

Gamucci emphasized his own cautiously empirical approach to controversial topics.

Early on, he discussed the issue of whether the *porta Ianualis* was (as says Macrobius) one of the four gates of the city of Romulus, or rather, as some argue, a gate of the founder's royal palace. (See the gate as part of the city of Romulus on the left wall of Marliani's map of the city of Romulus, Fig. 5.5) "I do not wish," he wrote, "to either deny or affirm what it is, because my intention in all this work is none other than to show those things true, that with the authority of writers, or with the certainty of the buildings *it is still possible to verify them* in our times, submitting in this always to the judgment of those that are more understanding than me."¹

About the location of *Forum of Caesar*, Gamucci wrote that some modern writers allege on the basis of the authority of Publius Victor that this forum was not in the place he described (behind the *church of Santi Cosma e Damiano*), which is in the fourth Augustan region, but rather in the eighth. Yet another argument based on Ovid's *Fasti* placed this forum in front of the Temple of *Antoninus and Faustina*. Gamucci declared that he has no wish to resolve these great controversies: "I do not intend to affirm as true [anything] except those things that in our times one can demonstrate with some vestige or with the certainty of clear authors, and to this I have wished to add still the opinion of modern writers."² The evidence of ancient artifacts and ancient texts, combined with the consensus of modern authors was what was needed before it can be seen as true.

¹ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 3, "Io non voglio nè negar, nè affermare che sia così; perche non è mia intentione in tutta questa opera se non di mostrare quelle cose per vere, che con l'autorità de gli scrittori, o con la certezza de gli edificij si possono ancora nè tempi nostri accertare, rimettendomi in questo sempre al giudicio di coloro, che ne saranno più di me intendenti."

² Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 48-49, "io non intendo per vere affermar se non quelle cose, che ne' tem[pi] nostri si posson dimostrare o con qualche vestigio, o con la certezza di chiari autori; & à questo ho voluto aggiugnere ancora l'opinione de' moderni scrittori" (49). For the *Forum of Caesar*, often called the *Forum Iulium* as it has been located and described by modern archaeologists, see Lawrence Richardson, Jr., *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 165-167; and Chiara Morselli, "Forum Iulium," in Eva Margareta Steinby, ed., *Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae*, 6 vols. Rome: Edizioni Quasar di Severino Tognon, 1993-2000), 2: 299-306.

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Gamucci's guidebook often provided measurements for the buildings being discussed—for example, for the Basilica of Maxentius, for which he gave measurements for various parts that were shown on the accompanying plan.³ In another example, Gamucci provided measurements for the Coliseum. Further, so that “in the mind of the reader curious to understand there does not remain anything not perfectly understood,” Gamucci noted its “geometric quadrature,” using the work of “Giovanni Gamucci da San Gimignano [undoubtedly a relative] in our times an excellent mathematician in theory not less than in practice,” who sought to discover the proportional measures of ancient monuments.⁴ For Trajan's Column, he provided the height, the diameter, the number of steps inside and the number of windows; he gave the dimensions for the Circus Maximus; and the dimensions of some of the obelisks found in the city; and having been assisted by his brother, Raffaele Gamucci, “Geometer mathematician of our times in Rome not inferior to any other,” he provided some dimensions of the Pantheon.⁵

Gamucci firmly placed the Roman Forum in the Marliani location between the Arches of Septimius Severus and Titus (although he believed that it did not extend all the way to the Arch of Titus, but ended at the Temple of Jupiter Stator—Giove Statore, the three columns (as is clear from his keyed illustration of the Forum) known today as the remains of the Temple of Castor [Fig. 6.8]. It was the Via Sacra that goes from the Arch of Septimius Severus to the Arch of Titus. He made his view of the Forum clear in the fold-out map of the city, where “Forum

³ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 36-37. For the basilica, including its misidentification, see David Wetkin, *The Roman Forum* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 44-52.

⁴ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 45-48, “non rimanga nell'animo del lettore curioso d'intendere cosa alcuna non perfettamente intesa,” “Giovanni Gamucci da Santo Gimignano arimetrico & geometra eccellente ne tempi nostri, non meno per teorica, che per pratica. (46).”

⁵ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 55 (Trajan's Forum), 78 (Circus Maximus), 76, 79, 152-153, 195 (obelisks), 162 (the Pantheon), “M. Raffael Gamucci Geometra, & Aritmetico de' nostri, tempi in Roma non inferior ad alcuno altro.”

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Rom[anum]” is plainly written, and from the image of the Forum itself. Gamucci considered the topic of the Forum “a truly worthy subject and [one] described by many ancient and modern writers with authority.” However, he confessed that he has proceeded with difficulty. It would not have been difficult for him to write about notable things in the Forum if he had not seen among the authors who wrote before him “so many controversies, which have been reasons altogether to impede me from my true goal, because my mind has never been inclined to [do] other than to approve for true all that which the most learned writers of our time had reasoned about this.”⁶

He wished nevertheless:

to find again the truth according to the certainties that I have been able to pull from histories, and the rules and orders that one draws from architecture; but even much more through the occasions that I have had from what afterwards was discovered every day in digging among the ruins, in the inscriptions that are in the marbles, the understanding of the statues, the manner and order of the said buildings, which conjectures and studies have been reason to make many of these writers remain misled in their opinions, their sayings being found diverse from the certainty deduced afterword from the things that have been discovered and are discovered every day through all Rome.”⁷

⁶ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 18-21. An illustration of the Forum with identifying letters shows its exact location in Gamucci's view (20-21); “soggetto veramente degno, & da molti antichi & moderni scrittori con autorità, & studio descritto” (18); and for the extent of the Forum, 28.

⁷ Gamucci, *Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma*, 19, “di ritrovarne il vero, secondo la certezza, che ho possuto trarre dall'histoire, & le regole & ordini, che si traggono dall'architettura [sic]; ma molto piu per l'occasioni ancora, che ho havuto da quello, che dappoi s'è ritrovato ogni giorno, nel cavar fra le ruine, le inscriptions che sono ne' marmi, le cognitioni delle statue, & la maniera, & l'ordine de i detti edificij; lequali coniecture & indirizzi, sono state causa di far rimanere ingannati dell'opinione loro molti di questi scrittori essendo trovato diverso il dir loro dalla certezza di quella, che s'è havuto dappoi dalle cose, che si sono ritrovate, & che per tutta Roma si ritrovano ogni giorno.”

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