

Trajan's Forum again: the Column and the Temple of Trajan in the master plan attributed to Apollodorus(?)¹

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Two of the most important monuments of Trajan's famous Forum (fig.1), the Column which bears his name and the Temple dedicated to his *divus*, have suffered very different fates. As sole survivor of the buildings in its originally elegant architectural context, the largely intact Column (fig.2), rising above the marble and concrete rubble of the Forum,² still attracts the attention of both tourists and scholars.³ Buried 5 m under the Churches of St. Mary of Loreto and the Name of Mary and the Valentini Palace (fig.3), the ruins of the Temple and its precinct have utterly disappeared from view.⁴ Yet, over the last two decades, with respect to the conceptual relationships between the Column and Temple (fig. 1.1) and the plan of the Forum of Trajan as a whole, certain scholars have begun to construct a new consensus which may be briefly summarized as follows.⁵

- 1 Dio Cassius 69.4, 1-6; Proc., *Aed.* 4.6, 13. W. MacDonald *The architecture of the Roman empire* (2nd ed., New Haven 1982) 1, 129-36, discusses the passage in Dio and gives a full bibliography on Apollodorus up to 1965. MacDonald's "Roman architects," in S. Kostof (ed.), *The architect. Chapters in the history of the profession* (New York 1977) 44-51, and "Apollodorus," *Macmillan encyclopedia of architects* (New York 1982) 1, 91-94, update this earlier essay. F. Lepper and S. Frere, *Trajan's column* (Gloucester 1988) 187-93 review the evidence for attributing the design of the Forum of Trajan to Apollodorus.
- 2 Lepper and Frere (supra n.1) 7 whimsically (if accurately) describe the site as "a flattened area, half municipal gardens, half drowned forest in appearance, as the allées of the via del Impero and the foundations of the Imperial Fora compete for definition along different axes [an] area ... frequented mainly by scholars and tourists, inhabited only by cats."
- 3 The literature on the Column is extensive. For older references see Platner-Ashby 242-44 and Nash 1, 283. These are now supplemented by S. Settis (ed.), *La colonna traiana* (Torino 1988); G. Agosti, V. Farinella, G. Simoncini (edd.), *La colonna traiana e gli artisti francesi da Luigi XIV a Napoleone I* (Roma 1988); Lepper and Frere (supra n.1) xiii-xviii (select bibliography). All are reviewed by J. Coulston, "Three new books on Trajan's Column," *JRA* 3 (1990) 290-309 (bibliography 308-9). The Column is also treated in L. Richardson, jr. *A new topographical dictionary of ancient Rome* (Baltimore 1992) 176-77, 178. The most recent articles are A. Claridge, "Hadrian's Column of Trajan," *JRA* 6 (1993) 5-22 and M. Wilson Jones, "One hundred feet and a spiral stair: the problem of designing Trajan's Column," *JRA* 6 (1993) 23-38.
- 4 But have been excavated intermittently from the 16th through the 19th c. For accounts of these excavations see P. Pensabene *et al.*, "Foro Traiano. Contributi per una ricostruzione storica e architettonica," *ArchCl* 41 (1989) 85-100 and J. Packer, *The Forum of Trajan in Rome: a study of the monuments* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, forthcoming) 1, chaps. 1, 2. In Chapt. 4, n.36, Packer identifies the known fragments of the Temple as follows (the first number in the list *infra* is the Comune di Roma inventory number (if assigned by 1992); the second is that of Packer's catalogue of architectural fragments). From the porch of the pronaos (recovered along the line of its façade) come the upper sections of 2 large-scale gray granite shafts (Inv. 3721, Cat. 50, Inv. 2848, Cat. 50A), a corresponding Corinthian capital (Inv. 3720, Cat. 89), and a monumental cornice with modillions (Cat. 172, now in the garden of Villa Albani).
- 5 Although some of the arguments used here appear also in Packer (supra n.4), the publication of Claridge (supra n.3) seems to have crystallized the new and, in some respects, iconoclastic approach to the Column and Temple summarized *infra*. Not previously treated as a whole, this approach clearly merits further discussion.