



Fig. 29. Forum seen from the Temple of Jupiter

Fig. 30. The Forum of Pompeii. After La Rocca and de Vos 2002.

# Forum

The Forum is explained as a marketplace that developed at the intersection of roads connecting the inland with the sea. Fortification walls surrounded the so-called Altstadt already during the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>1</sup> At the centre of the ancient town was the sanctuary of the Greek god, Apollo, the protector of the city.<sup>2</sup> The structure of the city, as we know it, was laid out during the intense building phase of the second century BC.<sup>3</sup> A new temple to Apollo was erected on the structures of a demolished pre-existing cult building,<sup>4</sup> and even the Temple of Jupiter and the Basilica have a history that goes back to the time before the Roman colony.<sup>5</sup> Later, the buildings at the west side were restructured or decorated when the Forum received its rectilinear layout as part of the Augustan religious and cultural programme.<sup>6</sup> Buildings at the east side dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and earlier,<sup>7</sup> were demolished to provide space to new impressive buildings, such as the Edifice of Eumachia, the so-called Temple of Vespasian (Sanctuary of the Genius of Augustus) and the Macellum. During the years between AD 62 and 79, a period of earthquakes and seismic instability, there was a final intense, reconstruction and redecoration period, at the Forum as well as in other parts of the city.<sup>8</sup> The Temple of Jupiter, or the *Capitolium*, housing the triad of Roman gods Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, dominates this large rectangle by its position at the northern short end.

The buildings at the west side of the Forum and the Basilica are traditionally dated to around 120 BC, and by PFP to 89-80 BC, and those at the east side generally to the Julio-Claudian period, but here there are minor differences in opinion regarding the exact decade of some constructions.<sup>9</sup> A plaster study comparing the plasters of the Forum buildings with those at the *insula* I 9, might give indications on decoration phases and construction phases. Initially, I matched my results against the data provided by the PFP, but later, I had to consider the traditional dating as well. Information concerning the separate buildings, given by Professor John J. Dobbins, will be used as short introductions to each house. Some general considerations regarding the Forum buildings are presented below.

*“The standard view assigns a second-century B.C. date to the Basilica, the tufa colonnade in the sanctuary of Apollo, the Temple of Apollo, the Temple of Jupiter, and the tufa forum colonnade. The PFP offers a different date for these elements. It would be interesting to see if the stucco falls into one or more groups. Here are the PFP dates for these elements:  
89-80 B.C. Basilica, tufa forum colonnade, possibly Temple of Jupiter.  
Ca 10-1 B.C. Tufa colonnade in the sanctuary of Apollo, possibly also the temple.  
Post-62 A.D. Second coat on the Sanctuary of Apollo columns.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Eschebach 1995, 16.

<sup>2</sup> La Rocca & de Vos 2000, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Zanker 1993, 41f.

<sup>4</sup> La Rocca & de Vos 2000, 103.

<sup>5</sup> See Maiuri 1973.

<sup>6</sup> Zanker 1993, 92f.

<sup>7</sup> Maiuri 1973, 55, 57, 86, 91.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., De Carolis & Patricelli 2003.

<sup>9</sup> On the Forum and its buildings, see, e.g., Dobbins 1989, Eschebach 1995, La Rocca 1993, La Rocca & de Vos 2002, Richardson 1988, Wallat 1997, Zanker 1993.