

>>[...] una gran Pianta icnografica dell'antica Roma, che fra poco darò alla luce<<. Piranesi Pläne der *Roma antica* und die *Nuova Pianta di Roma* von Giovanni Battista Nolli

Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Edition von Piranesi
Publikationen zur Archäologie der Stadt Rom

Abstract

In his *Antichità Romane*, published in 1756, Piranesi announced the imminent publication of a plan of ancient Rome. But the plan – which would have followed previous reconstructions by Pirro Ligorio (1561) and Etienne Dupérac (1574) – never appeared. His announcement has therefore generally been taken as a reference to the monumental *Ichnographia Campi Martii Antiquae Urbis* published in 1762. However, this ignores the fact that the *Antichità Romane* already contained three partial plans. These plans are significant: when superimposed, they produce a coherent whole; and they can also be directly connected to the *Ichnographia Campi Martii*. As this essay makes clear, the three plans demonstrate that work on a plan of ancient Rome had progressed considerably further than has previously been assumed. A central part of this assessment is that – along with five other detailed plans of thermal baths – these plans match the scale of Giovanni Battista Nolli's *Nuova Pianta di Roma* of 1748 (the production of which Piranesi had been involved with during his first stay in Rome from 1740 to 1744), which was much praised for its *esattezza*. This means that Piranesi sought the same claim to scholarship and accuracy that had been attributed to Nolli's plan for his own *piante icnografiche dell'antica Roma*. In comparing Piranesi directly to Nolli, the essay illuminates not only Piranesi's 'way of thinking,' but also how his plans and publications on the archaeology of the city of Rome as a whole 'function.' Through detailed analyses of sites detailed on the maps such as the *Porticus Octaviae*, the relationship between scientific archaeological research and free 'artistic' invention can be determined more precisely than was previously the case. Only in understanding this relationship can a full understanding of Piranesi's achievement as an archaeologist of the city of Rome be gained.