

Zgodovinski časopis

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Javier Á. Domingo and Luigi Finocchietti, *Saint Jerome in Rome. Historical and Archaeological Hypotheses* • Vesna Badurina Stipčević, *Le Vite e la Traslazione di san Girolamo nei testi croato-glagolitici* • Andrej Nared, *Der brief ist nicht ausganngen. Razmišljanja o(b) zlati buli, ki je Kranjci niso dobili* • Izidor Janžekovič, *Etnični »stereotipi« v zgodnjemoveški Evropi: ruska in turška narodna noša* • Martin Boček, *Cunard Line and its operations within the Habsburg Monarchy* • Gary B. Cohen, *Historical Scholarship on the Habsburg Monarchy (1526–1918) in North America* • Irena Selišnik, *Status državljanstva ob nastanku nove Države SHS. Strategije izbire* • Aleš Gabrič, *Prepoved izida romana Branka Hofmana ali šestletna noč do poznega jutra*

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Razprave

Javier Á. Domingo and Luigi Finocchietti

Saint Jerome in Rome. Historical and Archaeological Hypotheses*

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Saint Jerome in Rome. Historical and Archaeological Hypotheses

This paper provides a critical revision of all the pertinent historical and archaeological data pertaining to the presence of Saint Jerome in Rome, and in particular his activities, his places of residence and his social contacts within the Roman aristocracy. As assistant and secretary to Pope Damasus, Jerome worked in archives, situated on the western reaches of the Field of Mars. This study explores the literary and topographical evidence with regard to the block of San Girolamo della Carità, situated in the Western Campo Marzio, which is currently the site of the eponymous church.

Keywords: Saint Jerome, Rome, Campus Martius, Saint Paula Romana's domus, Topography.

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Sveti Hieronim v Rimu. Zgodovinske in arheološke hipoteze

Članek prinaša kritičen pregled relevantnih zgodovinskih in arheoloških podatkov, ki se nanašajo na prisotnost sv. Hieronima v Rimu, še posebej njegove dejavnosti, stanovanja in stikov z rimsko aristokracijo. Kot asistent in tajnik papeža Damaza je delal v arhivih na zahodnem delu Marsovega polja. Študija preučuje literarne in topografske dokaze, povezane s kompleksom San Girolamo della Carità, ki se nahaja na zahodnem Marsovem polju, na mestu, kjer stoji istoimenska cerkev.

Ključne besede: sveti Hieronim, Marsovo polje, domus svete Pavle Rimske, topografija.

* The article is based on the paper presented at the international symposium on the 1600th anniversary of Jerome's death, Hieronymus noster, Ljubljana, October 24th–26th, 2019.

Introduction

We present here the conclusions derived from the analysis of the architectural structures found at the site in which tradition places the house of Saint Paula, where Saint Jerome resided for some time during his stay in Rome. The results of these investigations were recently published in a monograph¹.

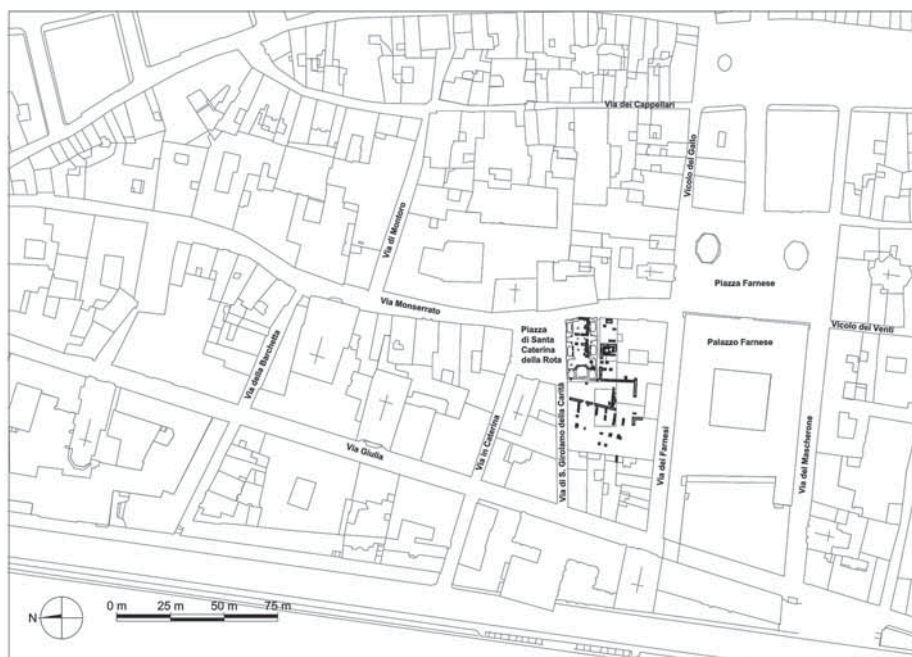


Fig. 1: Location of the block known as San Girolamo della Carità in the western Campus Martius, with the layout of the architectural structures found and the plan of the church of San Girolamo della Carità (Author: J. A. Domingo).

The city block involved in this study (Fig. 1) is situated between via dei Farnesi, via Giulia, via di San Girolamo della Carità and via di Monserrato. Beginning in 1998, a series of excavations was carried out under the supervision of the then *Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma*. They investigated the ground below the

¹ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*.

church of San Girolamo della Carità and the building that now houses the library of the Pontificia Università della Santa Croce. A broad chronology from Antiquity to the Middle Ages was attributed to the architectural structures found there. At the time of their discovery they were only afforded a preliminary communication² which has since been enhanced by the new studies carried out.

The excavated area was divided into multiple rooms delimited by walls that make up the foundations of the modern buildings above. This subdivision hinders an overall view of all the preserved structures and also makes it difficult to identify the alignments of the partially preserved ancient walls. However, using a rudimentary triangulation system (due to the lack of more sophisticated equipment), we were able to draw up a planimetry showing all the preserved remains. We reconstructed the wall alignments and distinguished the different chronological phases.

As will be seen, based on the current data, we cannot confirm the definite presence here of the house in which tradition tells us Saint Jerome lived. However, neither is there any evidence that would contradict such a possibility, which has been cited, as we shall see, by many authors over the centuries and is supported by various testimonies.

Literary testimonies regarding the place where Saint Jerome lived in Rome

We know that Saint Jerome arrived in Rome in the year 382 AD, having been called by Pope Damasus to occupy the position of his private secretary, and that he left the city in 385 AD on a journey to the Holy Land. We also know that he frequently communicated with the Pope through letters delivered by a messenger. From this we deduce that he did not live in the Lateran complex, the seat of the papacy, but some distance from it³, thus explaining the need for an intermediary.

There is also a tradition that places the house in which Saint Jerome lived in the western sector of the Campus Martius, near the new basilica built by Pope Damasus and dedicated to San Lorenzo in Prasina. The remains of this church have been located below the courtyard of the Palazzo della Cancelleria, a few meters from the present-day basilica of San Lorenzo in Damaso, where the papal archives would have been held, a suitable place in which to undertake the work of a secretary⁴. Based on the multiple hypotheses put forward by scholars, this house could have been in one of the internal stone-built bodies in the basilica complex; in the *domus* found below the nearby Barraco Museum (according to some hypotheses belonging to the family of Pope Damasus)⁵; or in a small room (*hospitolium*) in this area, perhaps belonging to him, as appears to be indicated by the content of

² Rinaldoni, *Contributo per la conoscenza*, pp. 371–394; Rinaldoni and Ferracci, *Ceramiche medievali*, pp. 277–285.

³ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 85. Ep. 35,1 and 36,1.

⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 85; Regarding the identification here of the Papal archives see: Krauthheimer and Pentiricci, *La basilica di*, p. 267.

⁵ Cfr. Labourt, *Où Saint Jérôme*, p. 207.

some letters (*Epist.* 42.3, 385 AD: “*Fuerat quidem prolixius disserendum, sed quoniam et amicis qui ad nostrum hospitium conuenerunt, praesentiam nostram negare nos possumus, et tibi non statim respondere admodum uisum est adrogantis, latam disputationem breui sermone comprehendimus, ut non tam epistulam quam commentariolum dictaremus*”).

We also know that Saint Jerome lived in Saint Paula Romana's house for three years (*Epist.* 45.2, 385 AD: “*Paene certe trienio cum eis uixi*”), which, as we will see, tradition places on the plot of land we are studying. In another letter written the year before, Saint Jerome asked Saint Paula to greet her daughters, Blesilla and Eustochium⁶ (*Epist.* 30.14: “*Saluta Blesillam et Eustochium, tirunculas nostras; saluta Felicianem*”), perhaps because at that time he was living in another room in Rome⁷. In fact, Saint Jerome frequented the *domus* of Christian matrons in Rome for the purpose of encouraging prayer circles and the study of the Holy Scriptures. We know that these meetings took place, for example, in the house of Marcella in the Aventino, as well as in that of Saint Paula Romana⁸.

The localisation of the domus of Saint Paula Romana and the early church of Saint Jerome

We have no historical reports or archaeological documentation that would indicate the precise location of the *domus* of Saint Paula. We only have a tradition and some indications of a topographic nature that place this house in the Campus Martius. We would now like to focus our attention on three aspects:

1) There is an ancient tradition that the church of San Girolamo della Carità in the Campus Martius, probably built between 1425 and 1477⁹, was erected on the site previously occupied by a 5th-century-AD church, which in turn was built above the house of Saint Paula Romana¹⁰. The existence of this hypothetical

⁶ For bibliographic information on Saint Paula's children, cfr. Consolino, *Tradizionalismo*, pp. 90–98.

⁷ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 85.

⁸ Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 92–93; Steinmann, *Saint Jérôme*, p. 133.

⁹ Buchowiecki, *Handbuch der Kirchen*, p. 158; Ardizzon, *San Girolamo*, pp. 33 and 118.

¹⁰ This tradition, of which we do not know the origin, is cited in a work by O. Panciroli in 1625: “*Hauendo S. Damaso Papa chiamato à Roma S. Girolamo, come s'è detto à S. Anastasia, morto il Pontefice, e succedendoli Siricio, vedendo alcune persone ecclesiastiche, dalle quali per la dottrina, e santità era inuidiato, che più di lui non voleua seruirsì il nuovo Pontefice, pigliarono occasione di perseguitarlo, interpretando in mala parte la conuersatione sua con alcune Matrone Romane, che dalla vanità del mondo haueua conuertito ad vna vita spirituale, e santa, trà le quali fu S. Paola con tutta la sua nobilissima fameglia; e può essere che à S. Girolamo doppo la morte di S. Damaso quì gli desse per alcuni giorni stanza S. Paola, insin che vi fosse commodità di nauigare per lo ritorno all'amata sua Betlemme; ne altro potiamo sapere della prima fondatione di quest'antichissima chiesa, che forsi era Collegiata, quando Sisto IV. la diede à gl'Osseruanti di S. Francesco, del cui Ordine egli era stato*” (Panciroli, *I tesori nascosti*, pp. 764–765). Subsequently it appears again cited in a work by G. Marangoni del 1712: “*Della prima fondazione di questa concordano gli Scrittori, & Antiquari più diligenti, & accurati, e le tradizioni, che fosse la Casa di Santa Paola Nobilissima Matrona Romana convertita da San*

early-Christian church could be linked to the presence of a monastery or place of prayer in Saint Paula's family house, where, as we have said, some of the prayer and study meetings with Saint Jerome would have taken place¹¹. In fact, we know that the saint advised the young Paula not to go alone to the vigils that were held in the large basilicas of Rome, where a great multitude of people congregated, but to pray in her house, where we can imagine there was a small chapel (*Epist.* 107. 9: "*Basilicas martyrum et ecclesias sine matre non adeat (. . .). Praeponatur ei probae fidei, et morum ac pudicitiae uirgo ueterana, quae illam doceat, et adsuescat exemplo ad orationem et psalmos nocte consurgere; mane hymnos canere, tertia, sexta, nona hora quasi bellatricem Christi stare in acie, accensaque lucernula reddere sacrificium uespertinum. Sic dies transeat, sic nox inueniat laborantem. Orationi lectio, lectioni succedat oratio. Breue uidebitur tempus, quod tantis operum uarietatibus occupatur*"). Although Saint Jerome makes no specific reference to a chapel in this house, we know that they were not uncommon in the private *domus* of the aristocratic Christian families of this period. For example, when Saint Ambrose arrived in Rome, he held Holy Mass in the house of a matron who lived in Trastevere¹², and we know that Saint Melania the Younger (383–439 AD), a member of the wealthy Valerii family, had a private chapel in her large family *domus* in Rome's Celio district¹³.

2) The church of San Girolamo della Carità is one of the few in Rome dedicated to this saint, and it is the only one for which there is no explanation for such a dedication other than the presence here of a tradition linked to the memory of the saint. In fact, the church of San Girolamo dei Croati, built in the port area of Ripetta in the 15th century, was erected in the place where, since the 14th century, there had been a settlement of fugitives from of Illyria who had escaped the persecution of the Turks, a fact that explains the dedication of the church to a saint who was a native of that region¹⁴. Another church is documented in the second half of the 16th century, although it corresponds to a change in the name of the earlier

Girolamo con altre sue pari dalle vanità del secolo ad una vita tutta spirituale assieme con la sua numerosa famiglia. In questa Casa suppone il Pancirolo, che detta Santa dasse alloggio a San Girolamo prima che questo ritornasse alla sua Cara, & amata Betlemme doppo la morte di San Damaso Papa. E Giosesto Sacerdote Palermitano Teologo, & Antiquario Erudito (...) Servo di Dio Francesco Marlupino era solito dire, che chiamato detto Santo a Roma da San Damaso Papa, ebbe in questo luogo l'abitazione, e la stanza. Et è da credersi (soggiunse egli in un suo manoscritto) tanto più che l'antica tradizione è, che nel sito ove ora è la Chiesa di San Girolamo fosse stata la Casa di Santa Paola Discepola del Santo Dottore, che quivi abitò (...). Laonde, e probabile, che doppo la morte di detta Santa i Cristiani di quel tempo in memoria di S. Girolamo, così benemerito della Chiesa Cattolica, la riducessero in Chiesa, la quale in progresso di tempo al sentire del preaccennato Pancirolo fù Collegiata" (Marangoni, *Vita del servo*, pp. 55–56). F. F. Ardizzon returns to this tradition suggesting that the early church would have been divided into three naves by columns (Ardizzon, *San Girolamo*, pp. 117–118).

¹¹ Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 92–93; Steinmann, *Saint Jérôme*, p. 133.

¹² Špidlic, *Melania la Giovane*, p. 157.

¹³ Carandini, Ricci and De Vos, *Filosofiana*, pp. 39–42; Guidobaldi, *L'edilizia abitativa*, pp. 186–188; Lega, *Il cd. Tesoro*, pp. 77–105.

¹⁴ Armellini, *Le Chiese*, pp. 399–401; Barbiellini, *13. San Girolamo*, pp. 43–48; Hülsen, *Le Chiese di*, pp. 380–381.

church dedicated to San Salvatoris de Cornutis, subsequently dedicated to San Hieronimo. That church was demolished in 1612 under the pontificate of Paul V to allow for the expansion of the present-day Palazzo Rospigliosi¹⁵. More recently, on 9 March 1960, the parish church of San Girolamo a Corviale was built on the outskirts of Rome.

3) We also have reports from 1419 according to which Pope Martin V granted the Franciscans permission to build a hospital near the church of Santa Caterina della Rota, a few metres from the plot we are studying, that he wanted to be dedicated to Saint Jerome¹⁶. The fact that the Pope had specified this dedication could mean that before the construction of the church of San Girolamo della Carità, as we have said prior to 1425, the saint had already been venerated in that place, otherwise Saint Francis would have been the patron saint¹⁷.

The archaeological documentation

The city block we are studying has restored architectural structures that can be dated from the late 1st century BC to the 5th century AD, with parts surviving from the medieval period. We have identified at least four different chronological phases.

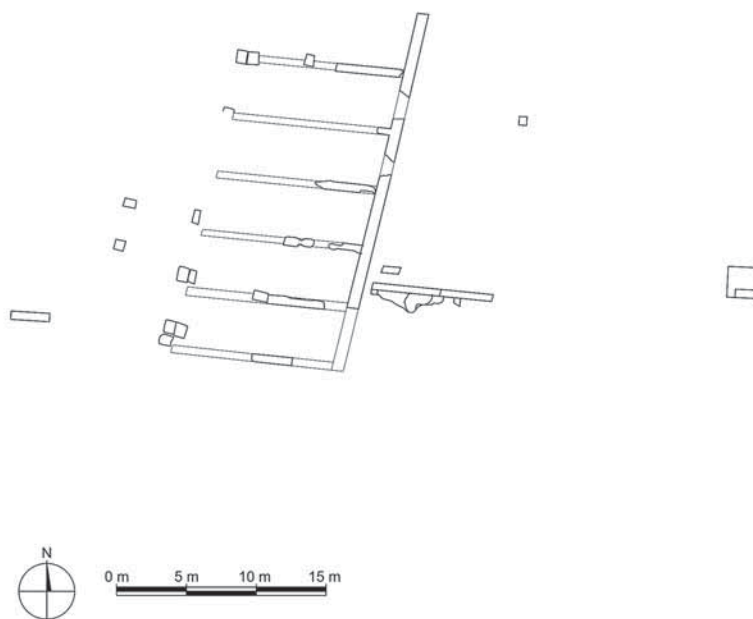


Fig. 2: Hypothetical reconstruction of the preserved architectural structures from the first phase (Authors: J. Á. Domingo & L. Finocchiatti).

¹⁵ Hülsen, *Le Chiese di*, pp. 435–436.

¹⁶ Pietrangeli, *Guide rionali*, pp. 46–47.

¹⁷ Ardizzon, *San Girolamo*, p. 118.

As far as the first phase¹⁸ is concerned (Fig. 2), the architectural structures have been identified as part of one of the factions of the circus (probably the *factio Veneta*), more specifically the stable for the horses and some of the annexed service and/or residential areas. This would explain the unusual shape of the structure, which is made up of elongated rooms. This hypothesis is based firstly on its location in the proximity of public buildings involved in chariot races, such as the *Circo Flaminio*¹⁹ and the *Trigarium* (for exercise and practice)²⁰; and secondly on the discovery in the area of the building complexes interpreted as the remains of the *stabula* of these circus factions (Fig. 3). The latter include the structures found

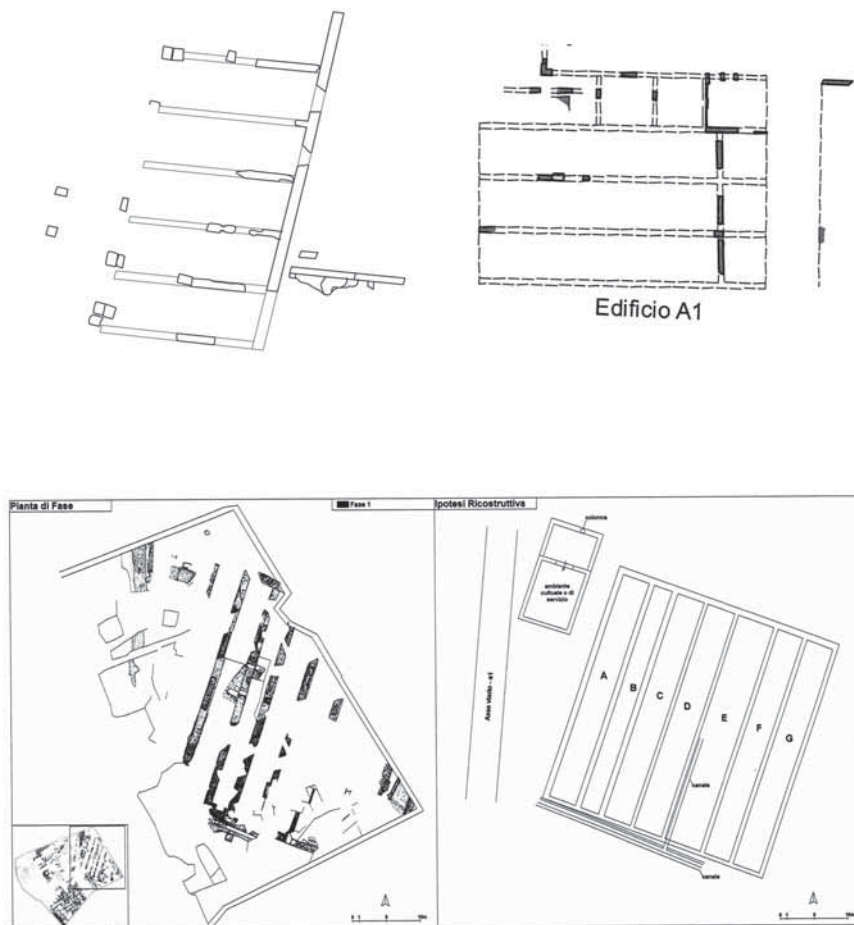


Fig. 3: Comparison between the first phase structures (top left, authors: J. Á. Domingo & L. Finocchietti) and the remains found below the Palazzo della Cancelleria (top right: Pentiricci 2009b, p. 207, Fig. 4) and with the remains of largo Perosi (below: Filippi 2015, p. 397, Fig. 6).

¹⁸ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 29–44.

¹⁹ Cfr. Gatti, *Dove erano*.

²⁰ Coarelli, *Il Campo Marzio*, pp. 839–840; Coarelli, s.v. *Trigarium*; Pentiricci, *Il settore occidentale*, pp. 25–28.

below the nearby Palazzo Farnese (*factio Veneta*)²¹ during the recent excavations of largo Perosi (as far as the *stabulum* of the *factionis Russatae* is concerned)²² and below the Palazzo della Cancelleria, where archaeologists identified more stables probably belonging to the *factio Prasina*, a name that remained fossilised in the basilica built by Pope Damasus just above it and dedicated to San Lorenzo in Prasina. Moreover, placed in this sector of the Campus Martius is fragment of the *Forma Urbis* with the inscribed name of *vi[cus Sta]blarius*²³.

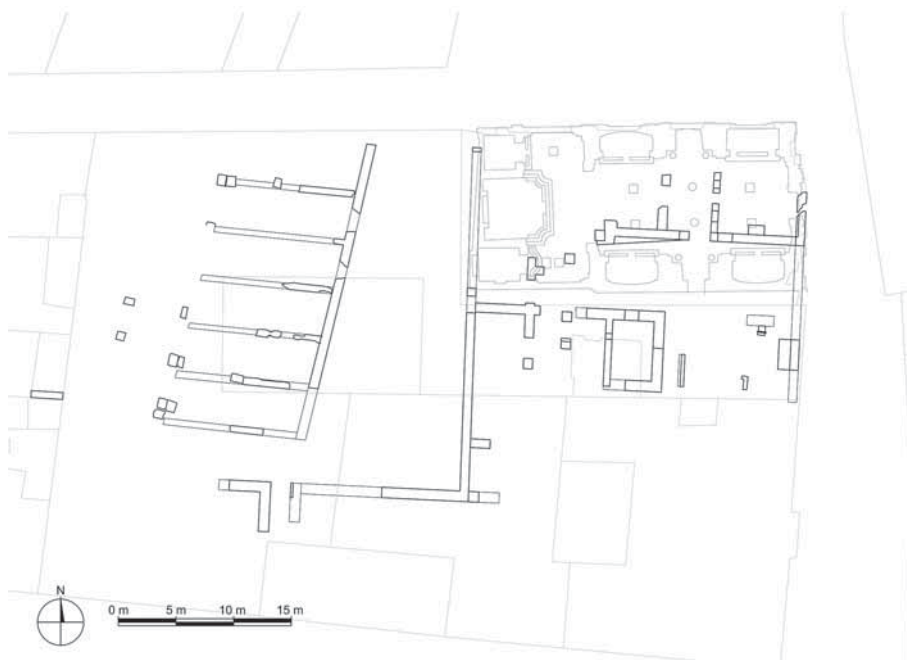


Fig. 4: Hypothetical reconstruction of the structures preserved from the second phase with the superposition of the plan of the church of San Girolamo della Carità and the other modern constructions (Authors: J. Á. Domingo & L. Finocchietti).

During the second phase of the life of the complex (Fig. 4)²⁴, from the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD, in the easternmost part of the block a building was constructed. It consisted of a series of rooms, probably of an industrial or manufacturing nature, situated on the ground floor of a building that would have been several storeys high.

During the third phase²⁵, which we date to the 4th century AD, the eastern sector of the study area was subjected to a transformation that brought about a change in the use of many of the rooms and the insertion of prestige decorative elements, such as marble plaques for the floors and walls, taking advantage of the structures from the previous phase (Fig. 5). We are probably looking at the conversion of the building into an opulent private *domus* that, not long after (in this or the subsequent phase),

²¹ Cfr. Vallet, *Les fouilles*, pp. 627–628; Pentiricci, *Il settore occidentale*, p. 55.

²² Filippi, *Il quartiere dello*; Gregori, *Documenti epigrafici*.

²³ Rodríguez Almeida, *Forma Urbis*, pp. 113 and 115.

²⁴ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 45–64.

²⁵ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 65–73.

was affected by a seismic movement (perhaps identifiable with the earthquakes of 443 AD or 484–508 AD)²⁶ that affected the stability of some of the walls.



Fig. 5: *Opus sectile* floor from the 4th century AD found in the western sector of the plot, immediately to the south of the foundation wall of the church of San Girolamo della Carità (Author: J. Á. Domingo).

In the fourth phase, from the 5th century AD²⁷, we attest the erection of *opus vittatum* pilasters (Figs. 6–7) placed at regular distances with an L-shaped distribution. We do not know if they are related to the previous *domus* or were perhaps for another type of construction built after the aforementioned earthquake²⁸.

In addition to its architectural opulence, which is in keeping with the status of the family of the matron Paula, the lifetime of this *domus* covers the whole period Saint Jerome was in the city. Therefore, at the current state of the research, nothing appears to contradict the tradition that this was the site of Saint Paula's *domus*.

On the other hand, we have already mentioned the tradition according to which in the 5th century AD the house was converted into a church with three na-

²⁶ Regarding the earthquakes that occurred in this period and their effects on Rome, see: Galadini, Ricci, Falcucci and Panzieri, *I terremoti del*, pp. 148–159; Guidoboni, *I terremoti*, pp. 199–202 and 560–619.

²⁷ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 75–81.

²⁸ Below the nearby Palazzo Spada it was possible to verify the effects of an earthquake in the second half of the 5th century AD (Rinaldoni and Savi, *Edifici antichi*, pp. 7–9; Rinaldoni, *Contributo per la*, pp. 380), after which some of the walls were rebuilt with a very similar *opus vittatum* to that documented in the pilasters of the block of San Girolamo della Carità.

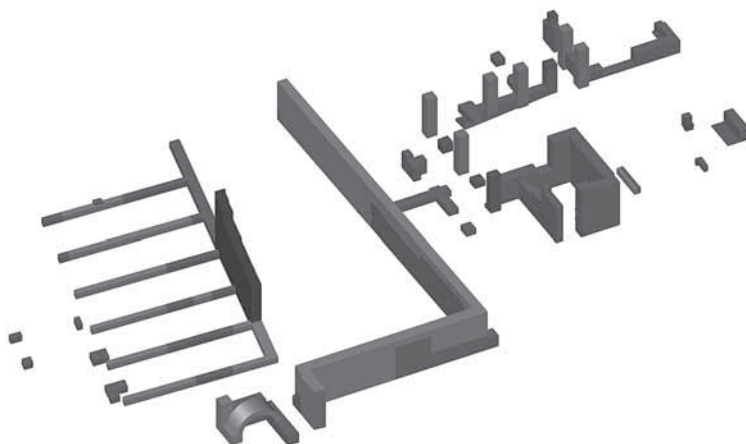


Fig. 6: Three-dimensional reconstruction of the structures still in use in the 4th century AD, with the addition of the *opus vittatum* pilasters (Authors: J. Á. Domingo & L. Finocchietti).



Fig. 7: *Opus vittatum* pilaster (Author: J. Á. Domingo).

ves dedicated to the memory of Saint Jerome. It must be said that we know of no architectural structure that would allow us to definitively confirm the existence of this church. The only evidence that could lead to a certain reflection in this respect is that of the structures from the fourth phase, during which the opulent *domus* was transformed with the erection of *opus vittatum* pilasters arranged in a L shape; we do not know if this addition corresponded to a restructuring of the house or the construction of a new building with another purpose. Could it be related to the construction of a church on the first floor of the *domus*? We know that this was not uncommon in Rome, where we have examples such as the chapel built above the stairs that led to the second floor of the so-called Houses of the Celio and the

successive construction of a church above this second floor in the 5th century AD (*Titulus Pammachii*)²⁹; the *Titulus Anastasiae* built at an uncertain time in the 4th century AD on the first floor of a 2nd–3rd-century-AD *insula* on the southwestern side of the Palatine hill³⁰; and finally, the transformation of an *aula* with an apse on the second floor of a *domus* in the church of Santa Lucia in Orphea (later in Selcis), commissioned by Pope Honorius I (625–638 AD)³¹.

We could also associate, albeit hypothetically, some of the decorative elements from our plot with a 5th-century-AD church:

- A 71 x 62.5 cm Proconnesus marble chancel or window lattice (Fig. 8)³² datable to the 4th–5th centuries AD. It comes from a window for which there are parallels in early-Christian altars with *fenestella confessionis*. These are frequently found in *ad corpus* worship buildings in the suburbs (a function that can be ruled out for this piece, as it came from within the city) and in the windows of some early-Christian churches, of a similar size to our piece; such as that in the upper part of the wall of the central nave in the church of San Giorgio in Velabro or in Santa Sabina, with pieces from the 11th century.



Fig. 8: Chancel or window lattice from the 4th–5th century AD (Author: J. Á. Domingo).

²⁹ Cfr. Englen, Filatici, Palazzo, Pavolini and Santolini, *Caelius II*.

³⁰ Brandenburg, *Le prime chiese*, pp. 134–135.

³¹ Guidobaldi, *L'edilizia abitativa*, pp. 188–192; Serlorenzi, *Santa Lucia*.

³² Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 127–134.

- A capital (Fig. 9)³³ 26 cm tall and 23.5 cm in lower diameter datable to the late 4th–5th centuries AD. It could have belonged to a *domus* or a basilica, although in the latter case, its small size would suggest it perhaps came from a baldachin.



Fig. 9: Capital from the late-4th-5th century AD (Author: J. Á. Domingo).

- Various column shafts³⁴ reused in a 15th-century courtyard in the middle of the block. The period of their reuse coincides with the construction of the first phase of the present-day church of San Girolamo della Carità that, thanks to some early engravings, such as that of Bufalini from 1551 (Fig. 10)³⁵, we know had a single nave. We could also imagine, albeit very hypothetically, that these shafts came from the earlier 5th-century-AD church with three naves that was dismantled to build the new church with a single nave.

Finally, from a historical perspective, we have information that could give more credibility to the hypotheses regarding the transformation of the *domus* owned by Saint Paula into a worship building dedicated to Saint Jerome, irrespective of the question of its exact localisation. This historical data consists of the evidence of the epistolary friendship Saint Jerome maintained with the well-known senator, Pammachius³⁶. Pammachius married one of Paula's daughters, Paulina, who had no children and on her death left her worldly goods (and probably also her share

³³ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 119–120.

³⁴ Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 122–125.

³⁵ Frutaz, *Le Pianta di Roma*, CIX, 18, Tav. 207; Domingo and Finocchietti, *L'Isolato di*, pp. 95–97.

³⁶ Hier., *Ep.* 48, I; 49, I; Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 19.



Fig. 10: First depiction of the church of San Girolamo della Carità, Bufalini 1551 (Papaldo 1978, p. 18, Fig. 1).

of her mother's estate, such as the *domus* situated hypothetically in the block we are studying), to her husband. We know for certain that Senator Pammachius promoted the construction of ecclesiastical buildings in other city blocks he owned. One example is the church of the Ss. Giovanni e Paolo in the Celio hill (*Titulus Pammachi*)³⁷, meaning that it is quite plausible that he would have wished to honour the memory of Saint Jerome by building a place of worship dedicated to him in the room (probably on the first floor of the house) where he had lived, which had come into Pammachius' ownership when his wife, Saint Paula's daughter, had died.

Conclusions

Tradition tells us that Saint Jerome's home when he lived in Rome was in the block we are studying, a tradition that appears to be supported by some evidence, such as the construction on this very spot in the 15th century of a church dedicated to the saint and the decision of Pope Martin V in 1419 to dedicate a hospital erected near the church of Santa Caterina de la Rota to the saint.

On the other hand, archaeology, despite having been unable to confirm the effective presence here of the house where Saint Jerome lived, does show how such a tradition is perfectly plausible based on the data obtained.

³⁷ Englen, Filatici, Palazzo, Pavolini and Santolini, *Caelius II*.

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POVZETEK

Sveti Hieronim v Rimu. Zgodovinske in arheološke hipoteze.

Javier A. Domingo in Luigi Finocchietti

Članek predstavlja zaključke analize strukture parcele v Rimu, na kateri je po izročilu stala hiša svete Pavle Rimske, kjer je nekaj časa stanoval sveti Hieronim. Ostanke teh zgradb, del katerih se nahaja pod današnjo cerkvijo San Girolamo della Carità, lahko datiramo v obdobje od antike do srednjega veka.

Vemo, da je sveti Hieronim prispel v Rim leta 382 na povabilo papeža Damaza, naj postane njegov osebni tajnik, in da je mesto zapustil leta 385 ter se podal v Sveto deželo. Vemo tudi, da se je pogosto dopisoval s papežem ter da je pisma prenašal sel. Iz tega izhaja, da ni živel v lateranskem kompleksu, na papeževem sedežu, temveč nekoliko vstran, kar bi razložilo potrebo po posredniku.

Po drugi strani naj bi hiša, v kateri je živel sveti Hieronim, po izročilu stala v zahodnem delu Marsovega polja, blizu nove bazilike, ki jo je dal postaviti papež Damaz in jo je posvetil svetemu Lovrencu (San Lorenzo in Prasina, nekaj metrov vstran od današnje bazilike San San Lorenzo in Damaso), kjer bi lahko stal papeški arhiv. Ta hiša je lahko stala v eni od kamnitih zgradb v kompleksu bazilike; v domusu pod bližnjim muzejem Barraco (ki je po nekaterih hipotezah bil v lasti družine papeža Damaza) ali v tamkajšnjem majhnem prostoru (*hospitolium*), ki bi mu lahko pripadal, kot se nakazuje v nekaterih pismih (*Epist.* 42.3, leta 385 našega štetja). Vemo tudi, da je sveti Hieronim tri leta živel v hiši svete Pavle Rimske (*Epist.* 45.2, leta 385 našega štetja), ki je po izročilu stala na parceli, ki je predmet proučevanja. Po antičnem izročilu bi današnja cerkev San Girolamo della Carità, ki je bila najverjetneje zgrajena med letoma 1425 in 1477, lahko stala na istem mestu kot cerkev iz 5. stoletja, ki je bila zgrajena nad hišo svete Pavle Rimske.

Sodeč po arheoloških spoznanjih, se strukture poslopja časovno umeščajo v štiri različne kronološke faze.

Tiste iz prve faze (1. stoletje našega štetja) bi lahko pripadale eni frakcij cirkusa (najbrž *factio Veneta*), natančneje hlevom in delu sosednjih oskrbovalnih in/ali stanovanjskih površin.

V drugi fazi (od 1. do 3. stoletja našega štetja) je najvzhodnejši del parcele zasedala zgradba z več prostori. Verjetno je bil to proizvodni obrat v pritličju večnadstropne zgradbe.

V tretji fazi, datirani v 4. stoletje našega štetja, je veliko prostorov v vzhodnem delu dobilo novo funkcijo, prestižne dekorativne prvine, vključno z marmornatimi ploščami na tleh in stenah. Staro zgradbo so najbrž preuredili v razkošen, zaseben domus. Kmalu zatem je zgradbo prizadel potres (morda eden od potresov, dokumentiranih leta 443 ali 484–508), ki je neugodno vplival na stabilnost nekaterih zidov.

V četrti fazi (5. stoletje našega štetja) vidimo postavitev *opus vittatum* pilastrov v enakomerni razdalji in obliki črke L. Ne vemo, če je to povezano z domusom ali drugim tipom zgradbe, postavljene po omenjenem potresu.

Po svoji življenjski dobi in razkošni arhitekturi je ta domus primerljiv s statusom družine svete Pavle Rimske in sovпада s celotnim obdobjem, ko je sveti Hieronim živel v mestu. Glede na trenutno stanje raziskav nič ne oporeka izročilu, da je domus svete Pavle stal na tem mestu.

Nimamo pa dokazov za starejšo cerkev, ki naj bi bila po izročilu zgrajena v 5. stoletju, čeprav bi jo morda lahko povezali s pilastri, zgrajenimi v četrti fazi in nekaterimi najdbami, ki smo jih našli pri izkopavanju, npr. pregrado iz oltarnega prostora iz 4. ali 5. stoletja, verjetno iz okna; marmornat kapitel iz 4. ali 5. stoletja; nekaj trupov stebrov, ponovno uporabljenih v 15. stoletju, v dvorišču sredi parcele.

Historično dejstvo bi lahko povečalo prepričljivost hipoteze, da je bil domus svete Pavle predelan v svetišče, posvečeno svetemu Hieronimu. Vemo, da se je senator Pamahij poročil s Pavlino, eno Pavlinih hčera. Ker ni imela otrok, je posest po smrti zapustila možu (verjetno tudi

svoj del materine zapuščine, vključno z domusom, ki je domnevno stal na parceli, ki je predmet proučevanja). Zagotovo vemo, da je bil senator Pamahij zadolžen za gradnjo cerkvenih zgradb na drugih parcelah, ki jih je imel v lasti v Rimu, vključno s cerkvijo Santi Giovanni e Paolo al Celio (*Titulus Pammachi*). Zato je verjetno, da je senator želel počastiti spomin na svetega Hieronima s svetiščem ter ga postavil v notranjosti hiše (najbrž v prvem nadstropju), v kateri je živel in jo prejel po smrti žene, hčere svete Pavle.

Čeprav arheologija ne more potrditi dejanskega obstoja hiše, v kateri je živel sveti Hieronim, nam le-ta pokaže, da je izročilo popolnoma kompatibilno s podatki, ki nam jih je uspelo pridobiti.

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