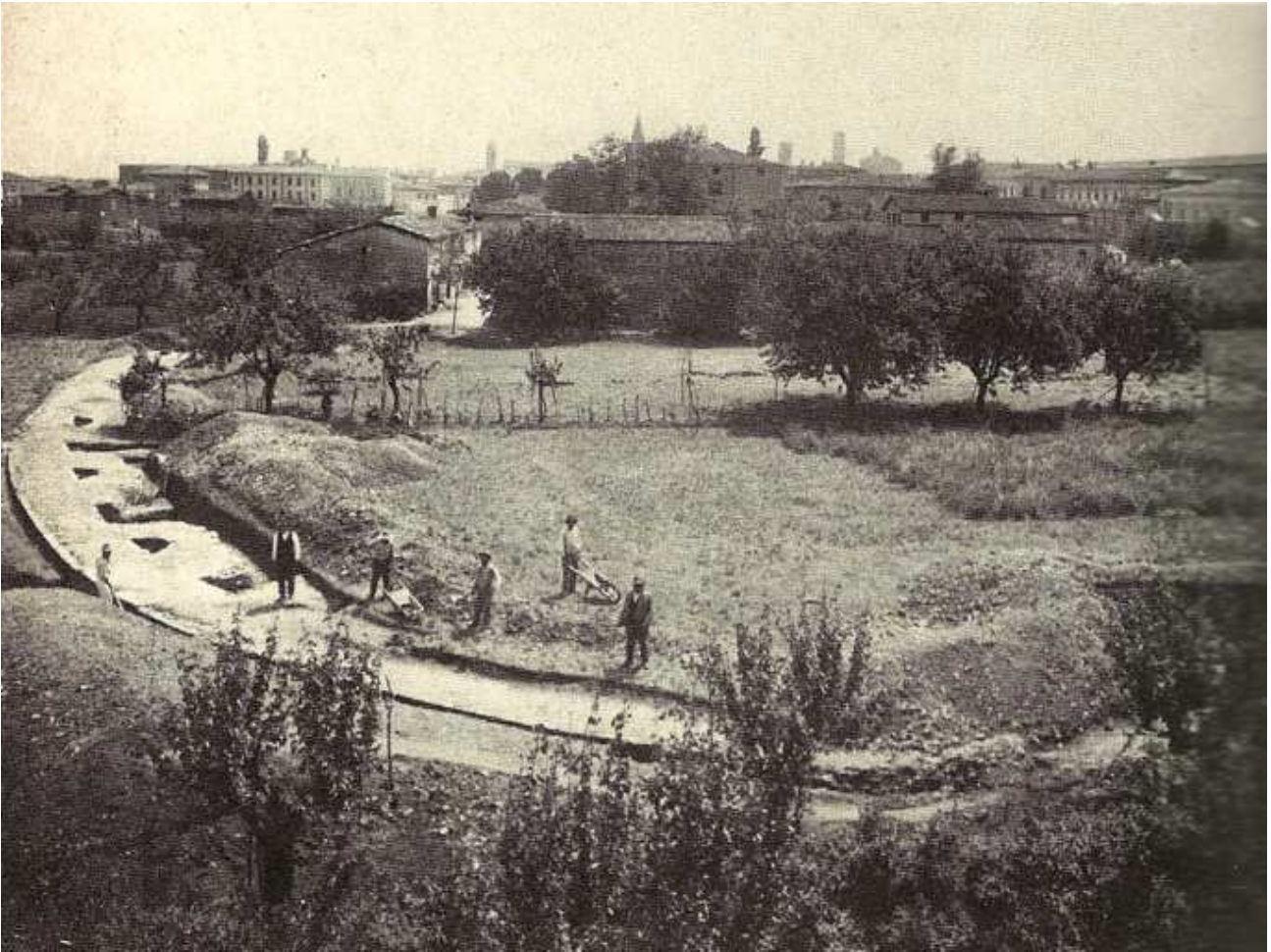


## ROMAN AMPHITHEATER



(BIM, *Manoscritti Imolesi*, n. 299)

In 1870, during the agricultural leveling work done on the “Pasticcia” farm, the mighty foundations of the Roman amphitheater in Imola arose from the ground. Scholars in Imola, including Giuseppe Scarabelli, rushed to the site upon hearing the news and made arrangements to excavate and survey the structures. Fears regarding the fate of the monument and the desire to resume excavations during the 1920s (the 20th century) led to the creation of a land bond by the Superintendency for Antiquities and the subsequent work was documented by a number of priceless photographs of the building and the city that can still be seen in the distance. In the aftermath of the Second World War, thanks to a huge construction boom, the land bond would be completely ignored and a preserved archaeological area would eventually be transformed into a housing development consisting of twenty buildings, which still exists today.

The Roman Amphitheater in Imola is one of the few famous public buildings located in this ancient city. Constructed in the western suburbs of the Roman city of *Forum Corneli*, it heralded the vast necropolis that flanked the consular road. This major axis, parallel to the street name “Via Emilia”, it measured 108 meters (354.33 feet) and was built in the 1st century AD. The Roman circus games included gladiatorial combat (fighting between men armed with swords and other weaponry) and the *venationes* (the hunting and killing of exotic animals), and served the function of releasing the penned up aggression produced within its communities as an element of social balance. This circus also represented a viable means of wielding control, as its participants climbed the ladder of success toward their goal of attaining political power.