

RODOLFO LANCIANI AND THE SOUTHWEST QUIRINAL: FROM EXCAVATION TO THE FORMA URBIS ROMAE

by Brian Brennan

In 1885, during excavations on the southwest slope of the Quirinal Hill, two magnificent Hellenistic bronzes were discovered by Rodolfo Lanciani. Although Lanciani dated the burial of the bronzes to the era of the barbarian attacks on the city of Rome, here it will be argued that the bronzes may have been excavated elsewhere by clandestine diggers and then reburied on the Quirinal slope, in a stash of robbers' loot. Utilizing newly located archival sources that shed fresh light on the excavation, and interrogating Lanciani's published accounts of it, this paper presents a case study of this small area of the hill. This leads in turn to an investigation of Lanciani's practice as a cartographer in plate XXII of his Forma Urbis Romae where the hillside was subsequently depicted. Plate XXII has a wider relevance for any user of the FUR because a close analysis of this one plate suggests that Lanciani's representation of the southwest Quirinal is dominated by a cartographic rhetoric. This is composed of significant omissions, obfuscations and graphic hierarchies all of which are employed to influence and manipulate the reader. It is argued that plate XXII of Lanciani's map is a persuasive rendering rather than a disinterested record of the ancient structures that were found buried there. This has significance for any reader of the FUR.

Nel 1885, durante scavi sulle pendici sud-ovest del Quirinale, due magnifici bronzi ellenistici sono state trovati da Rodolfo Lanciani. Infine, anche se Lanciani aveva datato sepoltura dei bronzi all'epoca degli attacchi barbari sulla città nella tarda antichità, qui si sosterrà che la sepoltura dei due bronzi potrebbe essere stata moderna. C'è una quantità di prove circostanziali che suggeriscono che i bronzi potrebbero stati scavati altrove da scavatori clandestini. Inoltre, è del tutto probabile che questi furono risepolti più di recente qui sul pendice del Quirinale in una scorta di bottino ladri. Utilizzando alcune fonti d'archivio recentemente ubicati che brillano luce fresca su questo scavo e interrogando il racconto pubblicato di Lanciani, questo scritto presenta un caso di studio di questa piccola parte della collina. Questo porta a sua volta ad un'indagine sulla pratica di Lanciani come cartografo nella tavola XXII della sua Forma Urbis Romae dove la collina è stata successivamente raffigurata. Nel Tavola XXII la raffigurazione di questa zona della collina è dominata da una retorica cartografica. Questo è composto da omissioni significative, offuscamenti e gerarchie degli elementi grafici, che servono a influenzare e manipolare il lettore. Tavola XXII si rivela essere un resoconto persuasivo piuttosto che un registro disinteressato delle antiche strutture rinvenute la. Questo studio di caso ha un'ampia rilevanza per qualsiasi utente della Forma Urbis Romae.

Rodolfo Lanciani's multilayered map of Rome, the *Forma Urbis Romae* (FUR; 1893–1901), remains the indispensable guide to the ancient structures that lie beneath the present city. Its authority appears to be built upon the dated *Scavi*, *BullCom*, *CIL* and ancient source reference annotations that are scattered intermittently across its sheets. Through these, Lanciani plots the progress of excavation down to his own times when the face of the city, the capital of the

new Italy, was rapidly changing. Yet while the *FUR* has been rightly acclaimed as a prodigious feat of scholarship, from time to time researchers working on different areas of the city have expressed some doubt about the accuracy of some of Lanciani's representations.

Kim J. Hartswick (2004: 144), for example, voiced unease about Lanciani's placement of two gardens in plates IX and XVI of the *FUR*. She has also convincingly demonstrated that there is no certain evidence that would support Lanciani's representation of either the *Templum Gentis Flaviae* or the *Aedes Fortunae* as they appear on plate XVI of the *FUR* (Hartswick, 2004: 144–6). For some time there was also an ongoing discussion of the accuracy of Lanciani's drawing of the Licinian tomb on the eastern edge of the city, shown on plate III of the *FUR*, as having three chambers (Kragelund, Moltesen and Østergaard, 2003: 51, 58–61). In that instance, it was only Frances Van Keuren's discovery of documents in the Archivio Centrale dello Stato relating to the excavation that finally established that the *FUR* drawing of the Licinian tomb chambers was indeed trustworthy (Van Keuren et al., 2003).

The present paper, a case study also based on newly located documents in the Archivio Centrale dello Stato, as well as Lanciani's popular publications, re-examines his 1885 excavations on the southwestern slopes of the Quirinal Hill and his subsequent representation of them in plate XXII of the *FUR*. This is intended to serve as a portal to a wider discussion of the practice of archaeology in post-Unification Italy and, in particular, Lanciani's own methods of working. An interrogation of Lanciani's published accounts when placed against the surviving archival records allows us better to appreciate the nature of the material that the celebrated archaeologist chose to include or to omit in his representations of this area within his *Forma Urbis Romae*.

The area we are focusing on here is small, but it will be argued that an area-limited case study, starting from the excavation itself, may contribute to a fuller understanding of Lanciani's cartographic practice in his construction of the *FUR*. Although the utility of Lanciani's plotting of the ancient remains across the area of the city has received lavish praise, his overall methodology as a 'scientific' cartographer has not received detailed investigation. This is surprising, because since the 1980s the whole concept of detached and value-free 'scientific' mapping has been seriously challenged by the most recent scholarship on cartography, much of it written under the influence of the pioneering work of Brian Harley. Instead of accepting a map as an objective form of knowledge, writers on cartography have approached a map as a text, a visual creation, an intellectual or social construction, as a form of rhetoric or an expression of power. Further, the meaning of a map is rarely seen as fixed, but rather treated as a series of negotiations involving the patron, the creator, the medium and the reader/viewer.¹ It will be shown that in the case of

¹ Wood and Fels, 1986; Harley, 1988, 1989; Monmonier, 1991; Wood 1992, 2002, 2010; Harley and Laxton, 2001; Pickles, 2004.

Lanciani's plate XXII of the *FUR*, covering his 1885 excavations on the southwest slope of the Quirinal, such critical approaches have a great deal to offer.

THE MOMENTOUS DISCOVERIES OF 1885

In 1885 the short campaign of rescue archaeology that Lanciani was conducting on the southwestern slope of the Quirinal brought the archaeologist immediate international fame. On the site that was being cleared for Rome's Teatro Drammatico (Fig. 1), he unearthed, in succession, two magnificent Greek bronzes: a standing athletic figure, the so-called 'Hellenistic Prince',² and a remarkable seated boxer bearing the wounds of his last bout.³ After restoration,



Fig. 1. The Teatro Drammatico Nazionale building, 1886, by Francesco Azzurri 1885. The embanked Colonna gardens and the side of the Colonna palace can be seen on the left. Photo 1910.

² The athletic figure (height 204 cm, height holding a lance 244 cm) is currently displayed in the Palazzo Massimo of the Rome National Museum (MNR inv. no. 1049; see Figs 3, 8 below). Dated stylistically to the first half of the second century BC, the statue has been variously interpreted as an athlete, a Hellenistic prince, or a Roman general cast in heroic terms (Ambrogi, 2013a).

³ The statue of the seated boxer (height, without base, 128 cm) is now in the Palazzo Massimo (MNR inv. no. 1055; see Figs 4, 5 below). The statue has been variously dated, from the fourth century to the first century BC (Ambrogi, 2013b), and a large and varied interpretative literature has grown around it. The statue of the 'Terme Boxer' has commonly been interpreted as a victor monument but some have suggested that it may be a figure from a narrative statuary group.

the two statues became star attractions in Rome's new Terme Museum and Lanciani gained increasing celebrity at home and abroad.

The excavations took place within part of the garden of the former convent of San Silvestro that covered the top of this southwestern part of the hill and extended west, at one point, down to what was then the via Quattro Novembre, and is now the via Nazionale. This was all state land, and the upper part of the garden was retained under the control of the military engineers who had been given some former convent buildings there. The theatre was to be built downhill on a narrow site, adjacent to land controlled by the military engineers, as well as the Colonna gardens on its northern side, and the Palazzo Campanari, which had been built between 1878 and 1883, on its southern side. Today, the 1930s INAIL building stands on the site (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The present-day INAIL building, 1932, by Armando Brasini on the site of the Teatro Drammatico, which was demolished in 1929. Photo: author.

Documents relating to the excavation, newly located in the Archivio Centrale del Stato, are especially significant because Lanciani appears not to have lodged with the authorities any sketches, plans or other materials for this site. This was irregular because by the 1880s such lodgement was routinely required of employees by both the relevant municipal and state authorities. Further, Lanciani did not register any of his finds from the site, even the great bronze statues, in the *Registro dei trovamenti* as required by the Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma, despite the fact that he was at that time the secretary of that body. There is much to suggest that by early 1885 Lanciani was overworked and in a state of nervous exhaustion (Dixon, 2016: 2). This perhaps may explain his inattention to such requirements.

In 1888 another archaeologist, Luigi Borsari, who was investigating the Servian Wall on the Quirinal behind the Teatro Drammatico site, recorded his frustration at only having from 1885 ‘the simple announcement of the discovery’ to work with. He also reports that he found that all of the drawings of structures on the site had been lost (*BullCom.* 1888: 15). Lanciani’s extant notebooks, now in the Vatican Library, contain no drawings of the structures on the Teatro Drammatico site and there is scant information on the site in the relevant notebook held in the Vatican Library, Codex 13036 (Buonocore, 1997: 146–7). All this stands in stark contrast to the way in which Lanciani operated at Ostia in the 1880s. There, measured drawings were made for him and detailed reports were lodged, as is evidenced by Lanciani’s Ostia files in the Archivio Centrale del Stato (ACS MPI Divisione antichità e scavi, b.147 f.15 Scavi 1889 campagne condotte dal Lanciani. Relazioni sui ritrovamenti 1880–1889). The lack of documentation from the southwest Quirinal in 1885, and his non-compliance in not listing significant finds from that site in the *Registro dei trovamenti* lends credence to some of the charges of irregularities which were levelled against Lanciani by his enemies. In sum, these led to his being forced to resign from the state archaeological service in 1890.

Although in his published works Lanciani gave a roseate picture of the municipal and state archaeological services and their achievements, there were tensions between the two. Lanciani himself was in a particularly difficult position as he worked for both. Further, he found the transition from the papal archaeological service, where he was trained as a young man, to be a difficult one. As Susan Dixon has observed, a ‘clash of habits’ was a growing pain of the state archaeological service (Dixon, 2021a: 25–7). Most significantly, Lanciani’s non-compliance, and differences with his colleagues, saw a campaign led by Felice Barnabei to have him removed, because of alleged irregularities in the discharge of his professional duties (Barnabei and Delpino, 1991: 464–70; Dixon, 2016). These charges levelled against Lanciani included that he had withheld information from official records so that he could publish it himself abroad in books and newspaper articles for his own personal gain and that he had retained drawings that were the property of the state. He was also accused of having worked in the interests of foreign museums to order to export antiquities, perhaps illegally (Palombi, 2006: 23–47; Dixon, 2016).

Certainly, Lanciani's reports on the 1885 site published in the *Notizie degli Scavi* were brief, nowhere near as full as those that he provided to English readers of the London journal *The Athenaeum*. The most complete synthesis of information about the excavation remains Lanciani's exposition in a chapter entitled 'Loss and recovery of works of art' in his *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, written for a popular audience and published in Boston in 1888, and London in 1891. The book represents a reworking of the lectures Lanciani delivered during his successful American tour of 1886–7 (Dixon, 2021b: 456, 461, 472). By then Lanciani had emerged as a celebrity on the lecture circuit, and accounts of his enthralled audiences had filled the American press.

Lanciani's 1888 book that came out of the lecture tour is particularly valuable, for in its preface he provides for the reader a boastful assessment of the achievements of archaeology in Rome in the period 1871–88. This is at times a markedly quantitative exposition. For instance, he lists the numbers of statues and inscriptions found since Rome became the capital of Italy and the number found in an earlier comparable period.

In his original notification of the find of the standing athletic figure (*NSc* Feb. 1885: 42), Lanciani reported that this 'very important discovery' which he described as 'a magnificent bronze statue' had been made 'at six metres below the brow of the Quirinal' (Fig. 3). However, he provided no date or time for this. Writing in *The Athenaeum* on 26 December 1885 he was likewise silent about these details (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 177–8). Then, in 1888, perhaps drawing on an informant, or a written source, he was able to furnish a date and time. He now stated confidently that the statue was found 'on Saturday February 7, 1885, toward sunset' (Lanciani, 1888: 303). Yet this date given by Lanciani cannot be relied upon either, because it is contradicted by newly found documents in the ACS that establish that while it was found at dusk on 8 February, the statue was immediately excavated during the night of 8–9 February.

Lanciani had not been present at the time the statue was unearthed, and his 1888 description of events surrounding the find is somewhat ambiguous for he often speaks of buried bronzes as being in a place of concealment: 'The news had been kept secret by the contractor of the works until the following day and when the government officials met on the spot the statue had already been removed from its place of concealment' (Lanciani, 1888: 303). Indeed, Susan Dixon has very reasonably suggested that there may be a more nefarious backstory to this account and that some of the excavation crew may have been attempting to hide the statue from the inspectors (Dixon, 2021a: 62). Such a reading of Lanciani's report is certainly very plausible, especially given the thefts of prized antiquities that did occur in 1885 on the site of his excavation of the Licinian tomb (Van Keuren et al., 2003: 132, 134, 135–6).

A newly located document in the ACS casts suspicion on the works contractor. Other documents in the same folder reveal, however, that the site workers and the municipal guard were to be given graded financial rewards for their roles in the



Fig. 3. Bronze statue of a standing athlete, now on display at Palazzo Massimo (MNR inv. no. 1049). Photo: author. By courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano.

safe excavation and subsequent protection of the statue after its discovery.⁴ The bronze statue of a standing athletic figure that the workmen had unearthed was immediately recognized as a work of great significance and enormous value. Lanciani, in one of his ‘Notes from Rome’ for *The Athenaeum*, wrote of it as ‘a nude athlete, or at least a man of the athletic type in full development of his strength’ (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 303).

⁴ ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII, folder ‘Scoperte nell area del nuovo teatro nazionale’ — Authorization by Giuseppe Fiorelli of graded payments to five workers dated 22 February 1885 — letter from Luigi Villa to Director General Fiorelli, one page, dated 21 February 1885; letter from Luigi Villa to Fiorelli, four pages, dated 26 February 1885; letter from L. Bocca, region VII, to Cesare Marincola, commander of the Guardia della Antichità for Rome, regarding the municipal guard Luigi Villa.

THE FIND OF THE STATUE OF THE SEATED BOXER

The *Notizie degli Scavi* for June of the same year carried a report by Lanciani that a ‘marvellous bronze statue’ of a seated ‘fighter’ had been found on the site (Fig. 4), in the garden of the ex-convent of San Silvestro al Quirinale, ‘not far from where the other [bronze] had earlier been found’ (NSc 1885: 223). No detail of the depth at which the bronze had been found was given. A staged photograph was taken (Fig. 5) but its reliability is questionable (Hemingway, 2013; 2015: 71).

In the July 1885 announcement in the *Notizie degli Scavi*, no date is given for the find and no description of the remarkable statue is provided. The first full description of the boxer statue only appeared in December 1885 in *The Athenaeum*, where Lanciani gave his English readers a detailed account of the find of both statues (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 177–9). In this article we have the first mention that the boxer statue was found in April ‘of the present year’, and a month after the discovery of the standing athlete (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 178). However, in his 1888 book where Lanciani states that the standing statue was found on 7 February, he also states that the boxer was found ‘about a



Fig. 4. Bronze statue of the seated boxer, now on display at Palazzo Massimo (MNR inv. no. 1055). Photo: author. By courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano.



Fig. 5. Excavation photograph, 1885, showing the statue of the seated boxer at the centre right. From the Lanciani photographic collection, Rome, Biblioteca dell'Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, fondo Lanciani, inv. no. 32636, Roma XI 53.20. Photo: Alamy © Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, Rome.

month later' (Lanciani, 1888: 304), thus placing the discovery at some time in March, not April.

In his *Athenaeum* article of December 1885 Lanciani did not mention whether or not he was present when the statue was first found. It is only in Lanciani's 1888 book (1888: 304) that he reveals that he was not in fact present when the first indication of the buried statue of the seated figure of the boxer was glimpsed. There he claims he had been immediately notified 'when only the head of the figure appeared above the ground' (1888: 304) and thus he was able to be present when the statue, which represented a bearded boxer, was disinterred. This is at variance with Lanciani's earlier official report in that it was the sudden appearance of the 'left leg' of the statue that first signalled the presence of the boxer (*NSc* June 1885: 223).

THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN

As early as December 1885 Lanciani had come to speak about the structure into which he had been digging as being below the podium on which had once stood the Temple of the Sun, built by the Emperor Aurelian in the third century AD. He

wrote: ‘the result of the excavations shows that half of the area was occupied by the dependencies of the Temple of the Sun and the other half by a beautiful private house, the existence of which was absolutely unknown, belonging to one M. Ulpius Exhodus’ (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 177). However, Lanciani in his 1888 book did admit that the limits of the ancient buildings in the area, including the Temple of the Sun built by Aurelian, were ‘so imperfectly known’ that ‘we could not tell how large a portion of each was to be discovered on the new building’ (Lanciani, 1888: 298). Yet this did not stop him from then writing about ‘the trench which had been opened through the lower foundations of the Temple of the Sun to conceal the statue of the boxer’ (Lanciani, 1888: 305).

In a later book, *The Destruction of Rome* published in English in 1889, Lanciani again referred to the find-spot of the boxer as having been under the Temple of the Sun (Lanciani, 1899: 66). This is most surprising because five years earlier, on plate XVI of his own *Forma Urbis Romae*, a part of which had already been published in the fascicules sent to subscribers by 1894,⁵ he had located the southwest edge of the large platform of the temple 80 m north of the Teatro Drammatico site. That map showed that the southernmost wall of the great Temple of the Sun itself lay 120 m further north of where he had been working in 1885. Thus Lanciani, writing in a popular publication for his English-speaking audience, was prepared to keep what was originally a mistake. Now it was maintained as a convenient fiction, still a part of the celebrated story that he had been telling his readers since 1885.

THE SECOND-CENTURY HOUSE

In Lanciani’s 1885 account of the Teatro Drammatico dig, the archaeologist told his *Athenaeum* readers that, apart from the Temple of the Sun, a ‘beautiful private house’ occupied half of the area. The house, ‘belonging to one M. Ulpius Exhodus’, rose below the substructures of the Temple of the Sun, in steps or terraces. It was destroyed for some unknown reason ‘at the end of the second century’. Lanciani, noting ‘all the works of art discovered among its ruins’, commented that they exhibited an ‘exquisite taste and finish’ (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 177).

This is most puzzling, because the name Ulpius Exhodus is not found on any object such as a lead pipe or pottery or marble fragment in any of the two inventory lists of materials found on this section of the southwest Quirinal during the years 1883 to 1885.⁶ Such a name is nowhere attested and Ulpius

⁵ The topographer Christian Hülsen, 1894: 380, n.1, lists the contents of the just recently available fascicules. The next year, in his own article on the Temple of the Sun, Hülsen referred twice to plate XVI of Lanciani’s *FUR* (Hülsen, *BullCom* 1895: 45, 52).

⁶ ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII folder ‘Scoperte nell’area del nuovo teatro nazionale’; ‘Nota degli oggetti di arte e di antichità rivenuti nelle fondazioni del Teatro Nazionale

Exhodus is never mentioned by Lanciani after 1885. Elon Heymans is surely correct in his suggestion that Lanciani confused the owner of the house with M. Ulpius Euhodus whose funerary stele was found elsewhere and which he himself later published in 1886 (Heymans, 2013: 241 n. 18). In the 1885 *Athenaeum* article the name was merely misspelled.

In Lanciani's 1888 book we again read of a magnificent house that had been built on the steep slope below the temple platform. It had been destroyed at the end of the second century. While luxurious frescoes, mosaic and marble floors and marble staircases are mentioned, Lanciani devotes considerable attention to a fountain of *nero antico* with a basin, which he also terms a *tazza*, 1.37 m in diameter. It featured twelve lion-head waterspouts. Such an item does not appear in either of the two inventories of finds from 1883 to 1885 held in the ACS and cited earlier. It most probably had passed to the state or municipal collections.⁷ In Lanciani's 1888 book we hear no more of M. Ulpius Exhodos/Euhodos. Now suddenly the house with all its artistic treasures belongs to 'a rather obscure personage, a freedman named Cnaeus Sergius Crater [*sic*]' (Lanciani, 1888: 299).

Lanciani explains that the evidence for ownership of the house is established by a lead pipe with Craterus' name upon it. Yet the text of this *fistula*, found at the base of the hill (*CIL* XV 7533) and here adduced by Lanciani, contains other names as well, indicating they were connected to the same pipe. Further, there is nothing there to suggest that Sergius Craterus was a freedman. It would appear that Lanciani replaced the mislocated Marcus Ulpius Euhodus with a stereotypical wealthy 'freedman' to now go with the same ostentatious house. It is however possible that Lanciani, who often was not careful in his handling of detail, once again confused Craterus with Euhodus because Euhodus had been described on his funerary stele as a freedman.

During the 1880s, five *fistulae* bearing names were reported as coming from the Teatro Drammatico site (*CIL* XV 7253, 7475, 7500b, 7533, 7611) and in 1893 another was found in the garden behind the site (*CIL* XV 1152). Then, in 1929 when the theatre was being demolished for the construction of the Cassa nazionale d'assicurazione per gl'infortuni degli operai sul lavoro, now the INAIL building, another three were salvaged (MNR inv. nos. 113273, 113274, 113277). At that time, traces of a burned ancient structure, interpreted as a 'patrician' house, were also found in the southern outdoor area of the theatre

dal giorno 2 Nov 1883 fino al rilievo del Guardiano comunale'; 'Nota degli antichi oggetti trovati nella parte demaniale dell'area del Teatro Drammatico in via Nazionale'. List from 2 Nov. 1883 to June 1885.

⁷ See ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII folder 'Scoperte nell'area del nuovo teatro nazionale', for a letter written on behalf of the president of the Archaeological Commission to the minister and the director general of antiquities on 20 October 1890, which mentions a 'tazza marmorea' that had been reintegrated from pieces, but provides no description. I have found no basin in either the MNR or Capitoline collections fitting Lanciani's 1888 description.

site where no new foundations had been laid in 1885 (Piccardo, 1929: 100). This well may be the second-century house, but given the quantity of lead pipes found both in the 1880s and in 1929 it is clearly impossible to name the owner of the house on the basis of any one of these.

LOCATING THE STRUCTURE WHERE THE STATUE FINDS WERE MADE

As we have seen, Lanciani's accounts of the excavation, written for different audiences over the years 1885–8, contain disparities in the dating of the discoveries and overall are imprecise. Elon Heymans, unconvinced by Lanciani's deficient account of the finding of the bronzes on the Teatro Drammatico site, has argued (2013: 235, 240) that the boxer and standing athlete statues that were found by Lanciani were actually excavated within the foundation walls of a totally different structure located to the east, further up the slope of the Quirinal Hill from the Teatro Drammatico site and near to the Servian Wall (Fig. 6).

Heymans's theory fails to convince for a number of reasons. Firstly, the structure he proposes was up the hill near an old shrine of Semo Sancus, and had been investigated by Lanciani earlier (Heymans, 2013: 234–5). There was no reason why Lanciani might confuse that structure with another. He certainly did not associate those particular foundation walls with the Temple of the Sun. Nor does Heymans adequately deal with Lanciani's insistence on the proximity of the podium holding up the Temple of the Sun to the find-site of the statues. Similarly, he neglects to account for the magnificent house of Sergius Craterus that Lanciani reported had occupied half of the site. The evidence for anything like that is missing from the alternative site proposed by Heymans.

Lanciani had no authorization in 1885 to investigate more widely up on that eastern part of the hill. This is strongly suggested by the newly located documents in the ACS and ASC. In the absence of large-scale plans of the archaeological site that Lanciani was actually working on in 1885, we can do a 'work around' thanks to building permission plans preserved in the ASC. This municipal archive has a series of measured plans of the building site with the theatre building on them. The plans were approved by the city authorities in July 1884. From these it can be established that the site on which Lanciani was working was an area 52 m wide and 59.5 m deep with a 4 m wide corridor of land on the south side for an emergency exit leading east for 230 m to the Piazza della Cordonata behind the Palazzo Campanari.⁸

⁸ ASC Ripartizione V. Lavori Pubblici Archivio del Comune Moderno Post Unitario Div III Architettura e fabbriche 1870–1924 Titolo 4 Teatro I.E. Prot. 2325 Teatro Drammatico Nazionale Pianta Generale.

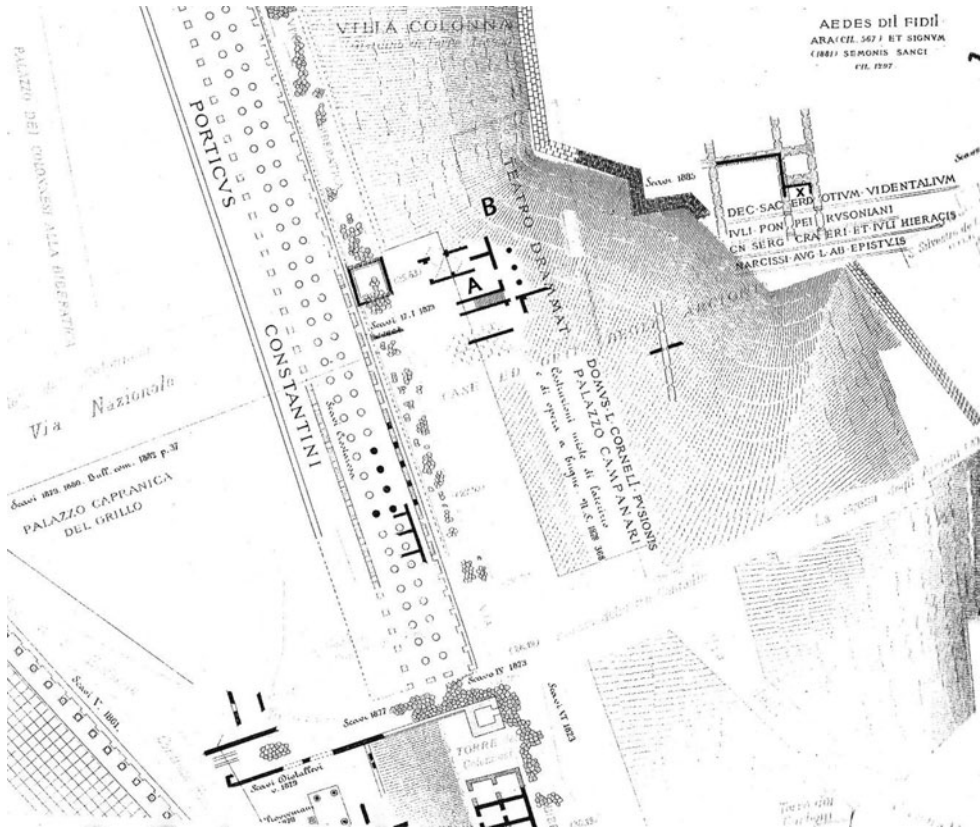


Fig. 6. Detail from Rodolfo Lanciani, *Forma Urbis Romae*, 1893–1901, pl. XXII, showing foundation walls on the Teatro Drammatico site, on the southwest side of the Quirinal Hill, found in the 1885 excavations. The find-spot of the boxer endorsed in this paper is marked ‘A’. The other site, proposed by Heymans, is higher on the hill near the remnant of the Servian Wall, and the find-spot that he suggested is marked ‘x’. The site of the 1893 excavation reported by Gatti is marked ‘B’.

Significantly there is also in the ACS a two-page letter by Lanciani to Minister Coppino and Director General Fiorelli, dated 3 May 1885, which indicates exactly where Lanciani was excavating.⁹ The letter reveals that Lanciani had already investigated some walls of a Roman structure with caverns abutting the northeastern margin of the theatre site and extending into the state-owned land of the ‘Orto di S. Silvestro’ occupied by the military engineers behind the land on which the Teatro Drammatico was to be built. In this letter, Lanciani

⁹ ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII folder ‘Scoperte nell area del nuovo teatro nazionale’ — letter to the Minister and the Director General on the subject of the search for antiquities in the area of the National Theatre.

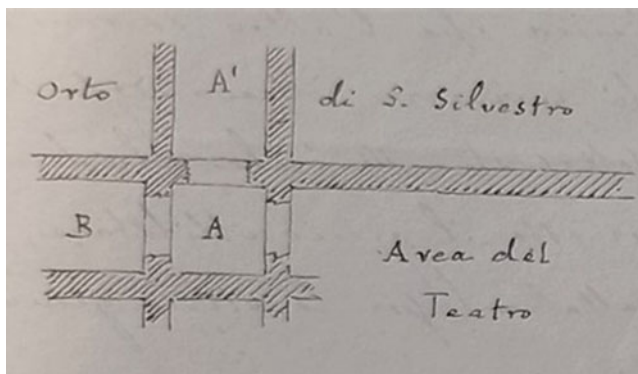


Fig. 7. Unmeasured line drawing by Lanciani in a letter to Giuseppe Fiorelli, 3 May 1885. Photo: author. Reproduced with permission Archivio Centrale dello Stato.

included in the left-hand margin an unmeasured drawing of these Roman walls and ‘grottoni’ (Fig. 7).

Although the excavation contractor had gone to the minister with a request to extend the dig in that area, Lanciani firmly advised against it, warning that the hillside behind the theatre site might become destabilized. The archaeologist also informed the minister and director general that the commander of the military engineers had mentioned that to him as he had been in talks with a contractor to undertake work in their garden area. Archival documents indicate that the engineers undertook some investigations during 1888 in the area directly behind the theatre to the east. An unmeasured line drawing of the area investigated at that time is to be found in a letter to the minister and director general discussing the area that was excavated between the theatre and one of the engineers’ buildings.¹⁰ An inventory of 31 small finds is in the ‘archivio storico’ at Palazzo Altemps.¹¹

Lanciani’s clear reluctance to go beyond the theatre site makes it highly unlikely that he had dug so far up the slope of the hillside to the east. Further, a document signed by Lanciani in January 1893, and now in the Vatican Library, indicates that when, at that time, he was digging in the courtyard garden of the Palazzo Campanari, right next door to the then-functioning Teatro Drammatico, he uncovered a foundation wall there. This, he noted, was ‘similar to those excavated in the Teatro Drammatico Nazionale and shown in the well-known photograph of the seated athlete’ (*Cod.Vat* 13036, f. 199 in Buonocore, 1997: 147). What Lanciani appears to be saying is that this wall

¹⁰ ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII folder ‘Scoperte nell’area del nuovo teatro nazionale’ — ‘Scavi sul colle Quirinale’.

¹¹ ASPA Pratiche di tutela 20/7. Id. 399, folder ‘Via Nazionale 1888. Providenti dall’area del Teatro Drammatico in via Nazionale’.

found in the garden and the other walls found right next door on the theatre site in 1885 were likely part of the same structure.

There is no good reason to believe that the bronze statues were found anywhere else but on the site of the planned Teatro Drammatico. In support of this we have the testimony of Lanciani himself, and the testimony of Villa and others relating to the discovery of the standing athlete statue. Beyond this there are also the comments by Giuseppe Fiorelli and Felice Barnabei and others about the theatre site and the adjacent land of the military engineers, all recorded in the newly located documents in the ACS.

WHEN AND WHY WERE THE BRONZES BURIED?

Lanciani, in his 1888 and 1899 books, argued with conviction that the buried bronze statues which he had uncovered on the southwestern slope had been concealed there, having been removed, ‘under apprehension of danger’, from the nearby Baths of Constantine on the Quirinal Hill to protect them from the barbarians (Lanciani, 1888: 307; 1899: 66). Lanciani’s conjecture that the bronzes of the athletes were originally displayed in the Baths of Constantine, only some 300 m from the burial spot, has been generally accepted. It is indeed attractive given the strong evidence for the display of sculpture in baths both at Rome (Varner, 2004: 217–19; Gensheimer, 2018: 40–3, 44–52, 84–9) and Constantinople (Malalas 321B; Christodoros, *Ekphrasis* 222–40). Yet the underground service areas of the nearby *Thermae Constantini* at Rome, still largely unexplored, might possibly have provided a more secure and convenient place in which to hide statues in late antiquity. Indeed, some sculptural fragments were discovered within one of these spaces as late as the sixteenth century (Lanciani, 1902–10: III, 196).¹²

Currently the only alternative to Lanciani’s theory is one proposed by Elon Heymans. He argued that the statues were a ritual construction-related deposition made in the second century at the time of the construction of the structure (Heymans, 2013: 238–40). However, that the statues were found between foundation walls that he would date to the second century AD does not prove that the statues were placed there when those walls were newly built. The location of the building aside, Heymans’s theory is not compelling because we do not know what kind of building was built on the massive foundations. Further, Heymans provides no argumentation as to why there might be a need

¹² The clearance of the site of the *Thermae Constantini* for the building of the Palazzo Rospigliosi–Palavicini and the laying out of extensive gardens in the early eighteenth century may have revealed other underground structures. Underground passages linked to the palazzo itself are recorded with a measured drawing by Luigi Rossini in his magnificent 1828 book *I Sette Colli di Roma*, fig. 8. Some of these subterranean passages were also investigated by Vilucci, 1985: 77–8, 76, fig. 4; 1986. In the future a ground-penetrating radar survey of the palazzo garden might also reveal more passages.

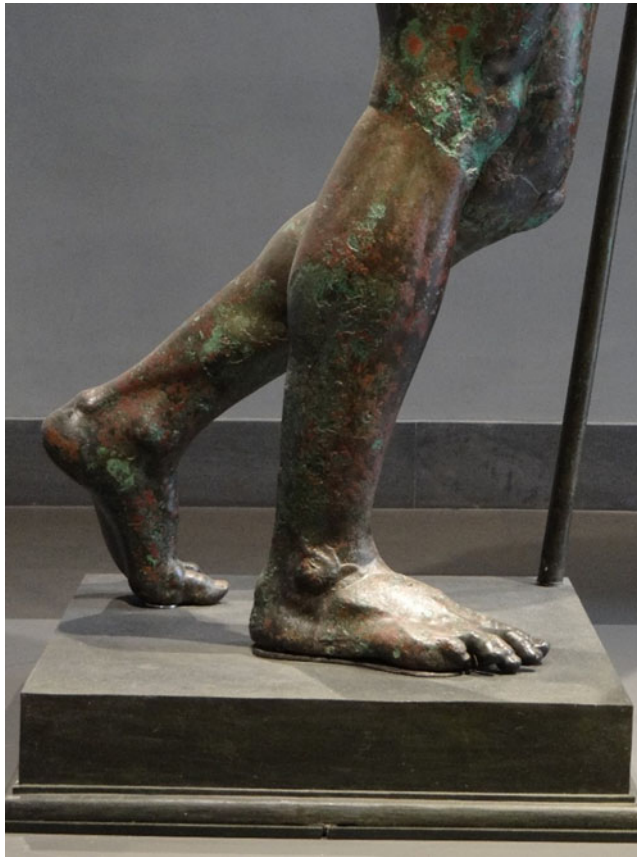


Fig. 8. Detail of the legs of the bronze standing athlete, Palazzo Massimo, showing damage. Photo: author. Courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano.

for the ritual burial of statues in relation to the construction. The majority of the other depositions adduced by Heymans to illustrate the practice elsewhere are of damaged statues, such as those struck by lightning, or ritual depositions of old statues at religious sites. Yet the Quirinal bronzes are not statues of divinities and, while the standing athlete statue showed some evidence of structural damage (Fig. 8), the boxer was found in remarkably good condition. It is most unlikely that these bronzes were being deliberately discarded.

A ROBBERS' STASH?

There is another possible explanation for the deposition of the Quirinal Bronzes and it may be hiding in plain sight. While in the case of the Quirinal Bronzes it is Lanciani's argument that the statues were buried to protect them from ancient barbarian looters, elsewhere he quickly interprets some other hidden

bronzes as having been stashed by looters with the plan of recovering them later. They bury the loot in order to move it on at a safer time (Lanciani, 1888: 296).

In the case of the Teatro Drammatico site, it is particularly disquieting to learn from Lanciani's 1888 book that Signor Giuseppe Gagliardi, 'an old digger of antiquities', had written to him before the excavations had even begun and had accurately foretold the find of 'rare bronzes that he thought were buried there at great depth' (Lanciani, 1888: 297). The precision of this prediction should give us cause for caution. If this individual had been more general about the possibility of finding 'some wonderful things' at the site on the south slope of the Quirinal, it would not be quite so suspicious. However, this prediction is remarkably specific — not statues, but 'rare bronzes', clearly more than one, and buried at 'great depth'. Lanciani's informant, Signor Gagliardi, was an old man by 1885, but in 1863 he had been an excavator for the papal Commissario for Antiquities on a villa site at Prima Porta, just north of Rome. There, two wealthy amateurs, acting under Gagliardi's guidance, unexpectedly discovered the now famous statue of Augustus (G. Henzen, *BdI* 1863: 71–8; Tomassetti, 1885: 438 n. 4). It is strange that Lanciani did not take more seriously Gagliardi's message about the possibility of bronzes being buried on the southwest slope of the Quirinal.

Lanciani, who knew many scholars, archaeologists, museum curators and shady antiquities dealers, was also well informed about the illicit trade in antiquities that went on all around him (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 34, 68–9, 101, 107, 123). He knew of workmen who stole from building or archaeological sites (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 15–16, 87, 95, 101). He had himself written of a statue that had been found in 1880 by two boys on the slope of the Viminal Hill between the via Nazionale and the botanical gardens. Lanciani believed it had been 'stolen from some private grounds, and concealed in that remote spot' (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 81).

Gagliardi's remarkable foreknowledge of the potential of the southwest slope of the Quirinal finds a suggestive parallel in events that can be dated to the second half of the 1870s and were later recounted by Count Michael Tyszkiewicz. The count wrote of a poor man who told Prince Torlonia that he had a dream that he was digging up a treasure on the prince's land near the fountain of Egeria, not far from the Via Appia. He obtained the Prince's permission to dig and an agreement from him that there would be a division of any finds. Tyszkiewicz, well informed about the modus operandi of looters, believed that the various objects subsequently dug up constituted property stolen by dishonest labourers from archaeological sites and buried in their 'gatto' or stash (Tys[z]kiewicz, 1898: 90–2).

The bronzes that Lanciani discovered in 1895 had been lowered into the ruins below from the garden of San Silvestro on the hillside above. The garden, clearly visible on maps (Figs 9, 10), was located at some height above the city, and would have offered thieves a perfect location and ample opportunity to conceal stolen antiquities. The bronzes which Lanciani found were generally in a good condition. There is certainly no evidence that would prove that the statues were

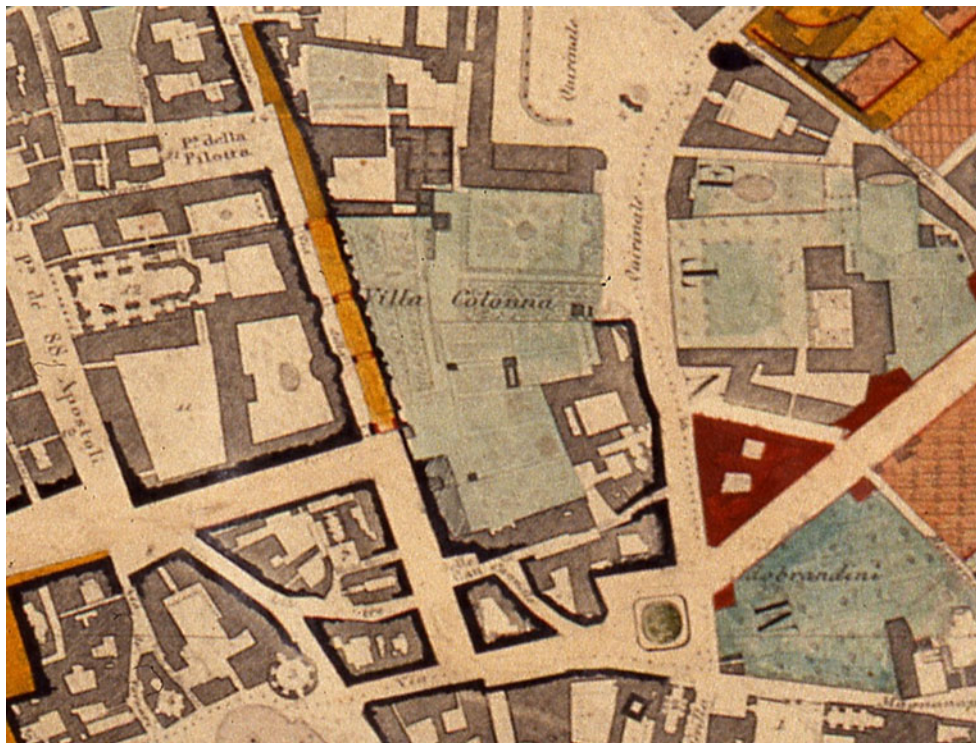


Fig. 9. Detail from the map by Alessandro Viviani, *Piano Regolatore et Ampliamento della città di Roma*, 1883, showing that part of the gardens of San Silvestro that fronted the via Nazionale on the turn in the street and next to the gardens of Palazzo Colonna. Photo courtesy Archivio Capitolino, Rome.

buried in ancient times nor that they necessarily came from the nearby Baths of Constantine. The statues were possibly discovered in different places and were most likely buried by different people at different times.

In the case of the boxer statue, the care and precision of the deposition suggests an overall concern for conservation. In December 1885, Lanciani told the readers of *The Athenaeum* that the seated figure appeared to have been deliberately concealed. It was found placed not on the earth but ‘on a stone capital of the Doric order, as upon a stool’. We also learn from Lanciani that ‘the earth which surrounded the figure had been as it were sifted in order to save the surface of the bronze from any possible injury’ (Lanciani, 1888: 304–5; [1885] 1988: 178). Here Lanciani appears to be suggesting an aggressive soil on site that might set up a corrosive environment and damage the bronze. Count Michael Tyszkiewicz, commenting about the rarity of bronzes surviving from antiquity, attributed this to the effect of the Roman soil. It was, he declared, ‘useless for the preservation of bronzes’ and reduces them to green dust (Tyszkiewicz, 1898: 128).

As a consequence of the great advances in scientific understanding of corrosion that have occurred since the late 1890s (Scott, 2002: 35–42), modern



Fig. 10. Detail from the map by Antonio Vallardi, 1891, *Roma Presente e Avvenire*, showing the site of the Teatro Drammatico at 122 bis via Nazionale and the garden on the slope behind.

archaeologists would sample the soil that had been used as fill between the foundation walls. They would want to know whether it is composed of the alkaline tufo common on the caps of the Quirinal ridges, or acidic alluvial material found in low-lying parts of the city. They would seek to analyse the mixture of clay and soil, apparently the ‘rubbish’ to which Lanciani refers. Such fill might even have contained organic materials and pollutants from the gardens of San Silvestro above the site.

Both statues were buried at a great depth, 5.2 m and 5.4 m, not only for concealment but also to avoid placing bronze in the more chemically active upper horizon of the soil (Scott, 2002: 38). Those who buried them had sufficient strength and time to dig down to 5.4 m, well below the level of a grave. Agricultural labourers, well diggers, gravediggers and labourers on archaeological sites all turn up in nineteenth- and twentieth-century police investigations of clandestine excavations and the stashing of looted objects in safe places for future retrieval. It is reasonable to suggest that such men were the diggers here.

Ironically, Lanciani, in his 1888 book, expressed the opinion that there were probably many other bronzes still buried in this southwest slope of the Quirinal (Lanciani, 1888: 307). He was certainly correct, for in 1892 a clandestinely excavated bronze head from a slightly larger-than-life statue of Lucius Cornelius

Pusio, of the first century AD, together with an accompanying dedicatory bronze plaque (Figs 11, 12), suddenly surfaced on the antiquities market in Rome. By 1892 the statue was in the shop of the dealer Elisio Borghi near Piazza Barberini, having been brought there by a certain Sig. Cavari, who claimed that he had found the head and plaque the previous year (1891) ‘in the building works’ of the Palazzo Campanari (built 1878–83), a structure that is next door to Lanciani’s 1885 dig site (Bienkowski, 1892). We only have Cavari’s word for this, but there is certainly evidence for modifications to the Palazzo Campanari at about that time. A document in the ASC reveals that in September 1886 an application was made to the municipal authorities for modifications to a doorway on the southern façade of the Palazzo Campanari which on that side steps down the hill (ASC Fondo T54 Edilizia e Ornato 1886 prot. 63739). Two drawings in the folder show the area of wall before and how it would be after the projected work. The doorway is at some height halfway up the Salita della Cordonata (now with paved steps) that ascends the hill. The southern wall steps down the hill, sitting on the ground. Thus, digging



Fig. 11. Reconstructed bronze head from the statue of Lucius Cornelius Pusio, now in the Epigraphy Museum, Baths of Diocletian (MNR inv. no. 48134). Photo: author. Courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano.



Fig. 12. Reconstructed bronze plaque from the base of the statue of Pusio, Epigraphy Museum, Baths of Diocletian (MNR inv. no. 48135). Photo: author. Courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano.

in the earth next to the *salita* to make a foundation for the new doorway seems the most likely context for the discovery of the fragments of the statue.

The original long-term burial environment of the statue of Pusio had almost destroyed it because the bronze had come into contact with an aggressive soil over some considerable time. Most of the statue is missing, having corroded away. The head was smashed to pieces (Bienkowski, 1892: 197–8) and a back part missing. Reconstructed (Fig. 11), the head is now displayed in the Museo Nazionale Romano (MNR inv. no. 48134). The accompanying bronze plaque (MNR inv. no. 48135) records a dedication by a centurion of Legio IV to Pusio and sets out his commander's *cursus honorum* (Fig. 12). The statue is dated AD c. 40–55.

The burial of 39 pieces of a smashed bronze head from a disintegrated statue, together with the statue's bronze plaque, but not the marble base to which it should have been affixed (Cesarano, 1987: 151), suggests very strongly that we are looking at the excavation of a secondary robber's cache. This constitutes

the burial of bronze remains that had previously been dug up somewhere else and stashed here. The bronze fragments were most likely destined to be sold to a smelter. Such caches of works in metal, some fragmentary, were familiar to Lanciani who elsewhere interpreted them as indicative of illicit activity (Lanciani, 1888: 296). The Pusio statue found by Cavari may originally have come from anywhere. We only have the barest outline of Cavari's story, passed to us in a brief report by Bienkowski (1892) who first published the text of the plaque. It is highly unlikely that the numerous fragments of the Pusio statue and inscription originally came from the site of the house found there in 1878. There is no ancient context at all; there is no mention of any plinth being found earlier. It would be most rash to name this the site of the House of Lucius Cornelius Pusio, as Lanciani later did, on the basis of this pile of smashed-up and highly portable bronze. The bronze fragments are more likely to represent a robber's stash just buried in the earth there.

GATTI'S 1892 EXCAVATION

During 1892 there was a short archaeological investigation supervised by Felice Barnabei and conducted by Giuseppi Gatti on the hillside behind the Teatro Drammatico and down its northern side, on land belonging to the military engineers. A notice published by Gatti in 1893 (*NSc* 1893: 238–9) announced the discovery of 'the remains of brick constructions belonging to private homes from the last times of the Empire'. The walls and the sewer tunnels under these structures were all recorded in the 1892 measured drawing (Fig. 13), now held in the *archivio storico* of the Palazzo Altemps.¹³ The works of art found in the course of the excavation were reported by Gatti as small objects 'of mediocre quality' and badly damaged. An inventory of 23 finds survives.¹⁴

A letter from Barnabei to the minister dated 3 June 1892 gives the distinct impression that the archaeologist considered this dig to have been an expensive disappointment because no further bronze statues were found. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that the season was sparked by the appearance the previous year of the Pusio bronze head and inscription found by Cavari in his clandestine excavation. Barnabei, an outspoken critic of the illicit trade in antiquities that went on all around him, was well informed about the Cavari case. He revealed to the minister that Cavari had not taken the fragmentary Pusio bronze material to Borghi at all but had originally taken the pieces to Torquato Castellani. Castellani subsequently sold the fragments to Borghi, who then undertook the restoration. Barnabei believed that the remains of the statue

¹³ Soprintendenza Speciale di Roma, ASV, Busta D, fasc. 924 'Quirinale Teatro Nazionale (area): pianta a colori e sezione dei cunicoli rinvenuti in area adiacente ex convento di S. Silvestro. Consulted at ASPA.

¹⁴ Soprintendenza Speciale di Roma, I /XII 33 S. Silvestro al Quirinale 1893 'Durante scavi nell'area dell'ex convento di S. Silvestro al Quirinale (orto demaniale militare)'. Consulted at ASPA.

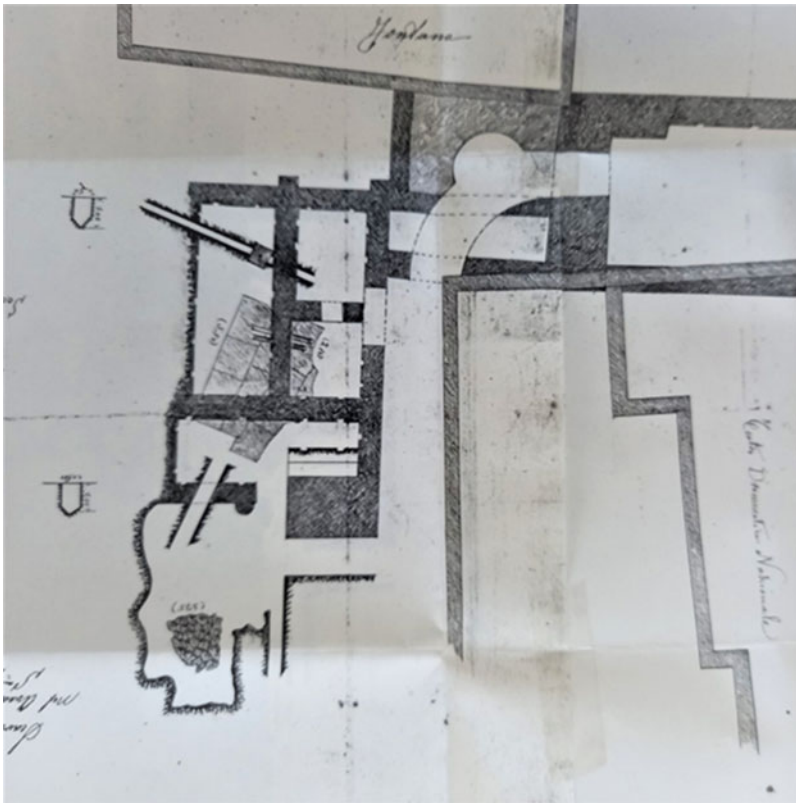


Fig. 13. Measured drawing of the 1892 excavation in the garden of San Silvestro adjacent to northeast of the Teatro Drammatico site (ASV). Courtesy Ministero della Cultura — Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma.

and the inscription had been found ‘a few years back’ but considered it especially noteworthy that the Pusio statue had been found so close to where the two bronzes found earlier had turned up.¹⁵

It clearly goes beyond coincidence that three very different bronze statues could be found, one after another, in such close proximity on this stretch of the southwest slope of the Quirinal. Indeed, the find of the bronze Pusio head and inscription may well have revived rumours surrounding the hillside, especially after Lanciani’s publication of Gagliardi’s remarkable prophecy. Barnabei certainly had his suspicions that this was an area of the city where the bronze bodies might be buried. However, after disappointing results, Barnabei had to advise the minister that the stretched resources of the state archaeological service might be better used elsewhere.

¹⁵ AA.BB.AA., *Divisione musei e scavi (1891–1897) II versamento I parte*, b. 223, fasc. 3829 Posizione I Roma: Anno 1885. Reg VII, folder ‘Scoperte nell’area del nuovo teatro nazionale’ — letter 3 June 1892 from Felice Barnabei to the minister of public instruction ‘Scavi nell’area del Teatro Drammatico Nazionale’.

DECONSTRUCTING PLATE XXII OF THE *FORMA URBIS ROMAE*

We have seen that interrogation of Lanciani's popular accounts of the Teatro Drammatico excavation, particularly when it can be put against evidence from the scant archival record, reveals that both in large matters and in small details his testimony cannot always be relied upon. There is also much that calls into question the accuracy of the representation of structures in plate XXII of Lanciani's *Forma Urbis Romae* (Fig. 6). When Lanciani drew up plate XXII, he recorded in blue the modern Palazzo Campanari and, on the ancient level, he indicated in black Roman square capital letters the DOMUS L·CORNELI PUSIONIS. Yet the *Notizie degli Scavi* for 1878, our only excavation record for the site, and quoted almost at that spot on Lanciani's map, makes no mention of any epigraphic material, such as a lead pipe, that might suggest any connection of the house found there to Lucius Cornelius Pusio (*NotSc.* 1878: 368).

On what basis did Lanciani identify as the House of Pusio the apparently formless brick and wood debris recorded in 1878? Nothing more, it would appear, than the sudden appearance of the fragments of a bronze statue and its identifying plaque in an art dealer's showroom in 1892. It was only Lanciani's map that subsequently brought the DOMUS L·CORNELI PUSIONIS into existence. In creating the House of Pusio, and by appearing to link it to the earlier licit excavations on the site, Lanciani gave the statue and plaque an unwarranted provenance.

This area of Lanciani's plate XXII is marked by a large label that tops the graphic hierarchy of information related to the ancient remains. This serves to magnify the importance of the House of Pusio at the expense of the neighbouring house which is unlabelled. That house he himself had excavated in 1885 but could not convincingly link to a putative 'owner'. Indeed, plate XXII is full of what Brian Harley termed the 'hidden structures' and 'silences' of a map that may be insidiously designed to influence or manipulate the reader/viewer of the image (Harley 1988: 64). Just such a deliberate 'silence' is the absence of a question mark after the identification of the *domus Pusionis*. Elsewhere, throughout the *FUR*, it was Lanciani's usual cartographic practice to indicate a degree of uncertainty about an identification of a house or other structure by inserting a question mark after a name. Some examples are to be seen in plates XX, XXIII, XXVIII and XXXVI. The corollary of this is that a structure or house given a labelled identification, but without such a qualification, is accorded a higher level of certainty in Lanciani's notational hierarchy. That the so-called *domus Pusionis* is accorded such a settled status should be unsettling to any reader/viewer of the *FUR*.

The script employed by Lanciani to indicate the position of the House of Pusio — square Roman capitals with medial dot interpuncts and a *littera longa* for *ī*, following early imperial practices (Gordon and Gordon, 1957: 183, 216) — was used by him elsewhere, both in his brief descriptive notes and in the labels that he made to indicate houses. Some of these houses he explicitly linked to an

individual on the basis of epigraphic evidence in *CIL*. Note, for example, the house of Gaius Marius Pudens Cornelianus, plate XXXV, lower left corner, and the house of Marcus Servilius Fabianus, plate XXIII, lower left quadrant. Of course, the typographic script itself contains signs such as the dot interpuncts and *litterae longae* that form part of a code (Wood and Fels, 1986: 67), signifying Latin epigraphy. In the case of the House of Pusio however, the effect of Lanciani's typography is to subtly suggest an inscription. The *NSc* 1878 note is of little value. Yet Lanciani could have given the relevant *Mitteilungen* reference to the bronze fragments had he wished to do so. See, for example, the annotation used on plate XXXXIII, upper left quadrant, ultimately directing the reader to an inscription.

The *domus Pusionis* is not the only example of a misleading house label to be found embedded in the plates of the *FUR*. Further afield, on *FUR* plate I, right lower quadrant, we find, for example, Lanciani's label DOMUS T·SEXTI AFRICANI with *Scavi* 1880 placed underneath it. However, *NSc* 1880: 467 cites no inscription or pipe with a name. It does not even mention the remains of a house, merely two bronze heads and some fragments recovered from this site.

It is most revealing that Lanciani told his *Athenaeum* readers on 27 November 1880 that workmen had stolen these bronzes from the building site of the new Anglican church in via Babuino, near Piazza del Popolo, and had sold them to a dealer. He makes no mention of the discovery of any House of Africanus or indeed any formal excavations at all (Lanciani, [1885] 1988: 87–8). Titus Sextius Africanus, suffect consul in AD 59, is well attested in the epigraphic record as a member of the Arval Brotherhood (*CIL* VI 2034, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044), and he is mentioned by Tacitus (*Ann.* 13.19.2, 14.46.2). However, there is nothing in any extant inscription to link him to the 'House of Africanus' that appears on plate I of Lanciani's map, indicating the site on via Babuino.

It is therefore surprising that Lanciani, who had labelled these other houses with the owners' names, found no place on plate XXII to label with an owner the 'beautiful house' with its 'artistic treasures' that he had identified in 1885 on the southwest Quirinal. We have seen how Lanciani in his popular writings had linked it in turn with the mislocated M. Ulpus Euhodus and then with the supposed 'freedman' Sergius Craterus whom he had identified by the text on a lead *fistula* (*CIL* XV 7533).

In plate XXII, one line of that two-line *fistula* text — CN SERG CRATERI ET IULI HIERACIS — is symbolically displayed, along with three others, higher up the slope (Fig. 6). Perhaps Lanciani was obliquely alluding to the *castellum* that Giuseppi Gatti suggested would probably have been somewhere on the high ground there (*BullCom* 1887: 8). Lanciani certainly does not link the Craterus pipe directly to the Teatro Drammatico site where it was in fact found. Although he had earlier identified the house as belonging to Craterus, that label does not appear.

The absence of any label on the ruined walls of the structure where, in 1885, the famous bronzes were found must be regarded as a deliberate omission. Again,

it constitutes an example of what Harley termed a ‘silence’ that might be part of a map’s ‘hidden structure’ (Harley, 1988: 64). Lanciani, if he wished, could have placed references to the *NSc*, linking names on pipes to the site where they were found. However, his ‘silence’, a movement of the pipes, provided him with a neat way of avoiding the problem of naming the house as either the House of Sergius Craterus or the House of Julius Hierax.

On plate XXII, aesthetic considerations may also have influenced Lanciani’s depiction of the majority of *fistulae* within the composition. The *fistulae* of the southwest Quirinal, all placed horizontally, left of centre, towards the top of the plate, are balanced, right of centre, by a corresponding horizontal grouping of *fistulae* found on the site of the new Bank of Italy. Again, those relate in no way to exact find locations. Elsewhere, on the lower left of plate XII, three *fistulae* depicted as fanned out on the Arx near the Aracoeli have been judged by a recent excavator to be ‘clearly symbolic and unreliable’ in terms of the location, length and breadth of the pipes (Tucci, 2019: 88).

There are other omissions on the Teatro Drammatico site. Significantly, the Roman walls and ‘grottoni’ that Lanciani had discovered beyond the northeast corner of the structure which he was excavating on the Teatro Drammatico site are not represented. They would have remained unknown to us without the sketch that Lanciani had made for Fiorelli in his letter of 3 May 1885, where he advised against excavation (Fig. 7). The investigations published by Gatti (*NSc* 1893: 238–9) confirmed large structures there and they are shown in a measured drawing produced in 1892 (Fig. 13).¹⁶ Yet they were not given a *Scavi* note. Only those foundation walls between which Lanciani himself had found the boxer and athlete statues were drawn on the map. Gatti’s 1893 *Scavi* report was ignored even though by the date that plate XXII was published those structures mentioned there were known.¹⁷

Such an unconscionable dismissal of Gatti’s work may possibly be explained by ill-feeling on Lanciani’s part against a former colleague: it was Gatti’s testimony in 1889 about Lanciani’s activities on behalf of American museums and irregularities on his excavation sites that had contributed to his forced resignation (Barnabei and Delpino, 1991: 458–9, doc. 6, letter from Gatti to Gerrasi, 13 November 1889; Palombi, 2006: 129). Notably it was Gatti, having replaced Lanciani during his time in America, who later took over a number of Lanciani’s duties (Dixon, 2021a: 104 n. 109).

¹⁶ Heymans, 2013: 233, fig. 7, erroneously places the ‘est. area of 1893 excavations’ uphill beyond the Servian Wall. The measured plan in the ASPA related to the dig makes it quite clear that the 1893 excavations were carried out on lower land directly contiguous to the Teatro Drammatico site.

¹⁷ The *FUR* was published in fascicules from 1893 to 1901. An examination of the two fascicules published in 1893, the sole copy of which seems to be that held by the library of the Fondazione Marco Besso, Rome, establishes immediately that the 1893 publication did not include plate XXII. Plate XXII was therefore published well after 1893 in one of the later fascicules, which do not appear to have survived in libraries, and, of course, appeared in the completed volume in 1901.

Lanciani long harboured a grudge about his own forced resignation (Dixon, 2021c), so it is not unreasonable to suggest that he nursed an animus against Barnabei and Gatti. It appears to have extended even to refusing to acknowledge their 1892 excavation of the structure on the southwest Quirinal. Ignoring Gatti's work on the structures to the north, Lanciani chose instead to highlight graphically the area beyond the theatre site to the south by prominently labelling the Palazzo Campanari site as the DOMUS L · CORNELI · PUSIONIS, on the most specious of grounds.

CONCLUSIONS

Lanciani's representation of the structures on the southwest slope of the Quirinal in plate XXII of the *Forma Urbis Romae* cannot be viewed as simply reflecting 'facts on the ground'. The apparent loss of any measured drawings or notebooks relating to Lanciani's excavations on the southwest Quirinal was earlier noted by Luigi Borsari (*BullCom* 1888: 15). They have never surfaced (Buonocore, 1997: 146–7) and Heymans (2013: 235) has suggested that Lanciani may indeed have been relying on memory rather than drawings when laying out plate XXII (Fig. 6). Such misgivings are entirely reasonable.

Lanciani's *FUR* was his authoritative synthesis of the archaeology of Rome. By appropriating the name of the fragmentary Severan marble plan of Rome as the title for his map, Lanciani was able to claim both continuity and reliability for his own monumental *Forma*. Indeed, on plates XXIII, XXXV and XXXIX, fragments of the Severan marble plan were symbolically integrated into Lanciani's own mapping, like pieces of a jigsaw.

Further, Lanciani's chair of Roman topography at La Sapienza, and the publication of the *FUR* by the Accademia dei Lincei, one of Europe's most prestigious scientific bodies, bolstered Lanciani's claims that archaeology and cartography were both sciences. Since the Lincei had included Galileo, Darwin, Pasteur and Mommsen in their number, the patronage of that august body invested Lanciani's *FUR* with enormous authority. Yet the map that Lanciani produced was not his creation alone. Like many a map it was the result of a discourse between the cartographer with their 'inner power' and their institutional patron, the 'external power', whose needs and expectations the cartographer would have both understood and anticipated (Harley, 1989: 12–13; Wood, 2002: 141; Pickles, 2004: 64).

Lanciani, despite having been forced to resign from his state position in 1890, remained extremely well placed within the power–knowledge structures of post-Unification Italy. Despite having rivals and indeed significant enemies, by the time the *FUR* began to appear, Lanciani had reached a position of unparalleled and unassailable eminence in Italian archaeology. He enjoyed a stellar international reputation (Palombi, 2006: 125–8).

Brian Harley, influenced by his reception of Foucault (Belyen, 1992), argued that cartography was 'a form of power' because it gave the mapmaker a way of

presenting their own values ‘in the guise of scientific disinterestedness’ (Harley, 1988: 54). A close examination of plate XXII has revealed Lanciani not as a disinterested recorder of topographical information but rather as a highly involved actor who deployed his knowledge as power. In the map’s ‘silences’ the work of rival archaeologists is suppressed. Through rhetorical gestures used in the construction of the image, the viewer is influenced, distracted and manipulated. The reader/viewer is ultimately induced to accept Lanciani’s account as authoritative even though it sometimes is not supported by the ‘scientific’ evidence.

In plate XXII Lanciani does not provide the map reader with data presented in the putative ‘dry light’ of science, but rather he obfuscates the data by cartographic artifice, sometimes it would seem for partisan reasons. Plate XXII of Lanciani’s ‘scientific’ mapping of the southwest slope of the Quirinal is, in essence, a display of cartographic sophistry exercised in a bold assertion of his knowledge–power. It is entirely consistent with Lanciani’s proprietorial attitude to the state-owned excavation records which he always refused to give back (Dixon, 2021c: 1–14).

Overall, Lanciani’s magnificent *FUR* is best appreciated as a complex intellectual and imaginative construction containing any number of subtle messages embedded within its graphic representations. Despite Lanciani having extolled modern objectivist ‘scientific’ mapping, plate XXII of the *FUR* is very much an example of what Judith Tyner has termed ‘persuasive mapping’. Such a map is created by ‘manipulating the various cartographic elements through distortion, selection, symbolization and choice of text and title’ (Tyner, 1982: 140).

It has been argued here that plate XXII needs to be approached in a spirit of healthy scepticism if we are not to be misled by what we are shown, or not shown, in Lanciani’s artful mapping of this southwest slope of the Quirinal. More broadly, while Lanciani’s monumental multilayered *Forma Urbis Romae* is undoubtably a prodigious achievement that merits the greatest admiration, sometimes its very persuasiveness should alert the user to exercise a degree of caution.

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Abbreviations

- AA.BB.AA. = Antichità e Belle Arti
 ACS = Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome
 ASC = Archivio Storico Capitolino
 ASPA = Archivio Storico, Palazzo Altemps
 ASV = Archivio Storico del Vittoriano
BullCom = *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica di Roma*
CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
 INAIL = Istituto Nazionale per l'Assicurazione contro gli Infortuni sul Lavoro
 MPI = Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione
NSc = *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità*

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