TEMPLUM DIVI TRAIAINI PARTHICI ET PLOTINAE:

a debate with R. Meneghini

James E. Packer, with John Burge

The ancient sources unequivocally state that there was a temple of Trajan and seem to locate it north\(^1\) of his Column.\(^2\) Since the late 16th c., numerous architectural remains\(^3\) found there had suggested to scholars that the temple Hadrian dedicated to Trajan and Plotina, his adopted parents,\(^4\) had been on the site of the present Valentini palace (figs. 2, 11-12, 16).\(^5\) By 1933, L. Gismondi, architect for the excavations in the Forum of Trajan, could graphically restore (fig. 1) a pseudostyle octostyle shrine colonnaded on the front and sides, a Vitruvian *ambulatio ... sine postico* (3.2.5).\(^6\)

---

1. For compass directions throughout this article I assume that the actual NW-SE axis of the Forum of Trajan runs N-S.
2. SHA Ladr. 199. *Traiani patris templum ... Aul. Coll. NA 11.17.1 ... bibliotheca templi Traiani ...* (implying that the collections in the twin pavilions flanking the Column were, owing to their proximity in the Temple, sometimes called the 'Temple of Trajan Library'. In order to interpret this phrase otherwise,Meneghini has suggested that the Temple (wherever it was) may have had flanking archives 'opposite ... la delinazione templum Traiani abbia un valore non rigorosamente topografico'. La Rocca 1998, 185. But to ignore the imposing remains of the existing libraries to postulate instead the existence of otherwise unattested 'archives' seems cumbersome. Under Regia VIII, both the CVRIOVM and the NOTTIA (Nordh 1949, 73) mention the Temple (ibid. 84): *Templum Traiani et columnae (Curium); Templum divi Traiani et columnarum (Nottia)*. Ance (1999, 22) suggests a date after 334 for the Notitia; one after 357 for the Curium. Both list the *templum Traiani* in a sequence of monuments that begins with the *setia* of the Forum Romanum, continues north past the Forum Traiani and ends with the Temple, a progression that implies that the Temple stood north of Forum.
3. Quoted in Lanciani 1900b, 137. Pio Ligorio noted the existence in this zone of a "Temple Herolco di esso Principe, lo quale aveva un portico decorato di marmo augustale e le sue colonne erano sei piedi nell'istomoscopo (1.34 m) et alte cinquecentoquaratri (12.06 m) ..." (cited also by Miikila 1989, 83).
4. CIL VI 9666 ... *DIVI ITALIUS TRAIAIUS PARTHICO ET FACTIO PLUTINAE* (et alia); CIL VI 212125. Packer 1997, vol. 1, 127, and id. 2001, 80, gives the full text. See also Bertoldi 1962, 7; La Rocca 1998, 167; Meneghini 1996, 47-48 and 78 (Appendice 1 by L. Bili and S. Collettii), id. 1998, 130; Micheli 1984, 111-14; Packer 1997 vol. 1, 127. For the 'official title' of the Temple of the Divine Trajan in the title to this article, I combine CIL VI 9666 with Coll., NA.
5. Meneghini 1996, 47-74, ably summarizes and discusses archaeological discoveries in the area north of the Column, the site traditionally assigned to the Temple beneath the Valentini Palace and the surrounding streets (figs. 2 and 16 here, map: Packer 1997 vol. 3, folio 21). From that evidence, scholars had begun, as early as 1824, to assemble the conjectural plan of an octostyle temple in a rectangular temenos. Their details differ considerably. Lesueur (1825, pl. 2; reproduced in Packer 1997 vol. 1, 140 fig. 82; id. 2001, 88) suggests a pseudostyle temple on a high podium. Eggen (1933, pl. 4; Packer 1997 vol. 2, pl. 212) restored a dipleral south porch on a low podium; Morey (1833, pl. 10; Packer 1997 vol. 1, 153 fig. 91, id. 2001, 95) posits a similar structure, this time on a stylobate; Richter and Griiffi 1839, pl. 3 (Packer 1997 vol. 1, 162-64 fig. 95, id. 2001, 103) present an amphiprostyle building with an interior apse. For Canina (1848, vol. 2, pl. 11; Packer 1997 vol. 1, 179 fig. 102; id. 2001, 110) the pseudostyle temple, tripteral in front, on a high podium, has an altar built into the front stair. Nearly the same, Guadel's apsidal temple (1867, pl. 30; Packer 1997 vol. 1, 187 fig. 110, id. 2001, 121) stands on a low stylobate. Lanciani (1906a, pl. 22) reproduces Guadel's temple but sets it, once again, on an impressive podium.

6. Gismondi's reconstruction first appeared in Colini 1933, pl. 4, facing p. 256. It was based on earlier scholarship (see n.5) and on the then-recent excavation of the Temple of Mars Ulturn (plan: Centen 1996 vol. 2, Beil. 47). Since the many gray granite shafts found under Palazzo Valentini (see Table 2 below) came from an undated order of the same that of the porche of the Temple of Mars Ulturn (Packer 1997 vol. 1, 458-60), and since the Forum of Trajan took many of its architectural details from those of Augustus' Forum, Gismondi modeled his interior on that of the Temple of Mars Ulturn. Following G. Cotti 1934, 225-26, pl. I (fig. 3 here), the E and W walls of the temenos curved to meet the sides of the cella. Pietino di

Promotion to copy may be obtained only from JRA (jra@journals.org)