the Commissione Conservatrice dei Monumenti di Terra di Lavoro to the Villa Giulia in Rome (Adriani, 1974). The main body of

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Crawford 2009 makes abundantly clear. Some Roman imperial and late Roman tombs were found on the perimeter of what was the Republican sanctuary in 1995/2008: Sampaolo, 2010: 5-6. Sampaolo (2010: 9) states clearly that 'the proximity to the necropolis is undeniable, although we cannot talk of tombs with the structures of the sanctuary'.

[10] They are not, as Bonfante, 1984: 10, figs. 1a-b, mistakenly writes, made of terracotta.

statues, however, is located in the Museo Campano di Capua (in Capua) and also in the Museo Archeologico dell'antica Capua (in Santa Maria Capua Vetere).

All tufa statues (but one) depict a mature woman seated on a throne or elaborate chair, placed quite squarely on the chair and facing the viewer; the only standing woman holding a baby is made of limestone (Koch, 1907: pl. 10.7). The chairs of the seated women vary greatly in size and ornamentation (Koch, 1907: 417-26). Most of the figures wear a sleeveless, belted tunic over a longer under-tunic; some have a veil or cloak hanging from the back of the head, and sometimes tendrils of curls fall either side of the woman's face onto her breast. The women commonly hold a single infant on their lap, but some cradle two babies, and yet others three, four, five or six infants (Fig. 09). Some even have their arms and laps full of eight or twelve infants (Fig. 10); one holds fourteen babies. Generally, the figures are completely clothed and simply hold the infants, but a few of them depict a woman suckling an infant at her exposed breast (Fig. 11). The infants are wrapped in swaddling bands, the bands usually being indicated by carved lines. The more summarily treated infants probably had painted lines on them to indicate the strips of cloth in which the babies were wrapped. Some of the infants have well carved faces, and even wear little bonnets (Fig. 12). A few of the women not only care for infants, but also sometimes toddlers and older children, both boys and girls, judging by the clothes they are wearing (Fig. 13). These statues, therefore, are concerned chiefly with mothers and with very young infants, but the wellbeing of children in general is also attested, which ties in well with the dedication at this sanctuary of terracotta and tufa statues and statuettes of seated toddlers, no longer babies, but a year or two old, and still in need of protection.

There has been no real attempt to explore the true nature of these statues or to contextualise them as a unified assemblage. If mentioned in scholarly literature, they might be interpreted as cult images of an unidentified fertility goddess or even as statues of Mater Matuta.[11] In my view, both hypotheses are highly unlikely. Adriani (1939: 19-21) thought that the statues could either be effigies of a goddess or mortal mothers who dedicated their images to a maternal goddess, claiming that there were no good arguments for either; nevertheless, he tended towards the latter option. Arguments against the statues of seated mothers being images of a goddess (or even of a cult statue) can be marshalled. For one thing, I can think of no sanctuary that would need 160 cult statues. Furthermore, one would expect the figures to be much more uniform in appearance if they represent the same deity or reproduce a cult statue of her; but the sheer variety in the mothers speaks against this interpretation. The largest (1.80 m) of the tufa statues is a seated woman, and it was suggested by Koch and Adriani that she might be the cult statue of the sanctuary ('die Göttin des Heiligtums'), but if she is, the other statues cannot be based on this, because she is the only figure from the sanctuary not to hold any infants (Koch, 1907: 415-6, pl. 12.1; Adriani, 1939: 21, 69, no. 153). In fact, she holds a pomegranate in one hand and an animal of some kind in the other, either of which could be interpreted as a votive offering being presented and the woman who gives them as a

[11] In the past, I also have interpreted them this way, although I would not do so now: Carroll, 2012: 49. They are identified as Matres Matutae in De Simone, 2012: 30, and Van der Kruijf, 2007: 82, also interprets them as images of a divinity. Their internet coverage also sees them referred to as Matres Matutae: http://www.vesuviolive.it/cultura-napoletana/archeologia-vesuvio/137412-santuario-fondo-patturelli-le-matres-matutae-la-maternita-culto/

mortal.

Three of the seated statues have inscriptions of which two (in Berlin) are complete, and these give us an invaluable clue as to the true purpose of the statues (*CIL* X 3817-3819) (Figs 14-15). Volume ten of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1883) identifies the woman in each of these two cases as a goddess. But the inscriptions make it clear that the statues were offerings dedicated in fulfilment of a vow or were a gift. One inscription names a Sequnda Solania, daughter of Lucius, as a dedicator: *Sequnda Solania L(uci) f(ilia) dat* (Fig. 14); the other names a Quarta Confleia, who has fulfilled a vow: *Quarta Confleia V(otum) S(olvit) M(erito) L(ibens)* (*CIL* X 3817 and *CIL* X 3819; Adriani, 1939: 20-1, pl. A4-5) (Fig. 15). The inscriptions are in Latin, not the local Oscan language, and the dedicatory formula *VSML* (translated as 'willingly and deservedly fulfilling a sacred vow') and the word *dat* ('gives') used here means that these women gave something to the deity, and it is likely that this was a gift in return for something having been divinely granted.[12] The women are named as the sole dedicator; no husband is mentioned. Sequnda Solania is free-born, as the filiation indicates; the family name is known thus far in Rome and in Umbria.[13] The fact that this name is not attested in surviving inscriptions at Capua is not an indication, of course, that the family is not Capuan. Quarta Confleia (or Confleia Quarta) was definitely a Capuan woman, as this family name is recorded in other inscriptions in the city in association with free-born individuals and with freedmen.[14]

These dedicatory inscriptions suggest strongly that all the mothers with infants at Capua were votive offerings, even if the earlier examples do not bear an inscribed dedication.[15] I would argue that, as ex-votos to some deity, their dedication and deposition can be understood as thank offerings for the fulfilment of pregnancy and maternal and infant health, expressing the reciprocity of the relationship between humans and gods. A *votum* clearly had been sworn by Quarta Confleia, and that vow or promise had to be fulfilled at the end of the petitioning process (Rüpke 2007: 163). Of course, a costly offering such as this might also have been made not only as part of a completed contract, but also to promote future divine aid on behalf of the family and for the continued good health of loved ones. As Flemming (2017: 114) notes, ex-votos in sanctuaries remained after the dedicants had left; the votives deposited here would greet 'each new suppliant, engaging all visitors to the sacred site, keeping the link with the divine open after the event and maintaining an enlarged community of the favoured'.

It is a reasonable assumption to interpret statues with one or two babies as depictions of mortal women who had successfully given birth to the desired child or children. About half the statues are of a woman with one child, and fewer than 20% of them hold two babies. But when a statue shows a woman holding multiple babies of four, six, twelve or even fourteen, as just over a third of them do, are we to imagine that she really had so many children who survived childbirth? Or is this a too literal understanding? Perhaps the

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[12] The abbreviation on the dedication by Quarta Confleia is VSML, rather than the usual VSLM known in Roman imperial inscriptions. VSML is used elsewhere in an imperial dedication in Capua: *CIL* X 3822.

[13] *CIL* VI 21376, *CIL* XI 5776.

[14] The family name is otherwise spelled Confuleius: *CIL* X 4092; *CIL* X 4374; CIL X 4472; *AE* 1988, 292; Pagano and Rougetet, 1987; D'Isanto, 1993, 109-10.

[15] Inscriptions could, of course, be in paint, but these do not survive. The language of any earlier inscriptions would be Oscan, not Latin.

depiction of multiple children can be interpreted as a visually powerful metaphor for fertility that had been demonstrated, through divine assistance, but was exaggerated in this portrayal. Or might these be votive statues erected at the end of the reproductive phase of a woman's life, after she had given birth multiple times over the years, even if perhaps not all the children lived to maturity? In this case, a woman's social identity as a prolific mother and guarantor of family lineage would be a status worth celebrating in this way.

Throughout central Italy, there was a 'boom' from the fourth century BC in the production of votive terracotta figurines of couples with an infant and of women with a baby, and this surely was related to the increasingly important social aspect of childbirth and childcare, with the emphasis being on motherhood and the wellbeing and continuity of the family. The family unit is also stressed in terracotta figurines from the fourth and third centuries BC, such as those from Votive Deposit III at Satricum which depict up to seven members of a familial group (Bouma, 1996: 270, figs 11a-b). The Capuan mothers with multiple children are to be located within this context. The clear emphasis here is on fecundity, reproduction, and the gift of children, and that can include a whole family of children, from newborn to several years old. But to whom were these offerings given? A variety of goddesses has been suggested over the last decades, but all names are speculative. These include some of the 'usual suspects', such as Uni, Damia, Juno, Venus Iovia, Mefitis, Fortuna, Ceres, Bona Dea, and Eileithyia.[16] Mater Matuta has also been proposed (Sampaolo, 2010: 9), although the only other site in Campania at which she is attested is Cales in the Roman imperial period (*CIL* X 4650, *CIL* X 4660 = *AE* 1929, 166, *AE* 1987, 250; Bruun, 2014: 86-7; Laird, 2015: 262-3). And as a Latin goddess, Mater Matuta seems out of place here in the Oscan city of Capua, particularly in the period before any Roman involvement. In my opinion, it is unlikely that she was worshipped here; any other suggestions for potential gods would be pure guess-work, and pursuing them is, I think, a bit fruitless. At any rate, whoever was worshipped here would have to have had resonance with this Campanian population and, I think, be indigenous to this region. We do not find this particular expression of votive behaviour anywhere else, so it is local to Capua. As we have seen earlier, gods and goddesses shared sanctuaries, and many of them seemed to have a variety of specialisms and could have healed or helped the worshipper in need. With Morel (1991: 167), it seems to me unwise to refer to a sanctuary as that of 'this' or 'that' god or goddess, when it is more likely that a sanctuary 'is the place of crystallisation'. That there was another god worshipped at the Fondo Patturelli site, at least in the late fourth and third centuries BC, after Capua was turned into a Roman prefecture, is indicated by the so-called *iuvilas* inscriptions in Oscan on terracotta and tufa stelae naming Jupiter Flagius, an Oscan cult that was widespread in Campania (Franchi De Bellis, 1981; Crawford, 2011: 415-6, no. 20). That being said, it is unlikely that the mother statues were dedicated to Jupiter Flagius, as the *iuvilas* inscriptions seem to stop before 211 BC, when the office of the *meddix*, a Capuan magistracy named in the inscriptions, was abolished by the Roman victors, whilst the dedications of the stone statues continue to the end of the second

[16] Damia and Bona Dea: Koch, 1907: 366-7; Damia: Adriani, 1974: 32; Bonfante, 1984: 1; Hera/Uni/Juno: Heurgon, 1942: 369; Uni: Trotta, 1991; Fortuna or Uni or Venus/Iovia: Coarelli, 1995: 374, 381, 387; Demeter/Kore/Ceres: Nava, 2012: 33; Uni/Mefitis/Ceres: Sampaolo, 2010: 9; Artemis/Hekate/Mefitis: Migliore, 2011: 31; Fortuna/Mater Matuta/Mefitis: Petrillo, 2016: 385-6.

century or the early first century BC (Fronda, 2007).

A variety of different gods and goddesses may have been present within the sanctuary precinct at Capua, although we lack the structural evidence to understand the layout of the place and, therefore, confirm this. The existence of more than one god or goddess here, however, might be reflected in the most recent work on the roof terracottas. Grassi and Sampaolo (2006), in studying the material retrieved in the excavations in 1995, recognised terracottas from the main temple and from various other small buildings (edifici minori o sacelli) –about four of them in total – from the second quarter of the sixth century and the early fifth century BC. They suggest that these might have been chapels built for specific deities or specific cult aspects by various Capuan elites. Architectural terracottas also of the Hellenistic period were found, indicating that there were further additions and alterations to the sanctuary. The complex of structures devoted to different cults, spanning the period from the late sixth century to the second century BC, in the sanctuary at Monte d'Argento on the right bank of the Garigliano provides an appropriate parallel (Livi, 2006: 109-11). A sanctuary at Falerii (santuario dello Scasato), for which no name evidence at all survives, but with various sacred buildings reflecting a concentration of different cults, provides another (Comella, 1986: 199-202).

We can only speculate how the tufa mothers of Capua were displayed in the sanctuary. We know from contemporary Greek sanctuaries that votive offerings could be suspended from the trees (votive plaques) or set up on pedestals or podia (statues, statuettes, vessels); also textiles and garments were deposited in sanctuary treasuries and used to dress cult statues or hang from trees in the open courtyard, as temple inventories and votive reliefs demonstrate (Brøns, 2015: 51-2; Carroll, 2017: 18-22). It appears that when the *iuvilas* stelae were being erected in the Fondo Patturelli sanctuary at Capua, the precinct contained a sacred grove, a *lúvkeí* in Oscan (*lucus* in Latin), as an inscribed text on a stele reveals (Franchi de Bellis, 1981: 179-85, no. 24; Crawford, 2011: 434-5, no. 29; Bouke van der Meer, 2015: 104). The tufa statues, therefore, may also have had stood in a wooded setting. At Gravisca, as we have seen, offerings could also be deposited in the rooms of cult buildings. Most, if not all, of the mothers at Capua, have a very flat back, suggesting that they were placed against a wall or something similar for frontal viewing. This could have been around the altar (known very sketchily from nineteenth-century drawings) or around the temple or chapels or around the precinct walls. We can imagine the numbers of these votive gifts increasing over time and successively filling the sanctuary at Capua. The 'busy' display of mothers and their babies, all brightly painted, must have been very impressive and a very evocative expression of local religious identity, a point further explored below.

ITALIAN COMMONALITY AND CAPUAN SINGULARITY IN VOTIVE PRACTICE

In southern Etruria, Latium, and northern Campania from the fourth to the first centuries BC, the gods offered broadly similar services, and worshippers seeking assistance in a variety of personal matters and physical needs tapped into a pool of divinities who could answer prayers and provide the desired help. In sanctuaries and shrines, principal deities co-existed with various other gods and goddesses, many of whom remain nameless to us. The archaeological finds in these sanctuaries show a wide range, but also a fairly standard repertoire, of terracotta ex-votos offered to the gods in thanks for services provided. Of particular importance are the anatomical votives, and, in regard to female fertility, especially those in the form of wombs, breasts and swaddled infants. After assessing the

available evidence, the possibility of specific female deities functioning exclusively or primarily as 'fertility goddesses', or the existence of singularly focused 'fertility cults', appears to me highly unlikely, given the polyvalent nature of Roman gods. Moreover, anatomical votives of female and male body parts, as well as swaddled infants, are found together in many sanctuary deposits of female and male gods, suggesting that early Roman cults were not as gender-exclusive as has been claimed in the past.

It is very difficult to know what the commissioning, purchase, and dedication of votive offerings might have meant in terms of financial outlay, especially since they belong to different periods and are made of different materials. Presumably, a terracotta swaddled infant votive or uterus would not have been the costliest gift, but, as Fay Glinister has suggested, the production of terracotta ex-votos was not entirely without trouble or expense (Glinister, 2006: 27-8). Modern consumers may view terracotta as inexpensive, but in Classical antiquity, the costs of fuel and a lengthy process of preparation enhanced their value, and many of the terracotta votives are beautifully done (Turfa, 2006: 72). Such items may not have been accessible to the poor, although in the modern scholarly literature they seem to be referred to as gifts of the common folk or the poor (contra Scopacasa, 2015: 7; Rous, 2009: 67). Recke (2013: 1074) states, quite rightly, that it 'is questionable…to what extent we may read an indication of lower social status of dedicants from the low value of the material and its less costly manufacturing process'. The terracotta body parts, swaddled infants, toddlers, and figurines of suckling mothers in small format found at Capua correspond well with the terracotta votive phenomenon common to other central Italian sites at this time. But the Capuan tufa statues of mothers and children are another, and singular, version of the popular votive offering. It is impossible to know how much more the dedication of a stone statue, whether small or large, might have cost the worshipper, but the Capuan mothers and their babies certainly cannot have been cheap or mass-produced items. Each one is different, and each one is hand carved from quarried stone, finished, smoothed, and painted.

Presumably there was a hierarchy of expense signalled by the varying sizes of the statues, the largest and most elaborate being obviously the costliest. In Capua, these tufa statues also have a very few imitations in terracotta which are almost as large as some of the taller stone statues, up to 1.05 m in height, and certainly larger than some of the very modest stone effigies. Interestingly, although most of the contemporaneous terracotta figurines depict a mother with one infant, one large terracotta figure (75 cm tall) now in Copenhagen (Fig. 5) shows a mother with four swaddled infants in her lap (Fischer-Hansen, 1992: cat. no. 123). The Capuan singularity in the depiction of multiple babies in stone statues is, therefore, repeated here in this presumably less costly material, and this reinforces the idea that there was a hierarchy of expense and expression of status relevant to material, size, and elaboration of the images. The stone mothers indirectly reflect the richness of the Capuans known to the Romans, and they represent an outlay of wealth that was deemed worthwhile to the donor. The tufa statues with surviving inscriptions indicate that their commissioners and dedicants were women, although we cannot rule out the possibility, of course, that some images might have been set up by mother and father jointly as parents. Given the cost and logistics involved, presumably a woman would commission and dedicate only one of these images in her lifetime, either after the birth of her (first?) child or at the end of her reproductive years.

Temples and cults relied on donations (*stipes*) from worshippers; these included not only ex-votos, but also cash gifts, fees, and the sponsorship of temple buildings (Bendlin, 2000: 132-3; Rüpke, 2013: 14).The wealthy dedicants of Capua contributed to the sanctuary with these stone statues, but probably also with gifts of money and donations, which leave no trace in the archaeological record, and they might have been responsible for the building of the several chapels within the sanctuary, as the study of the roof terracottas suggests. A series of Latin inscriptions of the late second and early first centuries BC related to the *magistri campani*, local associations who looked after temples and cults in Capua, further represent examples of local euergetism not directed or sponsored by Rome (Sacchi, 2012: 285-8; Miano 2015: 266-7). In this context of continued local benefaction and cult activity, the deposition and display of the statues was a way for Capuan women, as pivotal actors in cult activities, to express their wealth and social status, and that of their family, in the community, both in the period when Capua was independent of Rome and in the difficult times after it lost that independence.

In general, textual and artefactual evidence connected with fertility, childbirth, and infant health can help us understand how women and parents in antiquity sought divine assistance to ensure conception and to safeguard the survival of their children. In the past, women have been rather marginalized in studies of Roman religion because of their limited role in public life, and their participation in ritual is poorly understood, especially in the early Roman period (Hemelrijk, 2009; Gaspar, 2012). But epigraphic evidence supports the increasing realisation that female participation 'was not a marginal component of Roman religious practice' (Schultz, 2006a: 93). Relevant for this discussion on the integration of women in religion are the inscriptions on votive plaques, statue bases, and funerary monuments that name women who were officials (*magistrae*) and donors in the cult of Mater Matuta in Pesaro, Cora, Cales, Praeneste, and Beirut. Although men and women might have been donors of votive offerings to Mater Matuta, these inscriptions especially confirm beyond doubt that women could and did act on their own as cult participants, cult officials, and supporters. Surviving female dedications elsewhere to other deities, such as Juno Lucina, Bona Dea, Fortuna, Hercules and other male gods also provide evidence for women's religious activities (Schultz, 2006a: 30-1, 52-3). If the boundaries between the religious and the political were blurred, as Hemelrijk (2009: 267) suggests, there are implications for women's integration in Roman civic life as well. At Capua, this might be especially relevant. As noted earlier, the statues may represent an effective metaphor for demonstrated fertility, but there might also be a more 'political' dimension of fertility here. Perhaps the dedications also celebrated the capacity of the women of this city to breed new citizens of Capua, the importance of which might have been heightened after Rome took Capua in 211 BC, abolished its government, deprived the inhabitants of their civic rights, and confiscated their land.[17]

It has been suggested that Italian terracotta votives in the first century BC made way for Roman inscribed stone and marble monuments as offerings recording the fulfilment of vows (Schultz, 2006a: 100-2). The Capuan mothers, again, are special in this context because of their materiality and their inscribed messages. The material of tufa represented a durable celebration of the relationship between the suppliant and the divine, and the inscriptions publicly stating the fulfilment of a vow or the donation of a gift in the Latin

[17] I thank Daniele Miano for suggesting this intriguing idea.

language in the dedications of the late second or early first century BC reflect the growing importance in Roman religion of permanently recording a ritual act. But the statues are also eloquent testimony to a strong and vibrant local identity that was undeterred by subjugation to Rome. We do not know what happened to this Capuan sanctuary in 211 BC when the city was taken by Rome. Historical sources indicate that the nearby sanctuary of Diana Tifatina on Monte Tifata, which was of pivotal symbolic and religious importance for the Capuan community, suffered at the hands of the Romans: its ancient sacred deer –'the deity of the city'- was slaughtered by the Roman general Fulvius (Silius Italicus, *Pun.* 13.115-37). Silius Italicus wrote, however, that Capua was not set on fire and destroyed, although both temples and houses were plundered by the soldiers (*Pun.* 13.314-25, 348-60; Stek, 2009: 1-2, 29). At the very least, therefore, the sanctuary on the Fondo Patturelli site might have had its temple treasury and objects of precious metals taken. Stek (2009: 4) noted that Italic communities often redefined themselves when faced with pivotal changes after the Roman conquest, cult places and religious ritual being strong symbols for defining a community's position in the new order. Despite Rome's punishment meted out to Capua, the sack of the city, and the loss of independence in the late third century BC, the indigenous and pre-Roman tradition of dedicating thank offerings in the form of stone mothers with children as thank offerings continued right up until the early first century BC, only now with Latin inscriptions. These ex-votos thereby demonstrate the importance of women in the religious lives of their families and the community, and they represent a resilient expression of Capua's religious and civic identity.

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Abbreviations

AE *L'Année épigraphique*

CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1863 -) Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften

ILS Dessau, H. (1892-1916) *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. Berlin: Weidmann

SEG Dittenberger, W. (1883) *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*. Leipzig: S. Hirzelium

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Fig. 1 Votive offerings of anatomical terracotta votives and ceramic vessels from the sanctuary of Feronia at *Lucus Feroniae*. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of the Antiquarium e Area Archeologica di Lucus Feroniae.

Fig. 2 Terracotta wombs from Vulci. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of MiBACT. Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia.

Fig. 3 Terracotta swaddled infant from Italy. Photo Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam.

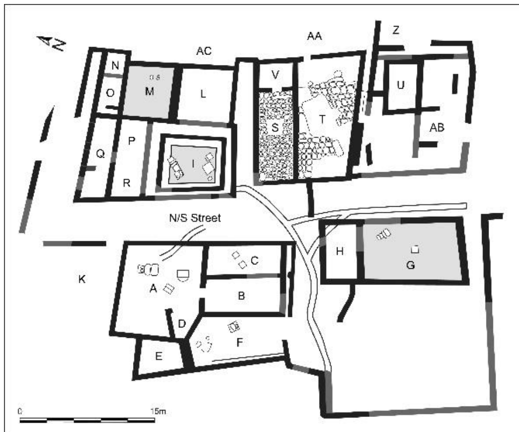

Fig. 4 Plan of the sanctuary at Gravisca. The grey areas are those in which many terracotta ex-votos were recovered. Plan by I. De Luis.

Fig. 5 Terracotta figure of a women with four swaddled infants, from Capua; height 75 cm. Photo Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen.

Fig. 6 Tufa statues of mothers and infants of varying sizes, Capua. The statue closest to the viewer is 85 cm in height. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of the Ministero dei beni e

delle attività culturali e del turismo Polo Museale della Campania.

Fig. 7 Tufa statue of a mother with five swaddled infants and with traces of the original plaster and paint. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of the Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo Polo Museale della Campania.

Fig. 8 Face of a mother statue with surviving plaster skim and colour. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of the Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo Polo Museale della Campania.

Fig. 9 Tufa statue of a mother with four swaddled infants, from Capua. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of MiBACT. Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia.

Fig. 10 Tufa statue of a mother with twelve swaddled infants, Capua. Drawing by I. De Luis.

Fig. 11 Tufa statue of a mother breastfeeding her swaddled infant, from Capua. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of MiBACT. Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia.

Fig. 12 Detail of a tufa statue of a mother with a swaddled infant wearing a bonnet. Photo M. Carroll, with permission of the Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo Polo Museale della Campania.

Fig. 13 Tufa statue of a mother with two swaddled infants and two young children, from Capua. Photo Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz.

Fig. 14 Tufa statue of a mother with eight swaddled infants, from Capua; height 96 cm. The inscription names the donor as Sequnda Solania. Some letters of the first name, Sequnda, are partially broken off and some are inscribed behind the woman's head which is carved in the round. Drawing by I. De Luis.

Fig. 15 Tufa statue of a mother with six swaddled infants, from Capua; height 1.02 m. The inscription reveals that it was a votive offering as part of a vow by Quarta Confleia. Drawing by I. De Luis.