ROME – The ‘I Fori Imperiali,’ the ‘Alessandrino Quartiere,’ and the ‘Via dell’ Impero’:
Martin G. Conde, Washington DC, USA (June 2013). mgconde@yahoo.com


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“La storia moderna dei Fori Imperiali è’ soprattutto storia di mutamenti di mentalità’ e di consequenti conflitti di interessi; così’ se non si tiene ben conto delle rapide trasformazioni ideologiche che hanno costellato le vicende in questo secolo, la problematica connessa all’ area archeologica forense risulterebbe davvero incomprensibile. (…) Con nuove champagne di scavo, progetti di musealizzazione, interventi di diversa viabilità’ si e’ così tornati [1998-2000], dopo più’ di sessanta, ad affrontare nuovamente la problematica dell’ area dei Fori Imperiali, con una diversa mentalità’ e soprattutto con la maturità necessaria per non sottovalutare ne’ la delicatezza archeologica del sito del sito storico ne’ l’importanza strategica dei rapporti ambiente-città’ funzionale,…”

Dott.ssa Silvana Rizzo,
“Archeologia dei Fori Imperiali”,

“…I Fori Imperiali sono ancora ostruiti dal moncone di via Alessandrina; troppi muretti di varia epoca rendono l’insieme incomprensibile; i bordi sono orripilanti; mancano passaggi per collegare le diverse aree. Ridurre o abolire il traffico in via dei Fori va bene, ma non basta. Al Colosseo, sul cui restauro continuano a pullulare notizie inesatte, occorrerebbe un museo nell’anello superiore. Al Foro e al Palatino urgono didascalie accompagnate da grafici, mentre nella Curia Piero Angela potrebbe inscenare spettacoli topografici e architettonici straordinari. Il secondo peristilio della casa di Ottaviano verrà scavato e restaurato? La Domus Aurea, chiusa, quando sarà liberata dalla terra del sovrastante giardino, che l’infradicia? E l’abusato Circo Massimo resterà nella squallida condizione attuale? Ho constatato in Inghilterra la cura estrema che il National Trust riserva ai visitatori, che vengono a un tempo educati e intrattenuti - è la valorizzazione!”

Prof. Andrea Carandini,
“Il patrimonio dissipate,”
Corriere della Sera Roma (05/06/2013), p. 1.
“To expose and exploit this [the city of Rome's archaeological and architectural] heritage remained the urban policy through the early decades of Roma Capitale, and most emphatically so under the Fascist regime. “Surely, among the great expediens of Mussolini,” commented Baldini in 1932, “that of showing Rome to the Romans will remain on of the most memorable.” To the Romans … and to us. We do not recall enough that what we see and study the architectural history of Rome has been selected, cleaned up and staged for us by the planners and rulers of Third Rome. They were the ones who decided which past buildings were worth of preservation, and which expendable for the sake of progress; how much of excavated antiquity would be retained for show, and how much quickly buried again under paving or new construction. To be a creditable student of Roman antiquity or the Middle Ages, or the Renaissance and Baroque, should presuppose solid familiarity with modern Rome, its city archives, contemporary newspapers, journals.”

Prof. Arch. Spiro Kostof,

“…Although archaeology is inextricably woven into the fabric of daily life in Rome – a city nearly three millennia old – there, as elsewhere, it is synonymous with digging below the levels of the modern city. And yet, for archaeologist in Rome, research in the archives of the excavations of the 19th and 20th century is an indispensable tool. (...) Yet, while extraordinary varied and numerous, the materials on the Forum of Trajan typify those which record many of the ancient monuments. In addition, photographers and architects employed by the Superintendence of Latium and the City of Rome annually document the results of new excavations; and aid to repair and consolidation, both the Superintendency and the City Commission measured drawings of standard monuments. Little of this invaluable visual information is ever published: filed in appropriate archive, most is simply of forgotten. It is hoped that archaeologists of the future will no longer make this mistake.”

Prof. James E. Packer,
“Contemporary Archaeology in Rome: The Archival Evidence.”

“I am an undergraduate art history student at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, IL; working a ‘senior thesis’ on fascist period archaeology and urbanism in Rome. My interest is specifically the Fori Imperiali, Ara Pacis and mausoleum of Augustus. (If curious, I came upon this topic during a study abroad program last spring with the American University of Rome.) I have hit a wall trying to find information about recent debates, activities and such surrounding the destruction of the via dei Fori Imperiali and excavating the Fori Imperiali. Some sources I have read say (very briefly) the removal of the via dei Fori Imperiali is definite and others say it will never happen. What, or who exactly is either stopping ‘them’ from ripping this road out, or preserving it?? I understand excavations are continuing in the Forum of Nerva, but I have no details. Do you know the immediate plans in excavating this area? Any information would be helpful and much appreciated.”

[Prof.] Linda A. Nolan,
“The Imperial Fora Debate & Excavations (Feb. 1996),”
Cited from: ‘ROMARCH – Internet List Server (Feb. 1996);’
The purpose of this report on Rome – the ‘I Fori Imperiali,’ the ‘Alessandrino Quartiere,’ and the ‘Via dell’Impero’ (1993-2013), is to provide Italian and international scholars, university students and related researchers interested in the scholarly studies for each one these respective fascinating unified historical sites (e.g., the multi-disciplinary perspective – archaeology, restoration architecture, art-history, archival, library, museum curatorial & education activities; & multi-period – Early Rome, Ancient Rome, Christian Rome, Medieval Rome, Renaissance Rome, etc.), and on through Fascist Rome of the early 1920s – late 1930s etc.); along with reporting on the correlating research focusing on the local (City of Rome’s town-council) and Italian national (the Italian Ministry of Culture & other agencies) various political, social, urban, and archaeological planning initiatives (c. late 1970s to the present as June 2013) for safeguarding, enhancing, preserving these sites, and the gradual [and or past political & scholarly failure of improperly] attempting to re-integrate these unified historical sites within the contemporary urban fabric of Rome of the early 21st century. Moreover, the purpose of this report, the documentation and dissemination of the scholarly studies & related research for the ‘I Fori Imperiali,’ the ‘Alessandrino Quartiere,’ and the ‘Via dell’Impero’, will also focus on providing scholars, university students, and related researchers with a thorough systematically updated listing of traditional bibliographical materials & later electronic multi-media resources for these unified historical sites (e.g. official Italian & international scholarly reports, monographs, exhibition catalogues, official local & Italian national contemporary documents & archival materials, Italian and international media resources, numerous unpublished graduate thesis, other unpublished private materials, and including numerous personal communications & commentaries by several Italian politicians & international scholars & university graduate students, all directly affiliated the studies & research of these sites, etc.). And finally, the purpose of this report, the documentation and dissemination of the scholarly studies & related research for the ‘I Fori Imperiali,’ the ‘Alessandrino Quartiere,’ and the ‘Via dell’Impero’, will also focus providing scholars, university students and related researchers with an extensive collection of over 3000 or more contemporary digital and historical photographs, e.g. satellite and aerial imagery, bird’s-eye views, high-resolution detail photographs showing in detail the progress of the archaeological investigations & architectural surveys as conducted within the area of the Imperial Fora, etc., since the early 1980s until the present (June 2013).

Thank you Martin G. Conde, Washington DC, USA (June 2013).

[Note: Research for this report conducted between February 1999 until June 2013].