



Publié sur *La Vie des Classiques* (<https://96.ip-213-32-20.eu>)

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## LANCIANI ON THE BATHS OF CONSTANTINE AND SOME REFERENCES

In this series of posts on the now-lost Baths of Constantine in Rome, I've posted renaissance drawings of what then remained. The list of these I took from Platner & Ashby's *Topographical Dictionary of Rome* (1929), 525-6, which I accessed via the excellent Lacus Curtius site [here](#). This states:

Enough of the structure was standing at the beginning of the sixteenth century to permit of plans and drawings by the architects of that period, and these are the chief sources of our knowledge of the building (see especially Serlio, *Architettura* III.92; Palladio, *Le Terme*, pl. XIV; Dupérac, *Vestigii*, pl. 32; *LS* III.196-197; Ant. van den Wyngaerde, *BC* 1895, pls. VI-XIII; *HJ* 439, n131). The remains were almost entirely destroyed in 1605-1621, when the Palazzo Rospigliosi was built, but some traces were found a century later (*BC* 895, 88; *HJ* 440, n133), and since 1870 (*NS* 1876, 55, 99; 1877, 204, 267; 1878, 233, 340).

We are fortunate that so many of these are online. "BC" is the "Bulletino Comunale", older volumes of which can be accessed online. Via the key to the page, I find that "HJ" is H. Jordan, *Topographie der Stadt Rom in Altertum*. Vol. I, Part 3 (by Ch. Hülsen). Berlin 1906; and "LS" is R. Lanciani, *Storia degli Scavi di Roma*. vols. I-IV. Rome 1902-12. [Volume 3 can be found at Archive.org here](#), and pages 195-6 contain no illustrations but a useful list of those who made them, and other sources. In particular:

Hanno studiato gli avanzi delle terme Fra Giocondo, B. Peruzzi, du Perac e seguaci, Wingaerde, Palladio, Grimaldi, e Alò Giovannoli. La scheda Uffizi 1535 del Giocondo, contiene molti particolari di basi fregi e cornici sopracariche d'intagli. ...

Most of these we have looked at, but I might see what can be accessed from the rest.

Lanciani actually made some diggings in the area of the Baths of Constantine, so his opinions about the site deserve respect. He included it in his plan of ancient Rome, the *Forma Urbis Romanae*, which can be accessed via [here](#). Here's an excerpt:





I wonder where exactly this is?

Lanciani himself is now a long time ago, and archaeology has moved on since those days. Surely there are more up-to-date sources?

The text of the old *RealEncyclopädie* article is actually online [here](#), which gives a few references to articles.

I was also able to find a number of modern sources which I have not been able to consult from home. I'd like to give a list, purely in case someone later comes along. Via [here](#) and [here](#) I get these:

- S. Vilucchi, "Le Terme di Costantino sul Quirinale e gli edifici privati di età precedente", *Bull. Comm.* 91 (1986), 350-355.
- I. Nielsen, *Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths*, Aarhus (1990) vol. 1, fig. 62 C13.
- S. Vilucci, "Thermae Constantinianae", in: E. M. Steinby (ed), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (=LTUR), (1999), vol. 5, p.49-51; fig. 30-32 ad 89. This is the modern replacement for Platner & Ashby, I gather; naturally it is out of print.
- A. Carandini, *Atlas of Ancient Rome*, Princeton (revised ed. 2017). This must contain a really modern overview, and is naturally impossibly expensive.

The building of the Palazzo Rospigliosi at the end of the 16th century did not destroy every remnant of this monstrous structure, and I gather that some material at foundation level



may still be seen in the palazzo, if you have the right connections.<sup>[1]</sup> More was visible before the construction of the Via Nazionale around 1900, as part of the process of transforming sleepy old papal Rome into a modern capital city. The following engraving of “the remains of the baths of Constantine” was made by Luigi Rossini in 1817, on copper.<sup>[2]</sup>



Avanzi delle terme di Costantino su Quirinale - Luigi Rossini - 1817

I don't know where this might be situated, however.

1. <sup>[1]</sup>See the Treccani article linked above, which seems to rely on the LTUR article.↩
  2. <sup>[2]</sup>Image and information from the Galleria Trincia, [here](#).↩
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