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Beyond the fortifications... Rimini's archaeology

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Museo della Marineria di Pesaro W. Patrignani, Pesaro (Italy)

After the Austrians defeat at Solferino (24 June 1859), the romagnole's legations proclaimed the end of the temporary power of the Church and the approval to annex the Kingdom of Sardegna, which were admitted the 10th of May 1860.

On the 7th of September 1859 Garibaldi is in Rimini and on the 19th of October, General Manfredi Fanti commands his vice Garibaldi to defend the frontier, to resist the enemy and once pushed back, to give chase beyond the border, and in the end to send the armaments and soldiers to the cities and provinces of the Marche, to rebel.[Masetti Zannini 1990, 284-286]

What is the border between the Pontifical State and the free part of the Septentrional Italy? Rimini or more likely Cattolica Tavollo River, where the artillery is positioned, which Garibaldi repeatedly visited in September of 1859.

General Fanti in his daily order from the 18th of November 1859 declared that in order to obtain a positive outcome was dependent on the numerous ranks of soldiers at their disposal and on the fact that their building fortifications at Mirandola and Rimini, while Bologna "cinta di cannoni, diverrà in un'epoca non lontana il centro che ci darà sicurezza e protezione in qualunque evento". [De La Bédollière 1859, 200]

On the 8th of December Major Lissana of the Military Intelligence sent a letter to the Mayor of Rimini, in which he suggests to nominate an expert for the evaluation of the fields to expropriate and to excavate the fortifications: "Per ordine di S.E. il generale in capo delle truppe della Lega dell'Italia centrale dovendo mandare ad effetto nella città di Rimini taluni lavori di fortificazione, i quali richiedono l'occupazione di vari terreni: così sarà compiacente nominare un perito agrario di questo Municipio per la dovuta stima di quei terreni. I suddetti lavori non ammettendo indugio, la pregherei della sollecitudine di una tale nomina". Il Gonfaloniere risponde che a termini di legge non può espropriare i terreni e il permesso deve venire dalla Sotto-Intendenza distrettuale [Archivio di Stato di Rimini, Archivio Storico Comunale, b. 837].

The Mayor responds that lawfully one cannot expropriate the fields and that the permit derives from the Sotto-Intendenza Distrettuale.

The works are done between February and March 1860 and came to realization by the 10th Company of the 2nd Military Intelligence's Regiment, which in September of the same year they would be engaged in the attack of the San Leo Fortress and subsequently in the siege of Ancona. [Menabrea 1864, 20-21]

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Maurizio Quadrio, in an article of the periodical, *Pensiero e azione*, of February 1860, about the fortifications comments: "c'è tanta esuberanza di pubblico e privato peculio che si gettano milioni in fortificazioni di lusso intorno a Bologna e a Rimini, fortificazioni di lusso, dico io, poiché, grazie al cielo, non esiste più frontiera alla Cattolica, ma una sola frontiera d'Italia al Capo Passaro e al Brenner [...]". [Quadrio 1860, 371-372]

In fact these fortifications will never witness battles, because the war manoeuvres will move in the Marche region, but the excavations of the enormous trenches around the suburbs of the city, in particular beyond August Arch, at the margins of the ancient Flaminia Road and beyond Porta Montanara, along the ancient Aretina Road, are the opportunities to discover numerous works in marbles and epigraphs related to Roman graves, situated on the margins of the consular roads.

The importance of the find convinced the municipal administration to continue the archaeological excavations also in the following year 1861, before the trenches were recovered: the explorations were rewarded for the discoveries of one-hundred pieces, among some inscribed steles, pieces of entire column, but above all the blocks of marble which form two important dado funerary monuments, with decorated frieze, of republican epoch (I sec. a.C.), with respective names of the deceased Caius Maecius and Quintus Ovius. The written and the interpretation of the inscriptions of these epigraphic monuments occupied for a long time the most illustrious epigraphists of the times, among them Gaetano Rocchi and Bartolomeo Borghesi and even to this day there are disputes among the experts. [Donati 1995, 394-398]

Luigi Tonini the first to note the discoveries in 1862, in appendix of the 3rd volume of his monumental *Storia di Rimini*, wanted show the epigraphies most representative in the *Galleria Nuova Archeologica*, staged by him in Biblioteca Gambalunga [Tonini 1862, XXV-XXXVIII], which constitutes the most ancient nucleus of the actual Musei Comunali di Rimini.

In 1923 all the materials of the museum collection, included the epigraphies of what we speak, they were moved and temporary shown in the S. Francesco Convent, once situated near the Malatestian Temple, then destroyed by the war, since 1994 they are visible in the Lapidario of the actual site of the City Museum, in the ex Collegio dei Gesuiti in via Luigi Tonini [Pasini 1995, 7-14].

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