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A new identification for the 'Porticus Aemilia'

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Introduction

The building in Rome known as the Porticus Aemilia, whose standing remains are visible near the Tiber and between Via Beniamino Franklin and Via Romolo Gessi (fig. 1), received this identification in a brilliant article by Guglielmo Gatti (1934), and his identification of the building has been generally accepted.¹ This paper attempts to re-identify the building based upon recent work on the history of *opus caementicium*, a re-examination of the fragments of the Severan Marble Plan and key passages in Livy, and an inscription. I begin with a brief synopsis of Gatti's conclusions and the evidence supporting them. Section 2 comprises a new analysis of the evidence and a new identification of the building type, that it was not a *porticus* but a set of *horrea*. In section 3 I propose a date and name for the building.

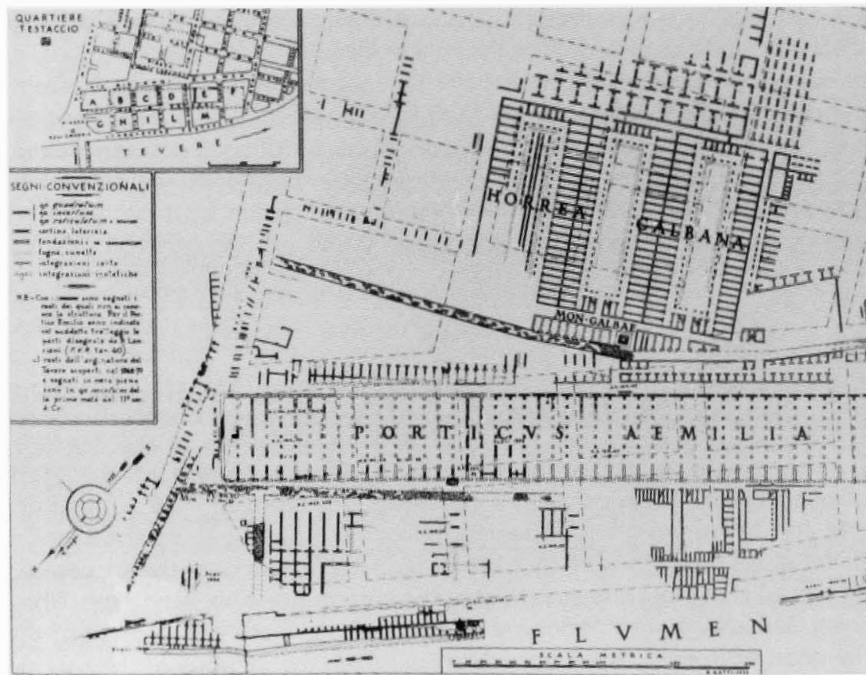


Fig. 1. The Portico Aemilia (after Gatti, *BullCom* 1934, fig. 7).

- * In addition to those in *AJA* 95 (1991), the following abbreviations are used:
- Coarelli 1977 F. Coarelli, "Public building in Rome between the Second Punic War and Sulla," *PBSR* 45 (1977) 1-23.
- Gatti Guglielmo Gatti, "Saepta Iulia e Porticus Aemilia nella forma severiana," *BullCom* 62 (1934) 135-44.
- Meiggs R. Meiggs, *Roman Ostia* (2nd edn., Oxford 1973).
- Richardson 1976 L. Richardson, Jr., "The evolution of the Porticus Octaviae," *AJA* 80 (1976) 57-64.
- Rickman G. Rickman, *Roman granaries and store buildings* (Cambridge 1971).
- Rodríguez Almeida E. Rodríguez Almeida, *Forma Urbis Marmorea: aggiornamento generale* (Rome 1981).
- 1 Gatti's conclusions, while generally accepted, were not universally so: L. Richardson, Jr., *A new topographical dictionary of ancient Rome* (Baltimore 1992) 143, for example, refers to the building as "commonly, but probably erroneously, called Porticus Aemilia." Richardson's arguments against the Porticus Aemilia identification are based in topography and architecture: see id. 1976, 59. F. Coarelli (1977) concluded that Richardson's views "only add confusion" to the dating and identity of the building.