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Viget Certe Viget Adhuc: The Invention of the Eternal City in Flavio Biondo's Roma Instaurata

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Viget certe viget adhuc:
The Invention of the Eternal City in Flavio Biondo's *Roma Instaurata*

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
of Bard College

by:
By Ryan Warwick

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
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To Professor Lauren Curtis, who taught me how to lose myself in my work
and to Ezra, who taught me how to find myself again.

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Introduction

Roman Vision: The Legacy of Flavio Biondo

The year is 1435, we are flies on the wall of Eugene IV's papal home in Florence. We see a group of men, swathed in curial regalia and huddled outside the gilded door that leads to the chambers of His Eminence, Pope Eugene IV. In attendance are Flavio Biondo, a papal newcomer; Antonio Loschi, famous for his Milanese imperial propaganda, now working for the papal court; Poggio Bracciolini, the famous manuscript hunter, slightly older, perhaps greying; Cencio de' Rustici, a translator of Greek classics; and Andrea the Florentine, all now working for the papal curia. They run after Leonardo Bruni, the current patriarch of humanist historiography and champion of Florentine independence. Out of breath, they catch him at the very door of the Pope's bedroom, on his way to an audience with Eugene. They have already been in heated debate and, when they reach him, they rush through the greetings that Bruni's respected status compels, impatient for him to weigh in on the discussion. The subject of debate is one that still a concern to classicists today: whether the ancient Romans spoke in Latin during their day to day lives, albeit simplified, or they used a vernacular, as the Renaissance Italians did.

This is the setting for a dialogue written by Flavio Biondo, addressed to Leonardo Bruni.¹ This image of scholars huddled near the doors of power gives us a glimpse of a moment in history that has often been forgotten. When we moderns think of Rome, we see the Rome of the high Renaissance, powerful, opulent, full of history. The papal secretariat of this earlier period knew a very different city, a muddy place, full of unrest and corruption, a city from which they were exiles. It is out of this Rome, a poor and diminished city, that the first specter of the Roman

¹ MCahill (2009): 165

Renaissance rose in the minds of these scholars. The *Quattrocento* was a time of transition for a papacy that had been stripped of its city and its political power. Pope Eugene IV, the second pope after the return to Rome from Avignon, was just beginning to see how a humanist understanding of history could help him re-establish the papacy on the political stage and re-define Rome as the center of the Christian world again. However, he was too busy defending himself against the frequent attacks against him to develop a coherent institutional vision of this new Rome. Because of this, humanists, free from a specific program, enjoyed a rarefied climate of intellectual freedom. This was the only period in history when they could stand outside the Pope's bedroom and argue about the ancient vernacular, without the Pope coming through those golden doors, perhaps still in his slippers, to give his own opinion. As many scholars still discover today, it's best not to argue with your patron.

This study focuses on one particular product of that intellectual climate: *Roma Instaurata* (1445) by Flavio Biondo. *Roma Instaurata*, Rome Restored, is a guidebook to Rome, a topographical examination of ruins and history. This is Biondo's contribution to a tradition that has roots in the Middle Ages: the tradition of the *Mirabilia*. The *Mirabilia*, and its revision, known as the *Græpha Aurea*, are 12th century collections of legends about the city, compiled for use by the clergy. They also served as a guide for the religious pilgrims that had just begun to flood Rome. These books are divided into sections, numbered in some manuscripts, each dedicated to a monument or part of the city. Biondo borrows this form for *Roma Instaurata*, as can be seen in its table of contents pictured below (Fig 1). *Roma Instaurata*, with its more rigorous methods of research, was intended to replace the *Mirabilia* as the Roman topography of choice.

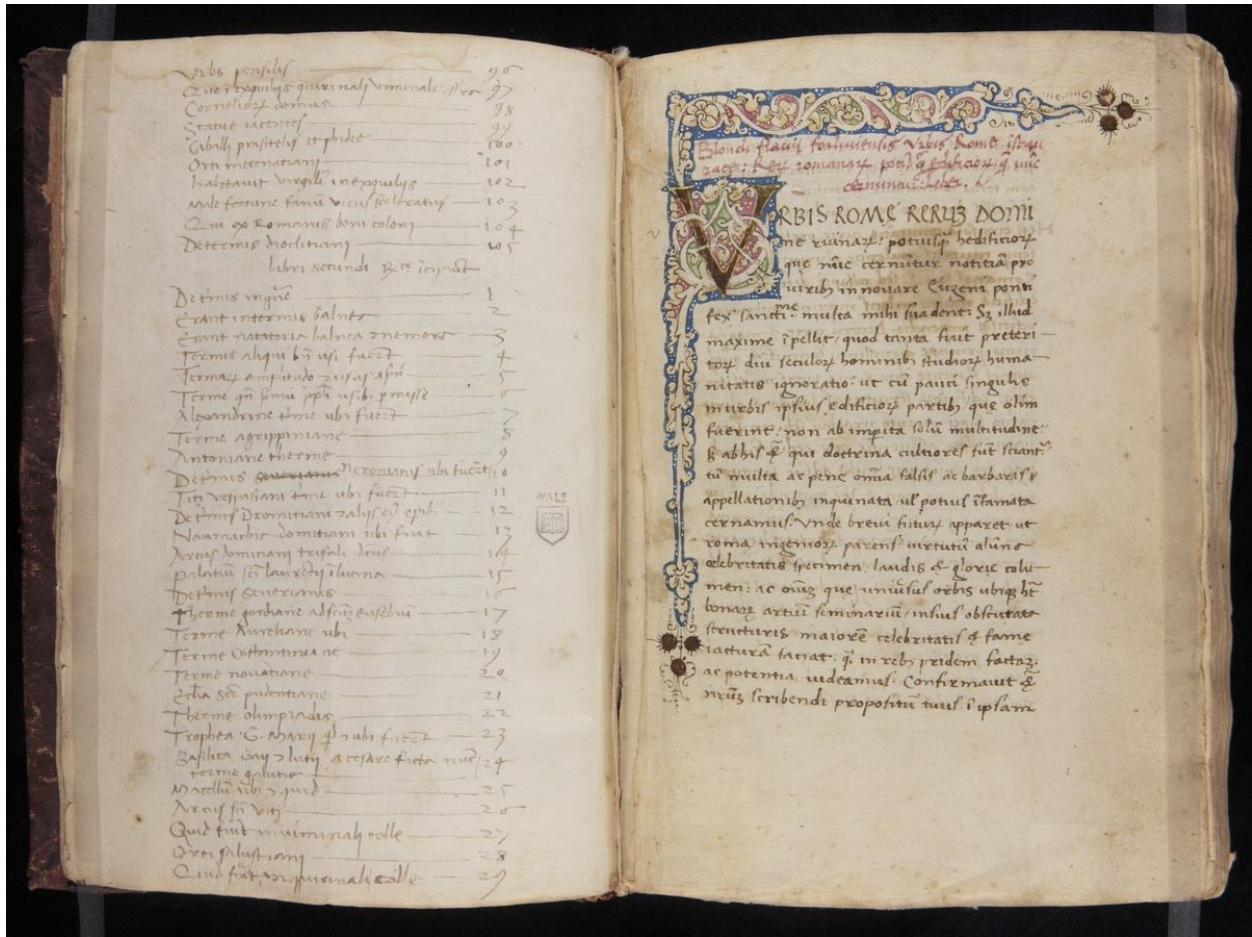


Figure 1. 4r and 4v of *Roma Instaurata* from Yale's Beinecke Library MS 779, 1450 <http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3587002>.²

However, despite similarity of form and content, *Roma Instaurata* can not only be categorized as better researched version of a Medieval text. Biondo draws from another, more recent, genre: the rhetorical humanism that became popular in Florence. The giants of this tradition, Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni, were adept at rallying their people around the ancient Roman Republic, at using something that was thought to be long dead to effect contemporary political change. Biondo uses this new way of seeing history to turn what could

² Early manuscripts of the work, like this one, show that a later hand has added the table of contents and section headings. Although this does cast some doubt on the organizing principle that Biondo had in mind, the section headings generally correspond to clear changes of subject or place within the text itself, as those of the *Mirabilia* did. With this in mind, I will refer to sections of *Roma Instaurata* using this numbering system, although it may have been interpolated.

have been a simple guidebook into a treatise on the decline, and hopefully the resurgence, of Roman values. Biondo's argument hopes to rehabilitate the Rome he sees around him, and to return the papacy to the political stage.

This project will be an unprecedented study of this early humanist work, which will allow us to see that the way Romans thought changed long before the environment around them did. It is possible to see the coming Renaissance in the pages of this guidebook, in the desolate streets of Biondo's Rome. Because this text predates Alberti's work to renew Rome with Nicholas V, which was thought to be the first treatment of Roman architecture and topography as propaganda, it presents us with a rare opportunity.³ Through *Roma Instaurata* we can see how the work of a single intellectual, written without explicit papal support, made Alberti's Rome, the Rome of the Renaissance, possible. For Biondo's work in *Roma Instaurata* redefined Renaissance Christianity's relationship to the past and paved the way for Alberti to forge the new aesthetic of an imperial papacy. *Roma Instaurata* has not been previously translated into English. My own translation of large sections of the work is provided as an appendix.

In order to understand the political realities that gave birth to Biondo's Roman vision, it will be necessary to analyze each logical step that Biondo takes towards his *instauratio*. I have divided my analysis of the work into three parts, which correspond to significant changes in style and content within the work. The first chapter is dedicated to Biondo's prologue, where he addresses his patron, Pope Eugene IV, and places the rest of the work in dialogue with the papacy's political program. The second chapter follows the first book of *Roma Instaurata*, in

³ Carroll William Westfall (1974) discusses Alberti's alliance with the first humanist Pope and their architectural renewal of Rome, which was in many ways the physical realization of Biondo's intellectual work in *Roma Instaurata*. Biondo was still working for the papacy at this time, but relegated to secondary status in the Curia. The reason for this is not fully understood, but I will present one theory below.

which Biondo's sequential tour of Rome delineates the ideal interaction between contemporary Christian space and the pagan ruins of ancient Rome. The third and final chapter chronicles the breakdown of this sequential structure into a more thematic examination of Rome's past, one that hopes to revive and Christianize ancient symbols of authority.

I argue that *Roma Instaurata* does not just give the reader a tour of *Quattrocento* Rome. It becomes a chronicle of Rome's evolving topography, which uses the ghost of the city's past to conjure up an image of its future. It is this image, Biondo's vision of Rome restored, that we see when Rome is mentioned. In putting so much emphasis on rebirth, Biondo shifted the focus away from his own time. Once Rome actually achieved the greatness he longed for, his arguments that advocated for Roman rebirth seemed self evident, outdated to those who had never known a ruined Rome. His success, the sheer brilliance of the city he helped create, has, for us modern readers, actually obscured his message. For this reason we must clear away all the modern assumptions that we have about Rome, the last cultural cobwebs left by the 19th century's Grand Tourists, and return to Biondo's own historical, cultural, and political moment, a time when even the great Forum Romanum was called "the cow pasture." [*Campo vaccino*]

Biondo's Moment⁴

Flavio Biondo was born in Forli in November or December 1392. In a passage of his later work, the *Decades*, he recalls being held in his father's arms as an infant and seeing the comet that portended the death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the Duke of Milan who had set his sights on Florence.⁵ This *monstrum* also told his fate, for most of his life was consumed by the transition

⁴ I obtained a good deal of this information from Denys Hay's treatment of Biondo in *Renaissance Essays* (1950): 37-42. Hay himself is quoting Nogara's *Scritti inediti e rari di Flavio Biondo* (1927), the foremost Italian biography of Biondo.

⁵ Hay (1950): 38 quoting Flavio Biondo *Decades* ed. Basle (1531): 139, see also Hay (1950) 38n1

between medieval political players and Renaissance ones. He was educated at Cremona and apparently enjoyed some success being employed by his city until he was exiled from Forli at age 30 by a revolution. He then took a series of secretarial positions, first working for Francesco Barbaro, the Venetian senator who was among the delegation that petitioned the Pope to stop Milanese expansion, cementing Venice as one of the major players on the late medieval/early Renaissance stage. He then passed into the service of Pietro Loredano, an admiral and would-be doge who may have been murdered by his incumbent. He returned to Forli briefly as an aide to its governor, Capranica, before, in 1432, becoming the secretary of Vitelleschi, governor of the March of Ancona, part of the *patrimonia Petri*, the country of the Pope.

Biondo was taken into the service of the papal curia in 1434 as a papal secretary during the turbulent rule of Eugene IV. Eugene was beset on all sides by events that had been set in motion long before he took the triple crown. He was only the second Pope after what is known as the Babylonian captivity, the removal of the papacy to Avignon, and as such, was still weak politically. That very year, Eugene narrowly escaped death at the hands of Milanese forces and fled from Rome to Florence with Biondo in tow. This exile was an important force in Biondo's life. The move transplanted him from the rocky soil of Roman humanism, a movement very much in its infancy, to the fertile hothouse of Florentine humanism.⁶

I contend that Biondo's exposure to this world as the papal secretary shaped his later work. He was a member of a new, secretarial generation of humanists, who did not have the same rhetorical focus as the older Florentine crowd. The combination of these two schools of thought, the antiquarian and the rhetorical are what make *Roma Instaurata* both an encyclopedia

⁶ John D'Amico (1983) goes into the exchange between Florentine and Roman humanism in his book.

and a manifesto. At Rome, he was witness to the near destruction of his way of life. Florence had an active community of humanists, rhetoricians of the school of Salutati and Bruni. These scholars used their knowledge of ancient authors to write works that would save their city. *Roma Instaurata* is Biondo's attempt to use the physical ruins around him in the same way that those in Florence used ancient texts. He used the Roman topography to structure his argument, and his argument to invent a Rome that could never fall, a Rome that was the unequivocal center of a Christian empire.

It was during this time in Florence that Eugene IV, who was part of a strict monastic order before becoming Pope, became more amenable to humanist ideas⁷. Biondo capitalized on this by publishing *Roma Instaurata*, addressed to Eugene, in 1445, the year the papacy returned to a Rome ruined by civil unrest. This study will focus on this out of his many works, because it represents Biondo's first conception of Roman rebirth at a time when that seemed impossible. Biondo continued to build this concept in his *Roma Triumphans*, and examined all of Italy in *Italia Illustrata*. His career as a historian came to an end with the *Decades ab inclinatione imperiorum Romanorum*, a history of Rome from 410 to 1442, which he died writing in 1463. He is buried in Santa Maria in Aracoeli.

⁷ Pastor (1891): v1. 302-3



Figure 2. Flavio Biondo's Gravestone in Santa Maria in Ara Coeli. Picture from wikimedia commons https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c1/21_Flavio_Biondo_all_Araceli.JPG

Biondo's gravestone, pictured above, is a testament to all the work he did in life. It reads:

“The sons of Biondo all place this stone here for their father, Flavio Biondo from Forli, a good man, famous historian, and a most faithful secretary to many Roman Popes.”⁸

Despite having such a large body of work and acting as papal secretary for three consecutive papacies,⁹ Flavio Biondo became irrelevant after the coronation of Nicholas V Parentucelli. Biondo's Latin was widely criticised. Many of his sentences stand bare of embellishment, with quotes from sources, often incorrect and uncontested, dropped in *verbatim*

⁸ My own translation, from the picture

⁹ Eugene IV, Nicholas V, and Pius II

mid sentence. This tendency to “be the victim rather than the master of his sources”, as Denys Hay puts it,¹⁰ was criticised by Octavio Cleofilo, a minor poet, who wrote an epigram addressed to him:

*“Blonde Latinarum scriptor celeberrime rerum
Aemiliae splendor gloria fama decus
Te Livi superat tantum facundia quantum
Res tua Romana distat ab historia.”*

Biondo, most famous writer of Latin Histories,
Glory, splendor, fame, honor of the Via Aemilia¹¹,
Livy’s eloquence exceeds yours only as much
as your history exceeds fact.”¹²

Biondo latinized many vernacular words instead of finding an ancient equivalent, a serious faux pas in a world where some scholars refused to use a word if it did not appear in Cicero. Pius II Piccolomini, himself an accomplished humanist and writer of erotic poetry in his youth, said in his *Comentarii*: “[Biondo] did not revise carefully what he had written and took pains to write a great deal rather than the essential truth. It would be most valuable if some learned and stylish author would polish and amend his works.”¹³ The loss of Biondo’s good reputation could simply be attributed to these stylistic faux pas, however, as we will discover in the next chapter, Biondo can write quite elegantly when he wants. I am inclined to agree with Elizabeth McCahill’s view that she puts forth at the end of her book *Reviving the Eternal City*:

“The crises of the early Quattrocento Church had encouraged humanists to question tradition and to take a skeptical attitude toward their society. Perhaps just as importantly, these crises had distracted Popes and cardinals, allowing Poggio, Biondo, and their colleagues an unusual degree of independence. As the position of the papacy improved, the Curia ceased to be a hotbed of political and social criticism; while intellectual debate flourished, the debate tended to be between scholars competing for the attention of Popes and other

¹⁰ Hay (1951): 50

¹¹ The Via Aemilia goes through Forli, Biondo’s home town.

¹² Hay (1951): 61n1 my own translation

¹³ Aeneas Sylvius *Comentarii* (1641), quoted by Hay (1950): 61 from Nogara (1927)

involved patrons...Like so many avant- garde movements, curial humanism was taken over by a ruling elite that turned it into a potent cultural tool but also robbed it of its early spontaneity and fluidity.”¹⁴

We, the intellectual descendants of Renaissance humanism, were the targets of that potent tool. The papacy used the aesthetic vocabulary and rhetorical framework developed by these earlier humanists to re-invent their city. Our image of Western history has this Rome at its center, the Rome that Flavio Biondo and others of his time wrote into existence. In order to revive Rome, and keep it in our thoughts for centuries, Biondo had to see history in a radically new way, to see the past as a story, lying dormant all around him, a story of death and rebirth that has since shaped our concept of history.

Biondo was not the first to tell this story; we can trace the narrative of a golden age all the way back to Hesiod, but Biondo brought it back, and married it so closely to the rise of a new, more politically adept Christianity, that we have not forgotten it since. It has become a discursive category, a Roman way of seeing the world that can be foisted on any culture. This Roman vision, the push to orient everything around the rise, fall, and rebirth of the West, has taken over the world. It has colonized the history of others, as we have colonized their land. It has silenced the legends of the Ojibwe nation in America and the folk tales of primitive Shinto in Japan. It has made these alternative histories irrelevant to who we are, to the larger narrative we weave to explain the world around us. This study will hopefully shed some light on the forgotten birth of this way of thinking, a way of telling our human story, that has obliterated all else, including, as we will see, its own creator.

Modern scholarship has had little to say about Biondo or *Roma Instaurata*. *Roma Triumphans* has also been sparsely treated, perhaps due to the daunting judgement of no less a

¹⁴ McCahill (2013): 196-7

personage than Arnaldo Momigliano himself, related by Denys Hay: “A proper understanding of the *Roma Instaurata* and *Roma Triumphans* must wait until we find someone willing to write a history of antiquarian thought in Italy.”¹⁵ *Roma Instaurata* has been seldom studied because of its hybridity. It is both an antiquarian topography, the origin of the 15th century tradition that Momigliano studies, and a rhetorical argument for Rome’s relevance. The latter quality has largely been ignored by the scholars of Biondo in English, with the exception of Elizabeth McCahill. This is partially because of Arnaldo Momigliano’s work, which attributes the same motivations to him and much later students of the discipline that he created.¹⁶

As McCahill writes, Riccardo Fubini has been the forerunner in challenging Momigliano’s interpretation.¹⁷ Although he acknowledges that Momigliano has highlighted one important aspect of Biondo’s contribution and is probably correct in casting him as the father of later Renaissance antiquarianism, Fubini contends that Momigliano has grouped Biondo’s scholarship too closely with that of later humanists, whose desire to understand Rome was motivated by a desire to recover ancient civilization. Biondo, by contrast, examined the ruins of the ancient world because of his intense love for contemporary Rome, despite its flaws. The disagreement between these two eminent scholars reveals Biondo’s complex position within the position of humanism. Neither overtly rhetorical nor completely a-political, Biondo is a humanist between worlds.

As I mentioned earlier, these two worlds are the Florentine, with its emphasis on the use of secular rhetoric for individual political action in the republic, and the Roman, with its

¹⁵ Hay (1950): 40

¹⁶ Arnaldo Momigliano (1950)

¹⁷ McCahill (2009): 188, 188 n157

emphasis on clerical courtly life and its engagement with objects. In his book *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (1983), John D'Amico has clearly articulated the differences between the two and I will briefly borrow from his account in order to paint a fuller picture of Biondo's intellectual climate. The return of the papacy to Rome brought an interesting new power onto the Italian political scene. The Florentine republic and the various medieval Italian courts were joined by a new type of government, the Roman curia.

The Curia was the first of its kind, an international bureaucracy supporting not just the Pope, but the college of cardinals, a clerical body that served as a kind of senate and chose a new Pope upon his death. Because of these unique qualities, the papal court was profoundly different from any other institution in Italy at that time. It was not under the sole control of one family, and one Pope often had opposite aims from the next. It instead was the dominion of a kind of culture, which grew up around the Pope to deal with his various duties: foreign relations, taxation, and appeals from worshipers. This bureaucratic culture, because of its wealth of secretarial opportunities, began to attract humanists in droves and, by their presence, was given a specific character.

Roman humanism would later define the papal presence in the Renaissance. Popes like Nicholas V, Eugene IV's successor, began to use humanist rhetoric to secure dominance in international politics. These Roman humanists mediated the transition between the Florentine and Roman Renaissance. Biondo came to Rome at an early stage in this transition, he was only the second humanist appointed to the position of apostolic secretary. His work, some of the first of its kind, was not written as a bid for power in some secular war but to secure a claim by the

Roman papacy over Christianity itself. Consequently, the main thrust of *Roma Instaurata* (and the rest of Biondo's corpus) went un-noticed both by humanists of his own time and later scholars, for whom Rome's claim to Christian dominance unquestionable. The propaganda machine that assured Rome's dominance could only have been a product of Biondo's particular moment. Because his vision of Rome was so brilliant, because he pushed Rome towards rebirth so effectively, Biondo wrote himself and his time out of history

The history of scholarship on Humanism

In order to more fully understand why Biondo's time has not, until recently, been an object of study. I will use Christopher Celenza's book *The Lost Italian Renaissance* (2004) as well as Charles G. Nauert's *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (1995) to briefly trace an intellectual history of the way humanists and humanism have been seen by modern scholars. This will help us as we begin to understand where Flavio Biondo fits into our contemporary understanding.

Renaissance humanism was an intellectual movement that began in the 14th century. The word "humanism" is derived from the Latin phrase *studia humanitatis*. This roughly translates to "study of being a good person", since the latin word *humanus*, which *humanitas* is an abstraction of, doesn't simply mean "human", but means something closer to the English "humane." Humanists studied language, literature, art and moral philosophy, essentially the components of a modern liberal arts education. This type of education was designed to groom children of the Roman elite for their participation in republican government. The ultimate goal of this program was the creation of good Roman citizens. But what do the schools of first century Rome have to do with fourteenth century Italy? The revival of this kind of learning in the fourteenth century

was fueled by a growing merchant class, particularly in Florence which, like first century Rome, was a republic¹⁸. This merchant class increased the demand for two professions: scribes and lawyers. Both occupations required Latin literacy and a familiarity with classical Latin texts, since they were of course the main body of legal precedent. As these began to be read by more and more would be lawyers and scribes, they began to see the merit of studying them not only for juridical knowledge, but for history, philosophy, and, most immediately important, the study of rhetoric.

The use, to great effect, of ancient rhetorical style, first in the representative government of Florence and then, by emulation, in the courts of Milan and Papal Curia, was one of the most important factors in the spread of humanist thought¹⁹. Humanism became the common language for all scholars, no matter their state, and soon they began to collaborate in new ways, using the texts of the ancient world to broaden their own. They discovered new architectural styles in the old world, new ways of making an argument, or even new ways to read and codify a text. This common language also made its way into government. Humanist rhetoric began to be the principal way that states communicated, with both their people and their neighbors. Through these two inroads, education and politics, humanists became the gatekeepers of their state's cultural legacy, and their interpretations of the past came to define the present and future.

Despite its influence on Renaissance culture, humanism has been hard for modern scholars to define. Because humanism not a homogeneous philosophy, humanists often had widely differing beliefs and practices. Humanists have been on opposite sides of a war. Some humanists denounced the monastic education system, while others worked for the church. By

¹⁸ Nauert also gives this origin to the term Humanism and relates it to the Florentine Republic. Nauert (1995): 12-14

¹⁹ Nauert (1995): 29-30 33-34

attempting to find an essentializing definition of humanism, scholars in the past have limited our view of who was or was not a humanist. A re-appraisal of how scholars have categorized Renaissance humanism is necessary, so that we can return Flavio Biondo to his rightful place in the canon, and fully understand *Roma Instaurata's* impact on history.

Jacob Burkhardt (1818-1897)

Jacob Burkhardt began the modern study of humanism, but in order to do so he had to fight against the basic tenants of the German Enlightenment, which had defined his intellectual climate. The development of historical studies was strongly influenced by Hegel's philosophy and the emergent concept of national consciousness: if the world is divided into different nations, then each nation must have a different spirit, or *Geist*, the manifestation of God's providence pushing a people toward civilization. The historians of the period sought to create essential histories, to identify this *Geist*. One of the forms which this elusive ghost took was language. At that time, even Wilhelm von Humboldt, a seminal figure in the development of education, held the view that a nation's language contained within it the character of its people.²⁰

Simultaneously, a specific idea of historical progress, the narrative that a society strives to reach a pinnacle and after that is in decline, began to take hold. This idea, which is similar to the historical model of Biondo and the other humanists, but arose in Germany through different means, can be seen in the work of the first art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann.²¹ He fervently believed that Germany must emulate Ancient Greece. His Greece, however, as modern archaeology continues to reveal, never existed; it was an amalgam of characteristics which he

²⁰ Celenza (2004): 2

²¹ Winckelmann (1764)

considered to be beautiful, balanced, ideal.²² Every aspect of ancient society that fell outside of this view was rationalized as a fall from his imagined past. The aim of German historiography became the rebirth of this recreated past, for within it Hegel's *Geist*, the pure essence of each people, undoubtedly hid.

New developments in natural science, principally the theory of evolution helped cement this concept, which held all cultures to a model of growth and decline. The natural sciences gained an increasingly greater sway over the German university system, and the pressure was on for the humanities to offer the same kind of certainty as hard science.²³ The growth of any society was measured teleologically, as an evolutionary path towards nationalism, and classical studies sprouted various sub-disciplines that sought to catalogue this evolution. Scholars taxonomized the Latin and Greek of classical antiquity with commentaries, recorded manuscript provenance in charts evoking the Darwinian tree of life, and spread the thoughts of ancient authors to the corners of the globe with innumerable translations. The discipline of philology was born, and, from it, a specialized high school education which emphasized the study of the classics, the so called *new humanism*.²⁴

However, German scholars did not have any interest in their movement's namesake, the Italian humanism which began in the 14th century. According to the nationalist definition of progress, Renaissance humanists actually held back the development of Italy as a nation. They wrote in Latin, a language long since dead. In the eyes of 19th century scholars, this held back the development of Italian. Consequently the humanists were characterized as selfish, backward

²² Celenza (2004): 3

²³ Celenza (2004): 4

²⁴ Celenza (2004): 4

looking imitators of Greek and Roman classics. Friedrich Schlegel wrote that, through their emulation of ancient literature, the humanists were "lost to their language and nation."²⁵ Leopold von Ranke wrote in his history of the Popes²⁶, "To whatever perfection this direct imitation of the ancients in their own languages was carried...it was essentially inadequate and unsatisfactory, and was too commonly diffused for its defects not to become obvious to many. A new idea sprang up; the imitation of the ancients in the mother tongue."²⁷ For the 19th century historian, it was not until humanists moved their achievements into the vernacular that Italy's national character could develop. That development was seen as the essential progress of the world, and so Renaissance humanist texts were largely ignored in the modern push for scholarly rigor.

It was in this cultural environment that Jacob Burckhardt wrote his famous book *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860). In it, he protests the treatment of Italian history by disciples of Ranke. He does this through a particularly pointed narrative about humanism which incorporates the movement into the story of death and rebirth that captivated scholars of his time. Burckhardt's model of history, and the way he fit the humanists into it can be summarized like this: The ancients achieved greatness, but at the fall of the Roman Empire, their brilliance was blackened by the ash of ignorant Christianity. Burckhardt's humanists carefully picked up the scraps of the past and, with them, ended an age of religious superstition and forged the modern individual, a secular citizen who would one day form the nation state.²⁸ Burckhardt told the story of humanism this way because the model of history in the nineteenth century was evolutionary. To fit them into this model, he cast humanists as a secularizing force which

²⁵ Celenza (2004): 9

²⁶ Ranke (1836)

²⁷ Celenza (2004): 9-10

²⁸ Celenza (2004) 11-12

prepared the world in some way for the modern nation.²⁹ Burkhardt's work is invaluable because it challenged the generalizations of the German scholarship that immediately preceded him: Renaissance humanists did not just ape the classics, as Ranke wrote. Their work was dynamic and related to the concerns of their time.

Burkhardt does not do much to categorize this quality, however. He simply calls it "individualism."³⁰ This does not explain how or why these thinkers relate to the past in this new way. Burkhardt's interpretation ultimately flattens our picture of humanism and obscures the way that scholars like Biondo could be intimately related to their own individual political climates, players not only in the history of ideas that Burkhardt writes, but also in the history of government and religion, art and culture.

Hans Baron (1900-1988)

Hans Baron rejected the idea that humanism was solely an intellectual movement. He would go on to show the immense relevance of the classical past in the politics of 15th century Italy. He pioneered the term "civic humanism," and demonstrated that humanists were not only scholars. They were also important politicians.

The figures of Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni spoke to Baron, a German-Jewish refugee brought up during Weimar Republic. He saw the struggles that he himself faced as the Nazis rose to power reflected in the Florentine resistance to Milanese hegemony. The specific rhetorical attitude of Salutati's humanism, his imitation of ancient Republican heroes, gave him the model that he needed to develop a new definition of humanism, one that served the political

²⁹ Celenza (2004): 13

³⁰ Nauert (1995): 21

present as well as the past. Far from being detached antiquarians, Baron's "civic humanists" transformed their investigation of antiquity into contemporary political action.³¹

This theory, revolutionary in linking something that belonged to academia with the real world, has come under fire since its genesis in 1928. Disputing scholars claimed that the government of Florence hardly resembles democracy as we understand it today.³² Power was in fact consolidated among a few rich families. However, this does not invalidate Baron's theory or its vast implications. Humanists did not invent or even advocate democracy in the modern sense of the word. They used the model of antiquity to return power to the voices of the *populus*, albeit at a time when that term referred only to a privileged elite.³³

Baron's theory is limited in one respect. It only focuses on the humanists that correspond to this "civic" model. Humanists of Biondo's day, who were just beginning to engage with history in a different way, to see the stories the ancient topography around them, were labeled as a-political antiquarians. This obscures the way that Biondo's work, although it deals almost exclusively with the physical remnants of the past, responds to the precarious political position of Rome. Baron's image of the politically active, rhetorically gifted humanist was so potent, so appealing to the post war academic world, that many were willing to turn a blind eye on the humanists that did not fit the mold.

³¹ Nauert (1995): 30-31, Celenza (2004): 36-7

³² Celenza (2004): 38

³³ Nauert (1995): 34

Eugenio Garin (1909-2004) and Paul Oskar Kristeller (1905-1999)

Eugenio Garin and Paul Oskar Kristeller both devoted their lives to expanding our definition of humanism. In contrast to Burkhardt and Garin, they did not tie humanism to a specific culture or time period. They redefined humanism as a kind of discursive lens, a social movement that swept all Italy.³⁴ Because of this, they realized that nothing could be understood about any humanist until a full picture could be painted of the political and social climate in which each scholar worked.

Garin's first major work, like Burkhardt's, was an attempt to carve out a space for humanism in the German historiographical tradition. It was a response to Heidegger's famous *Letter on Humanism* (1947). In the *Letter*, tasked to return meaning to the term "humanism," Heidegger denies that Renaissance humanism has any philosophical merit, since humanists believed in deducing first principles not by engaging with a higher Truth, but by examining the world around them. Heidegger rejected this approach, pronounced it dead, and tasked himself with returning to the "true" philosophy, that of the ancient Greeks, a philosophy that sought a world beyond what we can see: not being, but Being. The term "humanism", Heidegger wrote, was first used by the ancient Romans. *Humanitas* was used as translation of the Greek word *paideia*, which meant learning, and represented a watered down Roman imitation of Greek education.³⁵ Consequently, Italian humanism was based on a skewed representation of learning and was unconcerned with higher truth. According to Heidegger, the true rebirth of humanism came from Germany in the 18th century, the return of Hellenic thought to the world

³⁴ Celenza (2004): 30

³⁵ Celenza (2004): 34

Garin's view of humanism was informed by his early education in the literature department at the University of Florence.³⁶ His philosophy necessitated a deep personal engagement with a text as well as the specific social and political situation in which it was created. Garin was a scholar of traditions, and he could not help seeing the ways in which Heidegger's thinking was paradoxically indebted to that of the Renaissance humanists.

In Garin's eyes, humanism marked a change in philosophy, a change not shown in the content of humanist writings, their political affiliation or even in their ideology. Humanism changed the way that we conceptualize the past. Humanists were among the first to believe that they lived in a modern age, separated from an ancient past by an intervening period of darkness.³⁷ This historicizing view of the past allowed them to break the hold that Church philosophy held on the intellectual effort of the Middle Ages.³⁸ By refusing to see the past as holy, the humanists opened up the possibility for dialogue with it. Suddenly, the Bible could be read as a historical account, not simply dogma, and ancient authors could be refuted, argued with, or built upon. The world could be seen in a multiplicity of ways, each dependent on individual and sociopolitical factors. For Garin, this meant that an argument about ancient grammar, although not inherently philosophical in content, contained within it the very basis for modern philology, the study of which influenced so many philosophers, Heidegger included. This theory, however, although it relates humanism to the modern age more inclusively than ever before, still seems painted in broad strokes. It necessitates the investigation of all source material, but leaves that work for other scholars.

³⁶ Celenza (2004): 33-6

³⁷ Nauert describes this historical positioning as well (Nauert 1995: 18-21)

³⁸ Celenza (2004): 35-6

Kristeller explored the places that Garin did not, but only by throwing out the diachronic focus of Garin's argument. He began his career as a transcendentalist; in the tradition of Kant, he believed that beyond earthly realities there lay a universal Truth.³⁹ This is the very system, described above, which overlooked Renaissance humanism as a worthwhile area of study. Although Kristeller kept the tenets of this kind of philosophy at the core of his scholarship, his life took him down a very different path. His prioritization of history over philosophy as a method to understand the past put him at odds with the kind of philosophy that started his career.⁴⁰

Kristeller's study of Renaissance humanism was born out of frustration and a desire for accuracy. He saw that there were many authors working in the humanist tradition that had been passed over by other scholars, simply because they did not "fit" or were not "modern."⁴¹ He sought to find a definition of humanist thought that took account of all source material, to save the work of those humanists, long forgotten in anonymous libraries.⁴²

As Kristeller began his dissertation work in Italy, the Nazi racial laws were passed, precluding him from working in a German university. He was forced to stay in Italy, using his connections with scholars there to secure a post. It was then that he fully realized the amount of unstudied, untranslated material from the 14th and 15th centuries that Italy held within its libraries and began to apply to it the rigorous methods of German philological scholarship. From this research, he developed the theory that humanism could not be defined on political, ideological, religious or methodological terms.

³⁹ Celenza (2004): 41

⁴⁰ Celenza (2004): 51-2

⁴¹ Celenza (2004): 47

⁴² Celenza (2004): 41-42

For Kristeller, anyone who studied the subjects that made up the "humanities" in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries was a humanist.⁴³ He effectively leveled the playing field and began the process of redefining humanism from the ground up. Suddenly every humanist was worthy of study. It is thanks to Kristeller's work that we finally have an index of humanist texts. However, this is only a beginning. Kristeller up until his death refused to write a general history of humanist thought, because of the poor state of the sources, and fifty years later, there is still a lack of standard editions of work from the *Quattrocento*, Flavio Biondo's time period.

Garin and Kristeller's work on humanism saved many thinkers, including Biondo, from obscurity. They both eliminated the categories of their predecessors which had been unduly shaped by the political concerns of either the 14th or 18th century. This allowed them to look at the corpus anew. For Kristeller, as I mentioned above, any scholar from the Renaissance period whose work is concerned with antiquity was, by definition, a humanist. Garin's definition is a bit more epistemological: a humanist is a scholar who sees himself as a modern person, at a remove from the ancient past by intervening years, and as such can have a relationship with that past. Kristeller's definition does not answer any questions about the development of humanism as a discipline, nor does it show its lasting effect on modernity. It freezes the movement in time in order to properly define it, like a bacterium on a slide. Garin's definition, by contrast, charts humanism as a reaction against earlier trends in scholarship as well as its considerable effect on the modern age.⁴⁴ For it to do so, however, Garin had to cherry pick his sources to a certain extent.

⁴³ Celenza (2004): 43

⁴⁴ Celenza (2008): 17-18

New Definitions

More recent scholars like John D'Amico have taken Kristeller and Garin's definitions a bit further. If humanism is a cultural movement rather than a set of beliefs and, as such its application is adaptable to different cultures and time periods, it becomes necessary to treat humanism not as a standard language of the elite across time, but one that shifts and changes with the politics of that elite. A new model has developed: that of *different* humanisms,⁴⁵ the Florentine, which ends with the invasion of the French in 1494 and the Roman, which ends with the burning of Rome in 1527. This division of humanism follows the shift in power from Florence to Rome during the Renaissance and allows us to better account for the profound changes that occur in the lifestyles of the intellectual elite. Flavio Biondo comes onto the scene at an early stage in this shift. He has, in a sense, slipped through the cracks between these two worlds, the Florentine and the Roman. Consequently, in order to understand his particular humanism, it is all the more important to understand political situation to which it responds.

Humanism marks the beginning of a way that we see history, a belief that the past never dies, but is constantly reborn. This attitude allowed Biondo to revive a long dead story about Rome's golden age, used by Augustus to cement power, and reformulate it for the Christian world.

This study will focus on the way a single work of Biondo's, *Roma Instaurata*, responds to the demands of the early 15th century. His vision of a restored Rome, his hope to elevate it above the political problems of his time, gave birth to this unique perception of history. This model would come to define the Renaissance that came afterward, as well as the Enlightenment

⁴⁵ John D'Amico (1983) and Amos Edelheit (2008) both make reference to different humanisms in their work. D'Amico the Florentine and the Roman, and Edelheit the Religious and the Secular.

narrative in historiography, which has projected a specific narrative of growth and decline on all cultures, and which we, as modern scholars, still must grapple with.

The only tool that I have to fight this tradition, which has ironically obscured Biondo's work, is his text. *Roma Instaurata* marks the rebirth of this narrative, the reformulation of ancient propaganda as modern history. I will follow Biondo's logic and attempt to understand it using the sparse history of his period that has survived. In doing so, I will discover how and why he created this image of Rome, so bright that it casts all else in shadow.

Chapter 1

Panegyric as Prescriptive Philosophy

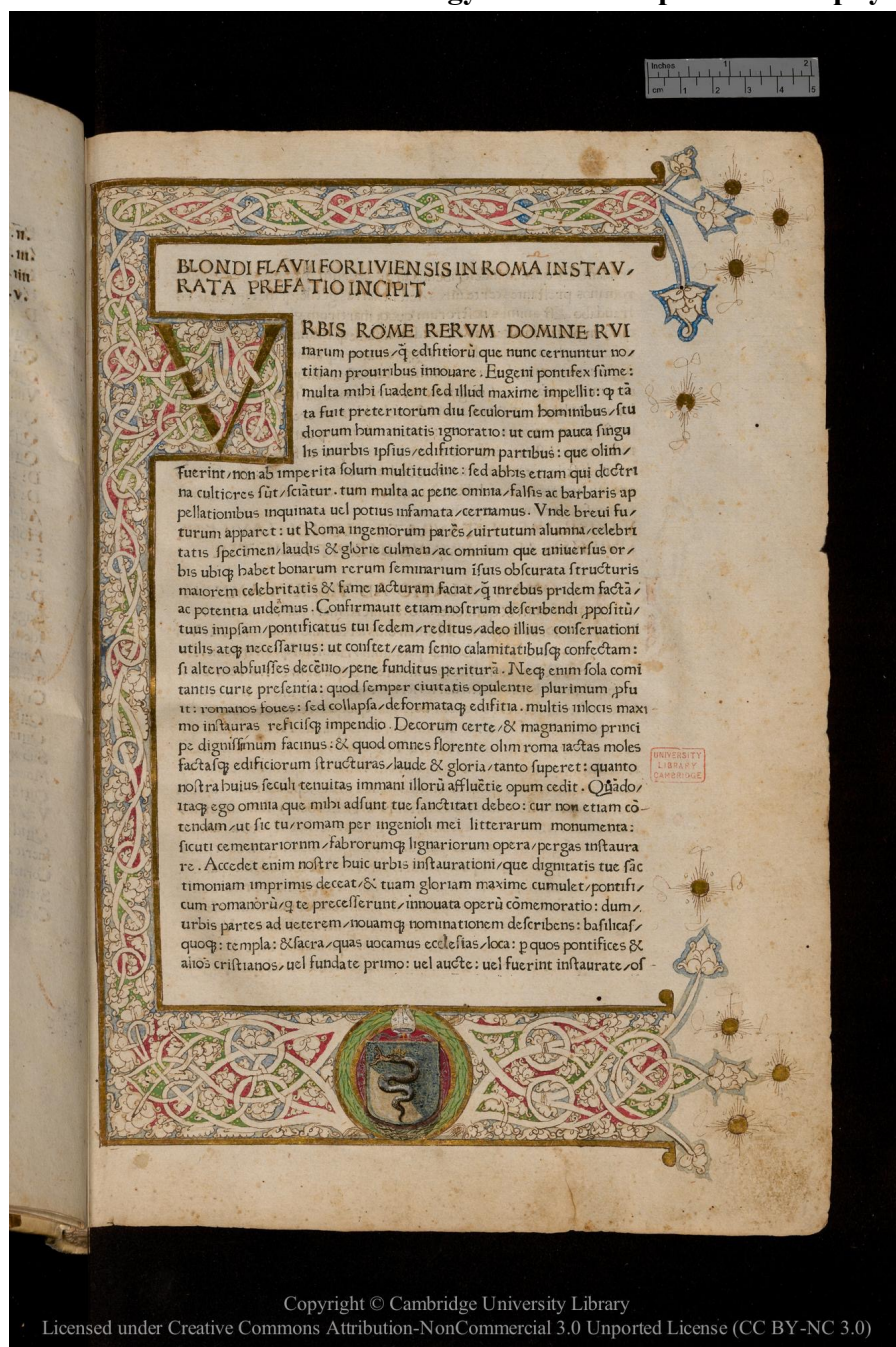


Figure 3. First page of Biondo's preface from the manuscript at Cambridge University Library (1447) Inc.2.B. 2.39[1320] <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/PR-INC-00002-B-00002-00039-01320/1>

Roma Instaurata is like no guidebook Rome had ever seen before. It was not a collection of legends about visible ruins, but an massive scholarly undertaking that combined philology, archaeology, and topography. For Flavio Biondo, *Roma Instaurata* is more than a guidebook. It is an argument, one that uses Rome's physical space to tell a politically coded story. Biondo attempts to create a layered map of Rome, a map that allows the reader to see Rome's evolution, decline, and possible resurgence. Before he takes the reader on this journey, his preface affords us a rare opportunity to understand why this particular image of the city was important to him, to dive beneath the vast sea of his sources and explore the undertow of his argument. In the preface, he speaks unequivocally to his patron Eugene IV about the purpose of his study: to re-imagine Rome. He has designed this new schema as an answer to the political violence that shook Rome at the beginning of his career in the papal court. Biondo asserts in this introduction that *Roma Instaurata* is a necessary re-foundation of the city he sees around him. This *instauratio* must take place not only for Rome's physical buildings, but also the city's political and social climate.

Biondo sees more than enough reasons in his Rome, "the mistress of more ruins than buildings," to write a guidebook like *Roma Instaurata*.⁴⁷ What he says moves him the most is the growing ignorance about the city's history. This ignorance causes the once great places to be "fouled, or rather defamed, by false and barbarous names."⁴⁸ The Roman people's slow loss of knowledge will make his greatest fear a reality:

⁴⁷ "Urbis Romae dominae rerum ruinarum potius quam aedificorum...innovare multa mihi suadent sed illud maxime impellit" Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio. All translation of Biondo is my own. A translation of large sections of the text can be found in the Appendix. For the Latin text I have pulled from *Rome Restaurée* by Anne Raffarin Dupuis (2005) and *Vistiamo Roma* by Cesare D'Onofrio (1989), where they differed, I preferred Raffarin Dupuis' edition, since it's more recent and, unlike D'Onofrio, has an awareness of the manuscript tradition.

⁴⁸ "Multa ac paene omnia falsis ac barbaris appellationibus inquinata vel potius infamata." Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

“Rome, the parent of our genius, the nursling of our bravery, display of praise, height of glory, the garden of of all good things that the world has, obscured by its structures, will suffer a bigger loss of celebrity and fame than we see has happened in the case of earlier wealth and power.”⁴⁹

This idea—that the history of Rome is being slowly lost, the names of the places replaced, and the great buildings covered over by lesser ones—greatly informs Biondo’s project. He aims to end this game of telephone that has taken place through the ages, to clear away the layers of soil and reveal the ancient pavement. This project is built upon a very specific model of history, one that separates the contemporary Rome from a golden age. The city’s fall from grace has fractured the very continuity of history. Biondo and other humanists of this time period seem to be waking up, like Dante, in a dark wood, realizing too late that the true way is lost. By saying that Rome will suffer as great a loss in the future as she has earlier, Biondo positions his present between an elegiac golden age and a future scraped away by rushing time. This apocalyptic future, where her great buildings have been covered by stinking pig farms and rolling pastures as blank as an unmarked scroll, is the endpoint of history’s downward trendline, which is inherently created by the contemplation of Rome’s golden past: the very moment the apex, the highest point, of the line is drawn. Biondo situates the present of *Roma Instaurata* at exactly the midpoint of this line, in a Rome not lost but in the process of losing itself. By placing himself and his readers at this important juncture, Biondo calls for action. He seems to see a way out of the woods yet.

Biondo’s path out of the dark is revealed by a reinvigorated papal seat led by his patron

Pope Eugene IV. Biondo here goes on to address him:

“The return of your pontificate onto its seat confirmed our resolution to write, a return so useful and necessary for the its conservation that it is evident that

⁴⁹ “Brevi futurum apparet ut Roma ingeniorum parens virtutum alumna celebritatis specimen laudis et gloriae culmen ac omnium quae universus orbis ubique habet bonarum rerum seminarum in suis obscurata structuris maiorem celebritatis et famae jacturam faciat quam in rebus ridem facta ac potentia videmus.” Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

the papacy already destroyed by calamity and decline, would be completely lost if you had been absent another ten years.”⁵⁰

This is the most important passage for determining the intellectual climate surrounding *Roma Instaurata*. The timeframe that Biondo gives when he says “another 10 years” has a certain logic behind it. It places Biondo’s time at the center of a continuum of Roman ruin, similar to the one he proposed earlier. 10 years ago things were fine, now things are beginning to fall apart, and if Eugene had been gone another 10 years, all hope would have been lost. This statement putatively dates this introduction to 1445, the year Eugene, with Biondo in tow, stormed the Vatican and retook Rome after a 10 year exile. *Roma Instaurata*, and the way that it orients itself within a larger historical model, directly addresses specific political anxieties that surrounded the papacy of Eugene IV at this time. Because of this, it is worth delving into the papal politics of the *Quattrocento*.

Eugene’s reign (1431-47) came at the end of a long period of papal exile, known as the Babylonian captivity. In 1309, after the death of Boniface VIII, who had opposed the growth of French power, King Phillip IV exerted pressure on the college of cardinals to have a French Pope elected. This Pope, Clement V, declined to move to Rome, and the papacy remained in Avignon for the next 67 years. This spelled disaster for Rome, and stripped of its status as the center of Christianity, it fell prey to civil unrest. Ever since the Roman Empire was moved to Constantinople, the papacy had come to control more and more of the infrastructure of the city. Rome could not survive without the special status conferred upon it by the Roman empire. Without the papacy, it became just another backward medieval town in an age of increasing

⁵⁰ “Confirmavit etiam nostrum describenti propositum tuus in ipsam pontificatus tui sedem reditus adeo illius conservationi utilis atque necessarius ut constet eam senio calamitatibusque confectam si altero abfuisses cecimo paene funditus peritura.” Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

Milanese and Florentine influence. Unless Rome could make the transition from being the center of the Roman empire to being the center of the Christian empire, it was lost.

The Roman people knew this and, when the papacy returned to Rome under the auspices of Gregory XI, they rejoiced, but this did not end the period of conflict. Upon Gregory's death, the Roman people clamored for a Roman Pope, seeking to avoid a return to Avignon. The college of cardinals hastily chose Urban VI, and fled lest the mob find that he was not Roman, but Milanese. It must have seemed close enough to the college, who after 67 years in Avignon, were no longer Roman themselves. Their choice proved regrettable, since Urban VI soon not only alienated the French by refusing to return to Avignon, but also the bulk of the college of cardinals, by preaching ceaselessly against their luxury and their collection of funds. This sparked another migration to Avignon by a good part of the cardinals and the election of the first anti-Pope Clement VII. The years that followed were marked by preparations for war between opposing Popes, those of Avignon and those of Rome. To avoid this, both parties invested a clerical college, The Council of Constance, with the power to choose the legitimate Pope, either cementing French dominance over the Catholic world, or saving Rome from oblivion. In 1417 Martin V Colonna was chosen by the Council. In his reign of less than twenty years, he did much to cement papal authority in Rome, but, at his death in 1431 there was unrest bubbling just beneath the surface.

After Martin V's death, Gabriele Condulmer, a member of the mendicant Augustinian hermits was chosen as Pope. He took the name Eugene IV. His particular brand of faith was austere, focused on helping the common people, and he brought this faith with him into the papal office. We can see from some of his early projects that he truly wanted to purify the Roman

church, tightening restrictions on cardinal power. His building projects mostly focused on restoring Christian sites and paving roads, allowing pilgrims and everyday Romans better access to these holy sites. Eugene would probably have been known as a great reformer, if not for the legacy of political violence left to him by Martin.

Martin V's greatest flaw was a preference for members of his family when it came time to choose a Cardinal or bestow an honor. The Colonna, who trace their origins to Hercules, and are named for the column that he saw on the world's last shore, were among the leading noble families of Rome who had helped Cola di Rienzo establish his ill fated Republic in the papacy's absence. Eugene IV, upon his ascension, sought to limit the powers of these noblemen who, in his eyes, had nepotistically infiltrated the curia. This infuriated the Colonna, and they, with a gathered army, stormed the gates of Castel St. Angelo, intent again on bringing back the Roman republic.⁵¹

After he managed to fend off the Colonna, Eugene became more suspicious of any threat. Consequently, he dissolved the newly instituted Council of Basle, a group of officials set to meet for reform, by changing the location at the last minute to Bologna. Although the purpose of such a council seems admirable to us, Eugene was trying to re-establish the balance of power that had been upset by the Council of Constance, the council that chose Martin V as Pope and, in that moment, were more powerful than the pontificate. Seeing this response as unjustified, the Council resolved to meet anyway, in defiance of the Pope, and it was there, at Basle, that they came upon a dangerous idea.⁵² Martin V was slow to institute the reforms promised at the Council of Constance and it seemed to them that Eugene IV would be too concerned with

⁵¹ Pastor (1891): v1. 286- 287

⁵² Pastor (1891): v1 287-88

maintaining a grip on power to make too many changes. The Council of Constance had been given powers beyond that of the Pope, but only for the purpose of ending the Schism, of choosing a single Pope whose legitimacy would be uncontested. The Council of Basle saw those powers as a precedent. If a collected body could be so effective in ending the Schism, the greatest threat to the church since paganism, then could it not also be just as effective in determining church policy?⁵³

In 1433, sensing the potential for another Schism, King Sigismund pressured Eugene IV to recall the papal bull that dissolved the council⁵⁴. This did not pacify those at Basle, however-- they sought to extend the powers given to democratic body during a time of civil war to a time of peace, and reduce the power of the Pope to a kind of prime minister or doge. With the Pope in such a position, it would not be hard for the Council to seize temporal, as well as spiritual power. Although these revolutionary ideas were incompatible with Church doctrine, which asserted the need for a supreme ruler, on earth as in heaven, it gained traction because of the people's faith in the Council of Constance and their confusion and fear after the Schism. This was the political environment which greeted Flavio Biondo as he joined the papal curia in 1433. It was a renewed period of instability, which carried within it the threat of another schism and, for Biondo, the destruction of Christianity as he knew it.

The Duke of Milan, who bore ill will towards the Venetian Eugene, used the discord surrounding the Pope to his advantage and sent two detachments into the Papal States, allegedly under the auspices of the Council of Basle.⁵⁵ One, commanded by Francesco Sforza, laid waste

⁵³ Pastor (1891): v1 290

⁵⁴ Pastor (1891): v1 292

⁵⁵ Pastor (1891): v1 292-294

to the area outside Rome, the other, commanded by Niccolo Fortebraccio, with the help of the recently disgraced Colonna, held the Vatican under siege. Eugene's allies betrayed him one after the other as the noble families were once again enticed by the promise of a Republic. Biondo said that at this time "it [was] shorter to reckon those who remained true than those who fell way."⁵⁶ Faced with disaster, Eugene acceded to the immediate demands of the Council for reform. Once reconciled with them however, he was faced with yet another calamity. Sforza was able to be reasoned with and signed a treaty with the papacy in 1434. Fortebraccio's forces, however, continued to raze the Vatican suburbs. At the same time, emissaries from Milan, the Colonna, and, in all likelihood, the Council of Basel inflamed the people against the Pope. In the Spring, the people rioted, and declared a republic. Eugene IV escaped Rome, disguised as a Benedictine monk and hiding from a hail of stones at the bottom of a boat which floated down the Tiber.⁵⁷

After Eugene's exile, the Council of Basel began to consolidate power. In 1439 they made their ultimate coup de grace against the Pope. They declared Duke Amadaeus of Savoy to be the true Pope, who took the name Felix V. Using the fear of a new schism, Eugene mended relations with the Duke of Milan, and, using his forces, marched back into Rome and retook the Vatican.

Despite his triumphant return, the papacy as an institution was in a state of flux. It had just survived two serious attacks that questioned the place of the Pope in international politics. The first, the schism at Avignon, hoped to reduce the Pope to a figurehead, attached specifically to the Frankish court in order to lend it the imperial legitimacy passed down through

⁵⁶ Papencourt 473 cited and possibly translated by Pastor (1891) v1 293, probably from the *Decades*.

⁵⁷ Pastor v. 1 p. 294-5

Constantine. The second, the schism at Basel, attempted to recreate the papacy as an appendage of an oligarchic council of Christian elite. In 1445 the papacy was safe, but its future was unsure. Unless there was some way to re-establish the papacy as its own state with its own territory, Rome, there would inevitably be another destabilizing assault on its sovereignty.

Flavio Biondo, with *Roma Instaurata*, proposes a solution to this problem. He wants to use the same language of authority used by humanists from Republican Florence to Milan's monarchy. He will use this specific way of reading the past into the present to recast the papacy as a benevolent Augustus, thereby evoking the ultimate political dominance, the Roman Empire and tying the papacy to the very map of Rome itself. Nowhere is this more clear than in the following passage from the introduction, when Biondo continues his address to Eugene IV:

“ Not only do you nurture Romans by your presence in the curia, a thing which mostly benefits the opulence of the city, but also in many locations you restore and remake fallen, misshapen buildings at the greatest cost. This is certainly honorable, a deed most fitting for a magnanimous *princeps* and one which surpasses in praise and glory all the foundations that were built and the structures of buildings that were made when Rome once blossomed by the degree to which the poverty of our age has a need for the immense wealth of our forebears.”⁵⁸

There is a lot packed into this. By calling the returning Eugene a *princeps*, an ancient Roman word that referred to the emperor from Augustus onwards, Biondo shows us that his vision of Rome unites ancient grandeur and contemporary piety under a Christian ruler. He associates Eugene's restoration of the buildings of Rome with the building projects of the Roman emperors. They were called *principes*, which literally means “first head” because they were “first citizens.” To achieve this status, which differentiated them from tyrants or kings and legitimized them in

⁵⁸ “Neque enim sola comitantis curiae praesentia quod semper civitatis opulente plurimum profuit Romanos foves, sed collapsa deformataque aedificia multis in locis maximo instauras reficisque impendio. Decorum certe et magnanimo principe dignissimum facinus et quod omnes florente olim Roma iactas moles factaque aedificiorum structuras laude et gloria tanto superet quanto nostra huius saeculi tenuitas imanni illorum affluentiae opum cedit.” Romano Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

the eyes of the Roman people, they built buildings that provided for basic amenities, like baths, as well as spaces that added aesthetic beauty to the city, like the fora, and at the same time functioned as imperial propaganda. Biondo here realizes that the papacy, in taking over the emperor's role as the benefactor, has an opportunity to create its own aesthetic propaganda aimed at restoring the power and legitimacy lost during the years at Avignon and Florence. This propaganda, which Biondo weaves into *Roma Instaurata*, will place the Pope, as *princeps*, at the head of a Christianized Roman empire.

Biondo goes even further to say that this Christian empire will be even greater than its ancient counterpart, because Eugene will have built it up from even greater poverty. This would reverse the downward trend that he sketched out at the beginning of the introduction, inaugurating a new golden age of Rome.

“Since I owe everything that I have to your Sanctity, why don't I try to do with the remnant in letters of my small genius as you do when you proceed to renew Rome by the labor of cement workers or carpenters. This renovated celebration of the works of the Roman Popes who came before you adds to the restoration of our city, which might please in particular the sanctity of your dignity and add to your glory.”⁵⁹

For Biondo, Rome's restoration is the first step in inaugurating this new golden age of the papacy, one that reconnects the post-Avignon papacy with the greatness of the early Christian Popes, a chain that goes all the way back to Saint Peter. The preservation of the “great works,” the churches and monuments, that these Popes commissioned keeps this chain of authority intact. Biondo sees himself and Eugene IV as partners, albeit unequal ones, engaged in essentially the

⁵⁹ Quando itaque ego omnia quae mihi adsunt tuae sanctitati debeo cur non etiam contendam ut sic tu romam per ingenio mei litterarum monumenta sicuti cematariorum fabrorumque lignariorum opera pergas instaurare Accedet enim nostrae huic urbi instauratiōni quae dignitatis tuae sacrimoniam imprimis deceat et tuam gloriam maxime cumulet pontificum romanorum qui te praecesserint innovata operum commemoratio...” Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

same holy mission. His writings renovate Rome in the intellectual world and Eugene's building projects restore it in the physical.

However, their partnership, the united front between Biondo and Eugene IV to restore Rome to its former glory, is a bit more fraught than Biondo portrays it. Eugene, as a young man, renounced all his possessions and joined the Order of the Augustinian Hermits, known today simply as the Order of Saint Augustine. While the order has done much to further learning in later centuries, creating vast libraries and building an early printing press, in the early quattrocento they were a bit less sophisticated. Sworn to poverty they roamed the streets of the cities preaching the word of God. Eugene IV continued to live with this austerity as Pope, which, as I mentioned above, is one of the things that got him in trouble. He would have deemed the study of pagan Rome decadent, possibly even heretical. Ludwig von Pastor writes: "The whole intellectual training of Eugenius who, even while he occupied the Papal throne, never ceased to be the austere monk, tended to keep him untouched by the Renaissance movement..."⁶⁰ Flavio Biondo was not immune to it, however, he was a vital member of a growing humanist community.

Even though Eugene IV had no great love for pagan antiquity, when he fled the forces arrayed against him in 1434, he chose Florence, the beating heart of humanist thought, as his destination. Ludwig von Pastor argues in his *History of the Popes* that this exile gave Eugene, and by extension the papal institution as a whole, a reluctant tolerance for humanism. This tolerance allowed his successor, Nicholas V Parentucelli, the first humanist Pope, to usher in a new era of classicism for the papacy and begin the Renaissance proper.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Pastor (1891): v. 1 302-303

⁶¹ Pastor (1891) v. 1 303-304

In the years before Nicholas the V, however, the humanist focus that would later become a cornerstone of Renaissance thought was in its trial period. *Roma Instaurata* was one of those trials. Biondo could see that the papacy was in a precarious position, and, although Eugene IV did not necessarily agree with this, Biondo knew that the papal administration had to use its connection to the physical remains of the Roman empire to reassert itself as a sovereign state. Biondo's time in Florence among humanists in like Salutati, Bruni, and Loschi showed him how the past could be mobilized, through humanist rhetoric, into political discourse. Biondo, because of his exposure to this discourse, knew that the answer to the papacy's continuing future in Rome lay beneath the Roman pavement. *Roma Instaurata*, then, goes beyond a propagandistic mirroring of a papal message. It attempts to persuade Eugene that humanism could be used in the service of Christianity, shaping and sanctifying the past into a source of political power.

We can see this tension between Eugene's more traditional Christian ideals and Biondo's reverence for the pagan past in the way that pagan and Christian antiquity are treated in this introduction. Biondo goes on to give a summary of the work that *Roma Instaurata* will accomplish:

“While describing the old parts of the city and their new names, I will explain through which Pope or other christian the basilicas, temples, and other sacred places which we call ecclesia were founded, begun, or renewed. As I write about the magnificence of our city, inasmuch as I will not defraud eminent Romans of praise, even if they are idolaters and gentiles, I have a mind to highlight the glory of our martyrs, namely whenever someone conquered by endurance or triumphed by succumbing to the pleasure, the insanity, of tyrants.”⁶²

⁶² “...dum urbis partes ad veterem novamque nominationem describens basilicas quoque templa et sacra quas vocamus ecclesias loca per quos pontifices et alios Christianos vel fundatae primo vel auctae vel fuerint instauratae ostendam. Et quando in describenda urbis operum magnificentia multos Romanos praestantes certe viros, sed idolatras gentilesque merita laude non fraudabo est animus nostrorum quoque martyrum gloriam ubi quidam scilicet patiendo vicerint et libidini insaniaeque tyrannorum succumbendo triumphaverint indicare.” Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

While this summary heavily foregrounds Christian material, a quick perusal of *Roma Instaurata* reveals that he gives equal space to both pagan and Christian sites. The key phrase here, embedded in the baroque second sentence, is that he will not “defraud eminent Romans of praise, even if they are idolaters and gentiles.” This concessive clause is sandwiched between the assertion that his study will focus on churches and that it will prioritize the suffering of the martyrs. This is Biondo’s attempt to get his most important reader, Eugene IV, excited about *Roma Instaurata*, while, at the same time, he subtly embeds his work’s true aim: to sanctify the eminent gentiles and create a unilateral model of history that allows the papacy to invoke the grandeur of ancient Rome without seeming heretical. Biondo uses this mode of persuasion throughout his work, slowly building to the revelation that the papacy’s return is also the return of the true empire to Rome. His citation of Christian renovation is the honey on the rim of the cup. The text is primarily concerned, not with renovation, but with introducing a new way of thinking.

Biondo gives the clearest example of how he has re-imagined the role of antiquity in the introduction’s artful closing sentiment. These final lines, in their symmetrical syntax, recall the speeches of Cicero, the paradigmatic orator. In invoking him here, Biondo has his grammar demonstrate his humanist philosophy, which uses the wisdom of Rome’s pagan past to ensure its Christian future:

“I will thus approach your glory for this duty which I have taken up, having trusted that it will be that our descendents will decide at some later time whether or not at this time of such great loss I was able to imitate with my undignified pen the architecture that has been built: the basilica of the prince of the apostles, remade and renovated in great part, as well as the walls of the Lateran palace, or the large bronze doors added to the most famous temple of Saint Peter, or the restoration of the suburban walls of the Vatican palace and the paved roads of the city. Our descendents will decide whether a restoration

remains stronger and lasts longer when made with lime or brick or materia
(?), with stone or bronze or, perhaps, with words.”⁶³

Biondo here, at the end of his introduction, invokes the same model of history that he did at the beginning, but with one key difference. The model is reversed. The future that he supposes by invoking the past is not an ignorant one. The next generation will, in fact, be more knowledgeable than him about the life of his city. They will be able to evaluate his work and determine its validity. This is Biondo’s subtle evocation of humanism’s power to effect historical change, to reverse the downward trendline by inventing a new ennobled Rome.

In hoping for this change he also demonstrates the method by which it can be achieved. Biondo, by viewing papal projects through a classicizing, humanist, gaze, makes them rhetorical. A church restoration becomes the beneficent act of an emperor, a paved street evokes Caesar’s transformation of ancient tufa to glowing marble. This transfiguration of physical to intellectual, of stone to word, will preserve Christianity’s holy sites for all time, presenting them to this imagined future as intact as the pen can render. However, Biondo’s last clause reminds his readers, and, most importantly, Eugene IV, the sacred architecture of Christian sites can only be preserved by taking advantage of an ancient pagan way of thinking. Biondo actually encodes this way of thinking, the path to political salvation and eternal fame, into his final clause. When he wonders whether his words, or the bricks and mortar of Christian construction workers, he makes an oblique reference to the thirtieth poem of Horace’s third book of odes: *Exegi monumentum*.

These are Horace’s opening lines:

⁶³“Aggrediar itaque assumptum mihi tuam in gloriam munus futurum confisus ut posteri aliquando deiudicent utrum ne refarcita et magna ex parte innovata basilices principis apostolorum et Lateranensis palatii tecta vel additas ex aere aedi celeberrimae sancti Petri maiores valvas aut palatii moeniumque Vaticani suburbiorum restitutionem et stratas urbis vias utrum ne inque tanto facta impendio opera vel rudi stilo potuerim imitari et calce laterico materia lapide aut aere an litteris facta solidior diuturniorve maneat instauratio.” Flavio Biondo, *Roma Instaurata* Praefatio

“Exegi monumentum aere perennius,
 regalique situ pyramidum altius,
 quod non imber edax, non aquilo impotens
 possit diruere aut innumerabilis
 annorum series et fuga temporum.
 Non omnis moriar multaue pars mei
 vitabit Libitinam; usque ego postera
 crescram laude recens, dum Capitolium
 scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex.

--

I have built a monument stronger than bronze
 and higher than the regal site of the pyramids,
 which neither devouring rain, nor the wild north wind
 will be able to destroy, nor the endless
 line of years, the flight of time.
 I will not wholly die. A great part of me
 will escape Death. I will always rise
 on future praise, continuous
 as long as the high priest climbs the Capitoline
 with the silent virgin.”⁶⁴

Horace’s logic here is much the same as Biondo’s in his last sentence. Text is re-imagined as architecture. These buildings will never crumble, never fall since they exist in the realm of the mind. They will ensure eternal fame the architect and poet. Biondo, in including this Horatian reference at the beginning of a city guidebook, has perhaps read this poem too literally, but he did so with an express purpose in mind. He has taken the theoretical framework that Horace applied to his poetry, which, although it was closely tied with the Augustan building program, was not written expressly about building per se, and applied to to the preservation of actual Christian buildings. With this extension of Horace’s meaning to include not only ideas but physical spaces, Biondo demonstrates the power of the humanist lens, which allows him to take a metaphor made over a millennium before his birth and apply it to the very real political problem before him. As his introduction closes, he again tells Eugene that this view of history is the best solution, that the pagan past is the path to the Christian future.

⁶⁴ Horace *Odes* iii. 30, 1-9, my own translation

Roma Instaurata's solution to the threats against the papacy of the *quattrocento* would come to define the culture of the *cinquecento*. As papal power consolidated under the first humanist Pope Nicholas V, Biondo's vision of a new Christian empire became the aesthetic core of the Roman art and architecture. From the new facade on the Vatican Palace that echoed the Coliseum to the genius of Raphael and Michelangelo, which paid tribute to classical ideas of proportion, the cultural production that defined the High Renaissance followed Biondo's model of *instauratio*. It was Biondo, who, through careful examination of the objects that made up the Roman landscape, first brought the ancient past, once so remote, back to the medieval streets, and while this endeavor was surely a political one, it had implications in every sphere of western culture. We, the future arbiters that Biondo invokes, may have forgotten him, but that is only because we live in the world he created, where the past is a measurable quantity in present life, whether in the form of an obscure papyrus, available the world over on an online database, or in the aesthetic vocabulary of the Roman empire, so ubiquitous that we barely register the artifacts all around us.

Chapter 2

The Guided Tour: Flavio Biondo's place-based argument

Flavio Biondo's style changes significantly once he exits his introduction and begins *Roma Instaurata* proper, but his message remains just as potent. The grammatical complexity of his sentences drops off. His arguments are at times non-linear. A thought, once begun, has a hard time finding its conclusion and, more often than not, is lost amidst the flood of information through which he is attempting to navigate. Both of these characteristics make *Roma Instaurata* easy to dismiss as a reference work, a compilation of relevant quotes on Rome's history, architecture, and topography. However, a careful reading of how Biondo presents his information reveals that this is a work with a definite purpose. *Roma Instaurata* is a journey around the city that imposes a textual order on its streets. This order functions as an argument about the nature of Rome, past, present and future. The following chapter will focus in on specific moments within the larger text to examine how Biondo articulates *Roma Instaurata's* subtle thesis: that the Rome of his time will be born again as the center of a Christian empire.

The one thing that is important to consider before beginning our reading of Biondo's text, is that, although in many ways it is the first of its kind, using humanist rhetoric usually reserved for literature to talk about the physical remains of Rome's past, it draws heavily on another slightly older tradition, that of the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*. As I mentioned in the introduction, this text, as well as its revision, known as the *Graphia Aurea Urbis Romae*, were the main guidebooks to Rome until *Roma Instaurata*. The *Mirabilia* consists of various legends about particular places or buildings in Rome, collected in the 12th century for the benefit of pilgrims

who came flooding into the city as the emphasis on the worship of the remains of martyrs grew. Given the audience, fact and fiction blend quite a bit in this early guidebook. *Roma Instaurata* is, on one level, a reaction to this mytho-topography. Biondo seeks to correct the inaccuracies of the *Mirabilia* and restore the sites' "true" meaning. This restoration of the buildings in the intellectual world is directly connected, as he says in his introduction, to their preservation in the physical world. Despite this tension with his guide book's predecessor, Biondo borrows the format of the *Mirabilia* for *Roma Instaurata*, guiding his tour of the city with short numbered sections about each site. He makes one very important change to this schema: instead of talking generally about types of monuments, as the *Mirabilia* does in its first two books, and reserving a *perambulatio*, a topographical, site based, examination of the city for later consideration, Biondo attempts to his contain entire discussion into one traversal of the city. As we will see in Chapter Three, he was not quite successful, but this change in perspective signals a shift in the way these monuments were perceived. They were no longer curiosities for the tourist to admire, but powerful tools for asserting political legitimacy and power. In order to determine the content and context of this shift, it is important to pay attention to the order in which he presents his information and follow him on his journey around the city.

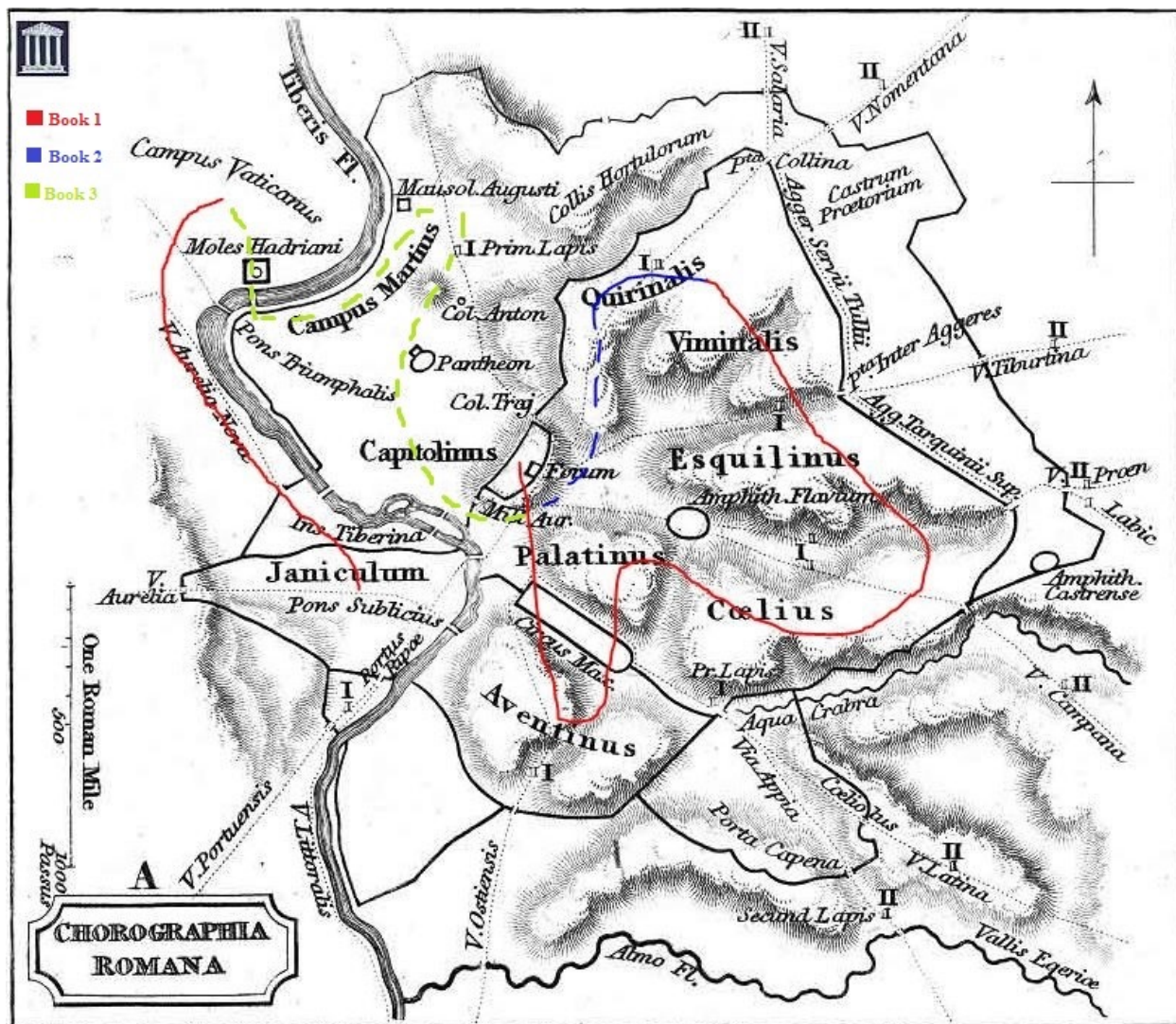


Figure 4. Approximation of Biondo's Course. Background taken from <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/historians/narrative/romanhistory.html> I traced the route and added the key myself.

Roma Instaurata's first book starts in Trastevere, on the Gianicolo. From there Biondo moves north along the Tiber to the Vatican. He then shifts to Rome's seven hills, leaving the Campus Martius for later. Biondo makes a more or less uninterrupted course over these hills for the remainder of the first book, represented in red on the map (fig. 1). He begins with the Capitoline, moving south to the Aventine, then curving up through the Palatine to the Caelian, the site of the Lateran Basilica. He continues from the Lateran north over the nearly continuous ridge of the Esquiline, Viminal and Quirinal, ending at the site of the baths of Diocletian. The

second book begins with an extended rumination on baths and bathing culture in Rome. This huge digression seems to make something clear to our author. As he moves through the Roman spaces most crowded with ruins, a site based exploration would actually obscure the true significance of what he sees. For this reason in the middle of the second book, he quickly ends his walk around the hills and divides the remainder of his study, the second and third books, into four parts: Roman Religion, Roman Government, Roman Spectacles, and a section devoted to miscellany as well as the conclusion of his argument. Despite the non-linear nature of these general topics, the monuments that he covers in each section actually do follow a kind of path, through the fora into the Campus Martius. I have represented this on the map (fig. 1) with a dotted line. This second, more general analysis of Biondo's will be covered in Chapter 3.

Biondo does not quite resolve the tension between the *perambulatio* and a more general overview of Rome's monuments. His program is not an integrated walk through the history or the topography of the city, but a fragmented examination of both. Biondo here is working in an as yet unformed discipline that combines the more familiar textual analysis with a new kind of proto-archaeology. Halfway through the tour our tour guide realizes that his purposes are better served elsewhere. Biondo stumbles onto a narrative of decline that pervades all Roman institutions and which he tells repeatedly in different domains throughout the remainder of his study. He abandons us in the middle of the city to better tell that story. For he realizes that *Roma Instaurata's* purpose lies at the story's conclusion.

He treats the intellectual world like the physical one, sifting carefully through layers of interpretation and scholarship to find the truth buried below the foundation, and he treats the physical world like the intellectual, using the aesthetics and the history of Rome's ruins to make

his rhetorical point. Because he straddles the divide between these two connected Romes, the one around him and the one he reads, Biondo struggles against the very structure he set out to create. Sometimes he will get lost in an author's words, making long digressions into Ammianus Marcellinus' examination of obelisks or a letter by Theodoric on the maintenance of aqueducts. At other times, he flies through the streets, leaving the reader in the dust and breaking from his defined order to write his own small treatise on the development of theatrical scenery. His logic seems discontinuous, his structure improvisational, but even Biondo realizes that these slips actually define *Roma Instaurata*. For this reason he comes to embrace them by the second book and makes his structure more general. The Roman Renaissance is created by precisely such leaps of faith. These elusive moments of timelessness, of space to word to space again, are what makes the past seem to breathe on the Roman streets. We can only understand his larger argument by which he hopes to bring about that rebirth if we attempt to follow his path through the city through ruins and words.

Trastevere

Biondo's choice to begin this survey on the opposite side of the Tiber from the ancient city is decidedly informed by the *Mirabilia*. When both texts do lead us around the city, they put this side of the river, the side that houses the Vatican, in pride of place. In doing so, they re-define the center of Rome⁶⁵. However, the *Mirabilia* does this out of the necessity. The Vatican was either the entry point for many medieval pilgrims or the first stop on the tour. Biondo's decision signifies something more. This becomes clear as he begins his perambulation with a

⁶⁵ McCahill (2009): 179

discussion of the Gianicolo. He quotes Livy in his first book: “The Janiculum also was added to the city, not because of a lack of space but in order that the citadel might not belong to the enemies. It seemed best not only to fortify it, but to join it to the city with a pile bridge because of the convenience of the path.⁶⁶” The position of this quote reveals a programmatic concern for Biondo. In his discussion of any given place, he first examines how it was incorporated into the city. By starting his journey here and focusing on the way the city grew to include it, Biondo invites the reader to see the way that Rome has evolved. This view of Rome, not as a frozen classical image, but as a city that is vital and changeable, is essential to his presentation of Christianity’s new place in it. For this reason, he must approach the Vatican from the Gianicolo. The section acts as a kind of buffer for the holiest place in the city (tied with the Lateran). The reader, perhaps a Ciceronian humanist who was expecting a tour that foregrounded the city’s ancient past, now enters the Vatican fully convinced that Rome is not immutable in its greatness, that there is room for the Vatican, and the papacy, in history to come.

The Vatican

Biondo’s account of the Vatican city starts off by treating it as a microcosm of Rome itself. As he did with the Aurelian walls, he gives the history of the Leonine walls around the Borgo (then called the *civitas Leonina*) and lists the names of its gates. In doing this, he positions Leo IV as a kind of Christian Romulus figure, an action that will become incredibly important once he reaches the basilica of Saint Peter.

⁶⁶Ianiculum quoque adiectum, non inopia loci sed ne quando ea arx hostium esset. id non muro solum sed etiam ob commoditatem itineris ponte sublicio, tum primum in Tiberi facto, coniungi urbi placuit.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 23 quoting Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 1.33

Before he gets there though, Biondo makes sure to weigh in on a few myths about other sites on the Vatican hill. It will be helpful to examine these a bit closer, in order to come to a clearer understanding of Biondo's methodology.

Biondo begins with, what is according to him, the Vatican's final gate, the elusive "Porta Triumphalis." Scholars today are split as to whether this term in fact referred to a specific gate⁶⁷, but Biondo is convinced. The most significant part of this passage is not the where he argues his point, but in the beginning, where he directly states his intentions. He says that he wants to "recover this thing lost entirely in the shadows by a more exact method, a work which, if the works of men hold firm at all, must flash with eternal clarity."⁶⁸ Although his argument about this monument itself becomes lost in the shadows shortly after this, Biondo's preliminary remark sheds more light on how he views his mission. In his eyes, these ancient monuments are deserving of praise, despite the pagan craftsmen who built them, because they are the work of men. If these great buildings fall into obscurity, so too, by extension, will the grandeur of the papacy. For this reason, Biondo seeks to restore all monuments to bright fame.

When Biondo next takes it upon himself to dispel the rumor that Nero had a palace on the Vatican, he tips his hand a bit about how he views his audience. Apparently it was so widely believed that Nero lived on the hill that Biondo makes mention of it in his analysis: "The rumor, perpetuated over many years and by the writings of many authors has involved many, even those who are not uneducated, in the error that there was a palace of Nero on the hill..."⁶⁹ From the

⁶⁷ A summary of the debate is provided by Samuel Ball Platner (1929)

⁶⁸ "Et ut rem quasi hominum opera quicquid solidi haberent oportuerit aeterna claritate fulgere tenebris in quibus omnino perierat certiore abstrahamus modo..." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 41

⁶⁹ "Implicat vero erroribus multos etiam non indoctos fama per multos annos multorumque scriptis continuat..." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 43

outset, Biondo views his work as corrective. He wants to use his research to change the way that his contemporaries saw the city. Scrutinizing Biondo's "true" Rome will reveal not only the types of arguments that would have convinced his peers, but also the values that he wants to include in his vision of the world.

A striking example of this is Biondo's next subject, Saint Peter's crucifixion. The location of Peter's suffering, contested even today, was understandably a hot button issue in papal Rome. Biondo begins, as he did in his section on the fabled palace of Nero, by placing himself in opposition to a group who is much less informed than he is. "There are some who seek to incorrectly decorate the Gianicolo with this honor."⁷⁰ Both these refutations seem to be aimed at a single person, Maffeo Vegio. Both Biondo and Vegio were in the papal secretariat at the time, and both were seen as experts in Roman topography. One of the crowning artistic achievements of Eugene IV's papacy were the Filarete doors to the Vatican basilica. They were an attempt, which Nicholas the V later solidified, to make the Vatican the center of Christian Rome, as opposed to the Colonna controlled Lateran. They depicted papal triumphs across history, culminating with the Concordat between the eastern and western branches of Christianity, which Eugene presided over. One of the most important scenes on this door is the Crucifixion of Peter (fig 2. below). Both Vegio and Biondo were involved in the papal court as this scene was being planned and both had opposing theories about it.

The *Liber Pontificalis*, the earliest source on the crucifixion, locates it in the *circus Neronis*, the flat area next to the Vatican hill, underneath a *terabinthum*, a turpentine tree.⁷¹ *The Mirabilia* says that Peter was crucified near a *meta* and near the location of the *Naumachia*, the

⁷⁰ "...nec desunt qui Ianiculum falso ea gloria ornare quaeritant. Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 45

⁷¹ J.M. Huskinson (1969): 137

lake in which Nero supposedly held naval battles. The location of this was originally considered to be near the *circus Neronis*, but it mysteriously shifted in the minds of scholars and map makers around the time of the *Mirabilia*. As the *Naumachia* changed locations, so did Peter's crucifixion. The landmarks that were associated with the crucifixion also changed. The terabinth tree morphed into the *terabinthus Neronis*, a monument that appeared on the Gianicolo in the *Mirabilia*. More importance was placed on the *meta*, the pyramid, and this was said to be the *meta Romuli*, a ruined hill of stone on the northern side of the Vatican hill that faced the Gianicolo. This tradition uses these two landmarks to triangulate Peter's position somewhere on the Gianicolo.

Vegio's version pulls from the *Mirabilia*. It asserts Peter was crucified between two *metae*, or pyramids, at the very site of the "*Terabinthus*." The two pyramids he uses are the *Meta Romuli* and the *Meta Remi*, or the pyramid of Gaius Cestius, which had been confused with the *Meta Romuli* for centuries because of its distinctive shape and the ruin of the *m.Romuli*. Vegio actually publishes this theory in a treatise called *De Rebus Antiquibus Memorabilibus Basilicae Sancti Petri Romae* in 1455, 10 years after *Roma Instaurata*. He nevertheless would have been a vocal proponent of this theory while the doors were being constructed.⁷²

Biondo wants to move away from this *Mirabilia* centered interpretation, and once again place Peter's crucifixion on the Vatican. To contest the Vegio's version, Biondo begins with ancient sources. He cites one of the oldest pagan documents on the Christians, Tacitus' passage in book 15 of his *Annales*.⁷³ Biondo argues that because Tacitus is pagan, he will be less prone to mythologizing and will stick to the truth. Tacitus describes how Nero tortured the Christians to

⁷² Huskinson (1969) 139

⁷³ Tacitus *Annales* 15.44

deflect public blame from himself after a fire consumed most of the city in 64 AD. Biondo reads this into an earlier Tacitean quotation, given two sections previously, from which he concluded that Nero had built pleasure gardens on one side of the Vatican hill. He moves from the textual to the physical, by first drawing the reader's attention to the ruins, which he asserts are of this *circus neronis*, and citing Pliny's attribution of the obelisk on the Vatican to the circus of Caligula and Nero. Using this reasoning, Biondo casts Castel Sant' Angelo as one of the *metae* that locates the crucifixion, the other being the illusive *meta Romuli*. He makes the *terabinthum* a turpentine tree once more, and asserts that it would have grown near the Tiber because it needs water to make its eponymous sap.

Biondo's argument has one large fallacy: the fact that the Castel Sant' Angelo would not have been built yet, since it first served as the tomb for the emperor Hadrian 138 years after the death of Christ. The way that Biondo addresses this says volumes about the way he sees history:

“Although the tomb of Hadrian was not one of the *metae* in the time of Peter and Nero, as we showed previously, we still contend that those men who wanted to commit this occurrence to letters or to reveal it to the idiots with a picture, accepted it as a sign of the *metae* only because there was nothing more certain.”⁷⁴

For Biondo, the past is in many ways lost, brought to the present only by an elaborate system of signs. Only someone who is truly learned can interpret these signs, deciding whether Terebinth means tree or building, or whether the two pyramids point to the Gianicolo, the Vatican, or even nothing at all. Biondo positions himself as this learned interpreter, and, by editing the past in this way, he considers himself to be polishing the ruins of the ancient world back to their former brightness.

⁷⁴ “Nam licet Hadriani moles metarum una temporibus Petri et Neronis sicut ostendimus non fuerit tamen tenemus illos qui longo post Petri mortem tempore id factum litteris mandare aut pictura idiotis ostendere voluerunt signum id metarum quo nullum erat certius accepisse.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 48



Figure 5. St. Peter's Crucifixion as depicted on the Filarete doors obtained from <http://stpetersbasilica.info/Interior/DoorFilarete/DoorFilarete.html>

When ornamenting the Vatican, however, Filarete and Eugene IV chose to foreground Vegio's version of the past. On the door, the bend in the Tiber clearly places the pyramid on the right in the Campus Martius, making it the pyramid of Gaius Cestius. Castel Sant' Angelo and the terebinth tree are included on the Vatican side of the Tiber. This nod to Biondo's theory here is really only a slap in the face. Instead of supporting the fact that Peter was crucified near Castel Sant' Angelo it serves to locate the *meta Romuli*, which makes a perfect triangle with the *meta Remi* in one corner and the actual scene of the crucifixion at the top, placing it firmly on the Gianicolo.⁷⁵ From examining these doors, it becomes clear that this passage in *Roma Instaurata* is a direct rebuttal of the scene on the door, whose main proponent was Vegio. Biondo disagrees with every landmark, except of course the tree. Filarete even included the *Palatium Neronis* on

⁷⁵ Huskinson's article (1969) provided a clear enough image, and clear enough explanation of the doors to determine this, for which I am eternally grateful.

the Vatican, the existence of which Biondo vociferously denies. The “idiots” that he refers to surely are the people of modern Rome, who, in his view, have been duped by an a-historical version of the past. This passage does more than give us an insight into the way Biondo makes a point, or even his bruised ego. It says a lot about the role of the humanist in this particular pre-Renaissance moment. Only in this transitional period, before the papacy had truly regained power, did humanists have the freedom to argue about the history and topography of their city. The papacy was interested in their ideas, and actually listened to them as opposed to later years when humanist scholarship was used to promote an assigned papal doctrine. *Roma Instaurata* attempts to teach the Pope about his own history, to tell him how to rule Rome. A work like this never could have existed, even a decade later.

Together, along with Biondo, we have walked along the Tiber from Trastevere, over the Gianicolo, through the Borgo, and have finally arrived at the Basilica of Saint Peter. Biondo, like a dutiful tour guide, points out different sections of the complex, the church and the palace, explaining how, when and by whom each was built. The true message only comes through once he reaches the improvements of Leo IV, the Romulus of the Borgo:

“Taking up great care for the place and for the Basilica he made many things which in sixty years, as much separates this time from theirs, had entirely collapsed from old age, and they would have, in a short time, gone entirely to nothing unless you had made an effort, most holy father Eugenius, so that we now delight to see these things renewed.⁷⁶”

Biondo’s direct address to his own Pope, Eugene IV, does not only place him within the text and re-identify him as the patron; it also gives him a specific role. Eugene enacts the physical counterpart to Biondo’s intellectual restoration. He is shown restoring the great

⁷⁶ “Magnamque suscipiens ipsius et basilicae beati Petri curam multa fecit quae in hoc annorum vix dum sexcentorum quot in haec tempora intercesserunt pacio inveterata iam omnino corruerant brevi ad nihilum perventura nisi tua beatissime pater Eugeni opera factum esset ut illa nunc laetemur cernentes innovata.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 55

remnants of earlier Christian buildings, preserving the work of those that came before him.

Using his humanist view of history, Biondo casts the Pope as the benefactor that will Rome back its great past. Biondo then goes on to say that this restoration makes his work even greater than that of his predecessors, because Eugene improves upon it: “Where Leo decorated the church with gifts, you made it even better...⁷⁷” This leads us once again to the greatest of Eugene’s improvements, the Filarete door:

“You [Eugenius] will see that you have been surpassed by Leo in only one single thing: the fact that he gave silver doors to the church and you gave bronze, except that their magnificence will seem equal, since the silver gates were made with no fine craftsmanship, and the bronze ones are gilded and inlaid with the great histories of the union with the Greeks, the Armenians, the Ethiopians, the Jacobins and other peoples with your work and expense for the church of the *conciliator*, so the price of bronze and gold and craftsman has surpassed the cost [of a silver gate] fourfold.”⁷⁸

Eugene’s gift to the church is valued higher than Leo’s precisely because of its iconographic contents. Each of the doors’ panels, depicts a different triumph of the papal institution from Peter’s crucifixion in the time of Nero to the *Concordat*, officiated by Eugene himself. These images function as symbols for the legitimacy of the Roman papacy.

Such legitimacy is granted by locating great events from Christian history on the very doors of the Vatican church, but Biondo’s view of papal power in Rome is even more expansive. As he moves on from Saint Peters, he remarks that Eugene has paved the very roads that lead from it. For Biondo, the sight of paved roads in Rome evokes a past older than the earliest Christian era and he makes this remark to effectively conclude his examination of the Vatican

⁷⁷ Biondo, *Roma Instaurata* I 56-7

⁷⁸ “Sola una re videris a Leone superatus quod valvas ille argenteas tu aeneas basilicae dedisti nisi par videatur magnificentia pro argenteis nullo exquisitori artificio factis aeneas otuisse inauratas tantisque inscultas historiis unionis Graecorum Armeniorum Aetiopum Jacobinorum et aliorum populorum tua opera tuaque imensa ecclesiae conciliatorum ut quadrupolo aeris aurique impendium merces opificis superaverit.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 58

hill: “it seems that the city of Rome has returned from another time, many centuries ago.⁷⁹”

Biondo here, just as he’s about to move on to the seven hills that comprised a Rome older than the Vatican or the Abitato, hints that the papacy will restore the glory not only of the ancient Christian past, but the pagan past of the Empire and the Republic as well.

The Ancient City

Biondo uses this connection between his Christian world and the past that he studies to move from the Vatican to the hills of the old city. He begins this section by using Varro to provide etymologies and general information about the location of each hill. Then, before he moves on to examine their specific monuments, Biondo gives us a general blueprint for how he saw the ancient city founded by Romulus. This model takes what he accomplished on the Gianicolo hill and takes it to the extreme, reconciling the timeless image of ancient Rome with his own pre-Renaissance reality. For him, the map of Rome is not immutable. Because Rome has always changed, a new Christian Rome would not break the continuity of power that led back to the emperors. As he did on the Gianicolo, Biondo uses Livy extensively to make this point, quoting his explanation of how each hill was assimilated into the city⁸⁰. He also cites a competing aetiology from Tacitus, which places the city’s origin point not on the Capitoline with Romulus, but in the Forum Boarium.⁸¹ He then proceeds to lay out his intentions for the following sections: “Going forward towards the description of the buildings and locations of

⁷⁹ “Strata vero palatii area et ipsa quae in urbem duci via in multas postea partes ubis divisa tanti sunt decoris ut alia ab ea quae multis retro saeculis fuit urbs Roma videatur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* 60

⁸⁰ Livy *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.30.1, 1.33.6, 1.44.3

⁸¹ “A foro Boario ubi aereum taurum adspicimus quoa id genus animalium aratro subditur sulcus designandi opidi coeptus ut magnam Herculis aram amplecteretur Inde certis spatiis interiecti lapides per ima montis Palatini ad aram Consutii mox ad Curias veteres tum ad sacellum Larem Forumque Romanum. Et Capitolium non a Romulo sed a Tito Tatío additum.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* 72 quoting Tacitus *Annales* 12.24

this city, I will expand it since it now has eight hills, and I will proceed to show whatever each has intact or destroyed, ancient or new.”⁸²

Biondo’s remark that Rome now has eight, not seven, hills as well as his inclusion of Tacitus’ alternate conception of the city should not just be attributed to his lust for scholarly accuracy. He also wants to convey to his readers, as he moves towards its most ancient sites, that Rome is being constantly re-imagined. The same voracity for the truth that causes him to always seek to correct, could also be seen as a kind of hope. No one historian’s version of Rome can ever be right, and there are always dissenting accounts but it is up to Biondo, as our guide around his eternal city, to interpret these often conflicting signs and create his vision of Rome reborn. Behind his pedantic clausulae, his quotes that run for pages, his tendency to mix sources up and read authors against each other a-historically, Biondo hides the mind of a poet.

It might seem strange to call the author of this work of reference a poet. But the poetry that Biondo evokes with his juxtaposition of ancient material, will be more obvious if we leave the streets of Rome for a moment and examine his intellectual project once again to his contemporary Vegio. In addition to assisting Eugene IV on the Filarete doors, Vegio was the author of the *Aeneidos XII Supplementum*, a new ending to Virgil’s epic. He exhaustively studied the poem, copied its metrical pattern, sentence structure, and even vocabulary to splice Virgil’s words into a new creation, one that, despite being indistinguishable from the rest of the Aeneid, reflects the concerns of his contemporary Italian world, which was seeking to engage with the precedents of ancient Rome in new ways.⁸³

⁸² “Progressuri ad eam inquam tendimus aedificorum locorumque urbis descriptionem qui nunc sunt octo montes. Quidque integrum habeant vel demolitum aut vetustum aut novum ostendere pergamus.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* 72

⁸³ Elizabeth McNeill (2009) discusses Vegio’s process and its significance at length

Around this same time, the Ciceronians would not write a sentence if it did not appear in a known work by that famous republican orator. For the humanists of the Quattrocento, who were only just beginning to discover their relationship to a Latin literary canon, to quote an author was an independent act of creation, a way of defining themselves under the shadow of Ancient Rome. Biondo doesn't quote so excessively only out of a desire to establish a scholarly basis for his guidebook, but because he sees quotation as a generative act. He is building his new, Christian Rome from the building blocks the ancient writers have given him. As we join him again and step onto the Capitoline, it will be important to pay special attention to the way that Biondo uses his sources, as they are an important conduit between him and the Rome he wants to renew. He makes special use of this kind of poetic association as we move forward towards the oldest sites in the city to assimilate these ancient places into his Christian worldview.

Capitoline

Biondo's tone is anything but hopeful, however, when he begins his section on the Capitoline: "It shames and disgusts me to report the ugliness that is beginning on the Capitoline."⁸⁴ He is frustrated that the contemporary Capitoline has none of the splendor that he read about in ancient authors. Such a response highlights an important difference between his mission on Christian ground and his mission among the pagan ruins. In places where there are a lot of churches, there has been a lot of building activity. Biondo's task here is to create a kind of continuum between Christian and pagan buildings. These pagan hills, however, have been mostly left to nature, with nothing on the ground to compare, and no evidence of what was there

⁸⁴ "Pudet vero pigetque a Capitolio inciientem eius deformitatem referre." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 73

except for what he reads in the historians⁸⁵. He seems almost overwhelmed when confronted with the difference, saying that it would be superfluous to list all the temples that once stood on the hill. Instead he begins with what is there:

“Now truly besides the brick house of Boniface the ninth built over the ruins, which would have disgusted the Roman citizen with its mediocrity, allotted for the use of senators and lawyers, besides the church of the brothers of Saint Francis of the Ara Coeli, built on the foundations of the temple of Jupiter, the Capitoline or Tarpeian hill is ornamented with nothing like the buildings it once had.”⁸⁶

Biondo bears particular animus towards this “brick building...built over the ruins.” It seems most likely that this building is what is now known as the Palazzo Del Senatore, which was used as the center of the Republican government, led by Cola Di Rienzo, that attempted to rule Rome in the papacy’s absence. Biondo’s disdain for this building is more than just aesthetic. At this time, separatist Republicans from rich and powerful families still posed a real threat to the papacy’s temporal rule over Rome.

⁸⁵ Biondo cites Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae* 16.10.14 and 22.16.12, as well as Cassiodorus’ *Variae* 7.6 on the former splendor of the Capitoline.

⁸⁶ “Nunc vero praeter latericam domum a Bonifacio IX ruinis sueraedificatam qualem mediocris olim fastidisset Romanus cives usibus Senatoris et causidicorum deputatam praeter Arae Coeli fratrum beati Francisci ecclesiam in Feretrii Iovis templi fundamentis extractam nihil habet is Capitolinus Tarpeiusve mons tantis olim aedificiis exornatus.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 73

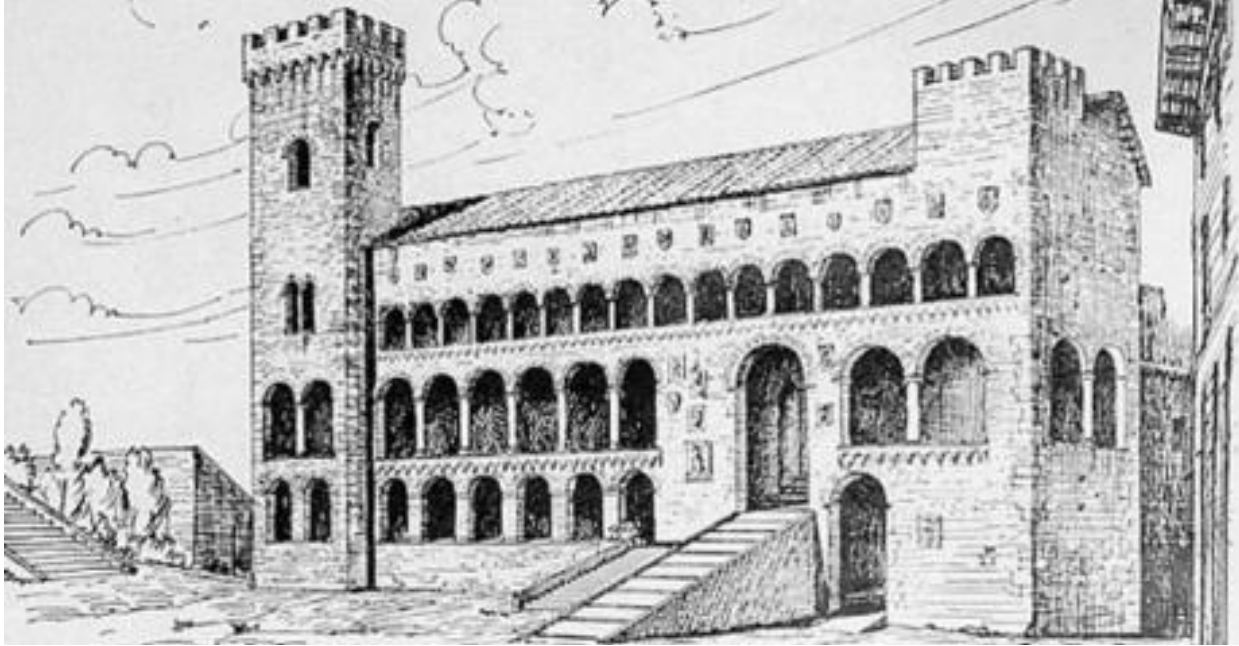


Fig 6. A contemporary view of the Palazzo Del Senatore obtained from http://en.museicapitolini.org/sede/piazza_e_palazzi/palazzo_senatorio⁸⁷

Viewed through this lens, the discussion of Marcus Manlius which follows comes sharply into focus. Biondo wants to attack the Republicans where they live. To do this, he uses the story of Marcus Manlius Capitolinus, culled from the *Factorum et Dictorum Memorabilium*, a history written by Valerius Maximus. To paraphrase, Marcus Manlius became famous for repelling a Gaulish invasion from the Capitoline. He earned a place on the shield of Aeneas in the *Aeneid*, and the cognomen Capitolinus. The patricians felt that he was using this fame and his proximity to major religious sites like the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus to gain the public's favor and seize power for himself. Motivated by this fear, they voted for him to be thrown from the Tarpeian rock and his property on the Capitoline confiscated. In addition, they passed a law which forbid any member of the patrician class to reside on the Capitoline. At the judgement a proclamation

⁸⁷ Although he misidentifies the ruins as the "Temple of Janus" this building is the only one built over visible ruins on the Capitoline hill, those of the Tabularium. It was since renovated by Michelangelo and now serves as the office of the mayor of Rome.

was made about Marcus Manlius, which Biondo makes sure to include: “You were Manlius when you were among the Senones. After you began to imitate them you were treated as one.”⁸⁸

By dispelling the myth that the senators of old lived and worked on the Capitoline, he robs the Palazzo del Senatore of its political significance. Biondo wants his readers to realize that the noble Republicans are not re-incarnations of the patrician class, but ignorant thugs, rebels against the power of the papacy. In this way, he uses the political intrigue from 1000 years ago as a condemnation of his contemporary patrons’ political rivals, the Republicans. He shows them not only to be uninformed of the very history that they are trying to recreate, but also compares them to a tyrant who once threatened the republic they claimed to stand for. Biondo casts the Republicans as obsolete despots, opposing the righteous rule of the Christian empire.

Palatine

Biondo begins his section on the Palatine, just as he did on the Capitoline, by focusing on the loss that has afflicted this hill. He is frustrated that there are no famous buildings on the Palatine, except for a church built by Saint Callixtus. This building offers him no opportunity to make a larger point about Christian Rome, and so the Palatine comes to represent the profound disconnect between the past and the present, the force against which Biondo fights. The ruins do not offer him many answers. Although he knows that this place once housed all the great men of ancient Rome, he cannot find any record of who built their palaces. In exasperation, he finally supposes that “certain single individuals with no sign of building made added small pieces which

⁸⁸ “Manlius eras cum mihi praecipites agebas Senones. Postquam imitari coepisti unus factus es ex Senonibus.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 73 quoting Valerius Maximus *Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium* 6.3.1

writers failed commit to letters since they didn't seem worthy."⁸⁹ He follows this with a disappointing picture of the quattrocento Palatine: it has become a pasture for all manner of domesticated animal. His meditation on this scene, no longer the Palatine, but the "Balatine,"⁹⁰ leads him to a new insight about this part of the city:

"I sometimes have entered into various debates with myself as to what can be supposed about the rest of Rome when I see those three hills, the first and only that were brought together into the first city, led nearly to the point of desertion that Rome had when it wasn't yet founded."⁹¹

For Biondo, all traces of antiquity really are lost on the Palatine, and Rome has been returned to its state before it was ever a city. This makes pre-Renaissance Rome a kind of Pallanteum, the wild city of Evander, depicted by Virgil in the 8th book of the *Aeneid*. When Aeneas arrives at Pallanteum, the king Evander gives the Trojan a tour of all the important sites in his proto-Rome. Virgil's text is also a topographical redefinition of Rome, the great-great-great grandparent of Biondo's text. What is most telling here is that, like Biondo's tour, it does not just acclimate the viewer to a new city, but to a specific way of seeing history⁹². Virgil's Roman vision can be best summarized by the following passage:

"Hinc ad Tarpeiam sedem et Capitolia ducit,
aurea nunc, olim silvestribus horrida dumis...

--

From here he led [Aeneas] to the Tarpeian seat and Capitoline

⁸⁹ "Sed cum reges primo deinde consules et postea imperatores maiori ex parte eam habuerint certam sedem quis tanta aedificia auxerit nullus scribit. Quod quidem nulla insigni constructione facta particulas addidit quas scriptores ut parum dignas mandare litteris omiserunt." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 76

⁹⁰ "Ballatium nunc posse appellari videmus quod ubicumque non impediunt magnae molis ruinae aut ubi vineta excelsis in fornicibus pensilia non occuparint totus ager pascuus non ovibus magis quam cabillis bubalis et capris est factus." Biondo *Roma Instauratae* A rather obscure pun, perhaps combining Palatine with *bovis*, which means cow.

⁹¹ "Qua ex re aliquando in varias cogitationes venimus quid de cetera liceat Roma suspicari cum tres illos montes qui primi et soli in prima urbe a Romulo comprehensi fuerint nunc si absint ruinae videmus paene ad eam deductos aedificiorum nutitatem quam Roma nondum condita habuerunt." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 76

⁹² Catherine Edwards (1996) discusses the way topographical studies reformulate the city from *Ab Urbe Condita* to the *Mirabilia*. As I said in the introduction, Biondo is not the first to see the environment around him in this way. What makes him revolutionary is that he takes an ancient discipline of and brings it to bear on his own political situation.

Golden now, but back then bristling with forests of thorns..."⁹³

Virgil, over a millennium before Biondo, also uses the topography of the city, past and present, to reinterpret the Rome around him. The Rome of gold and marble grows from the fertile earth of Evander's city. For Biondo the process is reversed. Biondo's Palatine, like Evander's Capitoline, is covered in thorns. In Biondo's world, however, this wildness does not signify a coming golden age, but a fall from it. The thorns that cover the *Quattrocento* Palatine are symbols for Biondo's grief, his frustration at the great Rome he will never see. But underneath that frustration there is a glimmer of hope. Mythic time has returned. Rome is once again a blank slate, ready to be found again.

Biondo's sense of removal from antiquity becomes clearer than ever when he attempts to return himself to the city's bustling past. In order to give the reader some idea of the kind of activity that went on in ancient Rome, he cites a description of a construction site from Juvenal's third satire. This quote, in Juvenal's context, is actually a rant *against* Rome's crowded streets, but ironically, by its placement here, Biondo uses it to give us a very real sense of his empty Rome. It reads:

"For if the axle that carries the Ligurian stone leans down and pours it overturned above the crowded group, what survives from the bodies? Who finds limbs, who finds bones? Each peasant's body would be crushed and lost."⁹⁴

This dark sentiment shows that the sheer obliteration of the past is something of a nightmare for Biondo. However, as he moves back onto Christian land, he hopes to pick up the falling marble and form it again into statues, this time glorifying the god of the papacy.

⁹³ Virgil *Aeneid* 8.337-348

⁹⁴ "Nam si procubuit qui saxa Ligustica portat axis et eversum fudit super agmina montem quid superest de corporibus? quis membra, quis ossa invenit?" Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 76 quoting Juvenal 3.257-260

Caelian/Lateran

As Biondo continues around the city, moving north along the slope of the Caelian, he begins to spend less time on a general overview of ancient monuments, instead focusing on moments of Christian interaction with pagan sites. After discussing the ancient use of the land, he quickly moves on to outline the number of churches in the area, and detail the discovery of a few ancient statues by early Popes, one of emperor Claudius and the other of Antoninus Pius. By focusing on these moments, Biondo attempts to combat the sense of loss that followed him from the Palatine and show us that oblivion doesn't always last, that the past and present are always in dialogue.

This dialectic that Biondo sets up between the overgrown, lost ruins of the hills and the constant restoration that he sees at the sites of contemporary churches resolves itself at the Lateran Basilica, the site that links the pagan and Christian worlds. Here Biondo expands Eugene IV and the papacy's dominion to include all time, the ancient and the contemporary, and hints at their role in building the Rome of the future.

He begins his description of the church by outlining its ancient origins. The Laterani were one of the most noble families in the late empire, and they lived there before Constantine gave the land to the Christian church. This donation was the first recognition of Christianity as the new state religion of Rome, and represents the end of the ancient pagan empire. This site is perfect for Biondo's purposes, because not only was it connected with the last Roman Emperor, but it was also the residence of every Pope since Sylvester I. The very foundations of the building are a testament to the continuity between Rome's past and present.

Upon this realization, Biondo then informs us that, just like the monuments whose loss he mourns, the Lateran is in danger: “Recently the palaces, worthy of the principate around which the basilica was built, have for the most part fallen into disrepair, since they have suffered from lack of habitation for some small amount of time.”⁹⁵ This lack of habitation was presumably caused by the removal of the papacy to Avignon by the Frankish king. Biondo here shows us that the second Babylonian captivity has damaged the physical link between the papacy and the guarantors of its temporal authority: the emperor Constantine. In his eyes, the restoration of this building represents an intellectual rehabilitation and makes a statement about the papacy’s role in the future, a role that is inexorably linked with Roman space.

At this point, Biondo breaks his narration to make an address to his patron and declare that he, Eugene IV has restored this link. The apostrophe, like his address on the Vatican, casts Eugene as the savior, the one who preserves the greatness of the Christian Church. Yet, as Biondo goes into the details of the restoration, he reveals the true rhetorical aim of this section.

“You [Eugenius] added a monastery of great and, in our age, even excessive work, the foundations of which, when they were dug out high in the vineyards, revealed how much magnificence was there once, when by eighteen feet under the vines and dug up earth in the garden appeared gates, rooms, pavement and columns of diverse colors lying there, mosaiced tablets of marble, statues of ingenious craft and other things which, after being excavated, not only surpassed the buildings of our time, but those of many generations before in all the cities of Italy.”⁹⁶

As he brings the church back to the greatness before Avignon, Eugene, in our author’s view, also uncovers the greatness of the past. Biondo, with this vivid image, shows us that the new

⁹⁵ “Nuper vero pallatia tanto principatu dignissima quibus circumdata fuit basilica maiori ex parte corruerant brevi nullum alicubi passura habitatorem.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 84

⁹⁶ “Monasteriumque magni ac ut in aetate nostra insani operis addidisti cuius fundamenta cum in vineis altius effoderentur quanta ibi olim fuerit operum magnificentia ostenderunt quodoquidem octonos denosque pedes sub vinea et horto defossa tellus aperuit fornices cameras avimenta et iacentes diversi coloris columnas exsectasque marmore tabulas ingenio sisque operis statuas et alia quae non modo aetate nostra sed multis ante saeculis excitata ceteris in Italiae urbibus superant aedificia.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 86

Christian church, the church of the coming Renaissance, will embrace its imperial roots and use them to bolster its power in the world. Eugene is not simply unearthing some forgotten bits of marble, he is sanctifying the power of the ancient pagan empire by building new Christian foundations upon it.

Chapter 3

Rome's Narrative and the Aesthetics of Rebirth

As he leaves the Lateran Basilica, Biondo has completed a journey from one Christian center to the other, a journey that the Pope himself would have made on a regular basis. This brings the narrative arc that began at the Vatican and showed the Christian restoration of the city to a close. With this concluded, Biondo seems to momentarily lose momentum. In his sections on the Esquiline, Quirinal, and Viminal, which form a single ridge that crosses the northeast corner of Rome, he is unable to separate the hills in any definitive way.⁹⁷ This dilemma frustrates him, and it is one of the few things that he leaves to those more authority than himself.⁹⁸ At this moment, when the structure of his tour begins to break down, Biondo discovers, seemingly by accident, the themes that will define the rest of his work.

At first, Biondo attempts to treat this confused group of three hills as he has the others, listing the small bits of antiquity that lie scattered across them-- A horse thought to be by Praxiteles, an ancient pair of torsos, but these outer hills never had the *gravitas* of the Palatine or the Capitoline, and lack the Christian significance of the Lateran or the Vatican. Biondo, on the Esquiline, realizes the limitations of myopically focusing on each section of the city in turn, for all sectors of Roman life, then as now, connect to form the story of the city. When presented with this dearth of physical remains, our tour guide is forced to search for that story in the textual tradition. Where are the noble ruins on the Esquiline, ruins which could serve to remind later

⁹⁷ Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 90, 93

⁹⁸ Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 90

generations of the ancient city's greatness? What he finds as he attempts to answer that question begins a digression from his topographical format that pushes him onto this new vantage point.

“Before Rome had the luxury which the emperors brought to the world, the Esquiline was decorated with rustic men tilling the earth honorably and with much praise in their time. For Livy when he said in his eighteenth book: “to till the field badly was judged fit for punishment, and as Cato reports, they thought it great praise when they called someone a good man and a farmer,” added later: “The rustic tribes of those who live in the field are most worthy of praise.” There were only four from the parts of the city in which they lived called the Suburra, the Palatine, the Collina, the Esquiline. That which the triumphal men or the emperors chose to build unheard of structures upon, the ruins of which we now admire, the peasants left behind and, moving into the fields and suburbs, they built another almost-Rome which would be outside the walls. We neglected to say this in our description of the gardens of Maecenas. When Horace in his odes tried to dissuade Maecenas from building such luxurious buildings, he gave these verses: “What about the fact that you, greedy man, rip up the closest boundaries of your fields and jump beyond the limits of your clients? They are kicked out, both man and wife, carrying their fatherly gods in their robes, as well as their dirty sons.”⁹⁹

Biondo stumbles onto a potent image, one that explains Rome's current position, a picture of imperial potentates, ousting the noble republican farmers from their homes and making Rome decadent, ripe for the fall. Here we leave the Roman pavement and switch to a more general, birds-eye view. We see the whole map of the city before our eyes and watch as the farms dwindle and palaces take their place. Biondo uses this wide-angle lens more and more as *Roma Instaurata* progresses, dropping the site based method of inquiry that dominates the first book. He doesn't completely let go of the topographical approach however, and that's what makes his

⁹⁹ “Prius vero quam urbs Roma luxum haberet quem imperatores urbem triumphantes invexerunt ornatae fuerunt Exquiliae rusticis viris terram egregie ac summa cum illius temporis laude colentibus. Nam plinius cum libro XIX dixisset agrum male colere censorium probrum iudicibatur atque ut refert cato cum virum bonum colonumque dixisset amplissime laudasse existamabant. Inferius addit: “Rusticae tribus laudatissimae eorum qui rura habitant. Itaque quatuor solae erant a artibus urbis quas habitabant dictae: suburrana pallatina collina exquiline” Sed quamprimum coepere viri triumphales aut ipsi imperatores insanae molis extruere aedificia quorum nunc ruinas tantopere admiramur cesserunt coloni et in agros suburbanaque delati alteram paene Romam quae esset extra moenia in circuitu construxere quod enim in hortorum Mecoenatis descriptione supra dicere omisimus cum Horatius in Odis multis verbis dissuadere conatus esset Mecoenati ne tam insanas domorum extructiones faceret addit hos versus “Quid quod usque proximos revellis agri terminos et ultra limitem clientium salis avarus pellitur pateros in sinu ferens deos et uxor et vir sordidosque natos.”” Flavio Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 104 quoting Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 29.18.13 and Horace *Odes* 2.18

work so revolutionary. He is able to show us the marks of this larger narrative of decline on the very stones that make this city eternal, that bear witness to the whole of Western history.

Such an approach is evident from the way that he takes these last quoted words of Horace and applies them to the baths of Diocletian, the first foundations of which were laid almost three hundred years after the poet's death:

“How many sons, either born to a high station or plebeian and rustic, do we think that the Emperor Diocletian cast into the fields and suburbs so that he could build his baths on the Esquiline which neither victorious and violent barbarians, nor age, nor the immoral hands of those who take stones and marble into other more lowly building projects were able to destroy even over one thousand three hundred years after the decline of the Roman empire with the result that no miraculous building now exists, such that the four greater palaces of the princes anywhere in Italy cannot be equalled in any way in greatness and richness of its craft.¹⁰⁰”

For Biondo, the crumbling facade of the baths can be read like Horace's lines to reveal the story of the ancient city: the farmers expelled from their land to build great buildings, symbols of an admirable but misguided age, and age that time and the ignorant masses have done their best to destroy. Biondo's ultimate goal is the preservation of the best parts of this former time, and here he meets them face to face. Biondo almost seems surprised by the discovery. This was not the survey of city monuments that he had originally set out, it is something much more sophisticated, a redefinition of ancient ruins around a modern narrative.

Biondo concludes the first book sharply: “...to collect the things that must be said about baths into this book would be excessive, these things must be reserved for another volume.¹⁰¹”

Here he is pushing against the strictures that he set for himself. The tour-like format he has used

¹⁰⁰ “Quam multos etiam in agros suburbanaeque compulisse credimus sive honesto nato loco sive plebeios et rusticos Dioclitianum imperatorem ut thermas in Exquilis aedificaret quas nec barbari victores irati nec vestustas nec improba manus eorum qui lapides ac marmora in alias sordidissimas extructiones asportarunt ita per annos mille et supra centum triginta post romani Imperii inclinationem demoliri potuerunt ut non admirabile etiam nunc extet aedificium et tale cui quatuor simul maiora quae nunc habeat alibi Italia principum virorum palatia magnitudine et operis sumptuositate nullatenus aequiparanda sint.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 104

¹⁰¹ “Sed dicenda de thermis quae multa sunt in hunc librum congerere nimis fuerit. Igitur ea in aliud volumen ducimus reservanda.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* I 104

up to this point has stopped him from telling the story within the Roman stones, and he knows that something has to change.

The beginning of the second volume leaves these questions of form unanswered, however. Biondo thinks it more important to make good on his promise of an in-depth analysis of ancient bathing culture, but, as is always true with Biondo, what seems like a digression has a lot to tell us about his view of Rome's history.

He begins the book by reminding the reader that bathing in this way was not necessarily decadent:

“Either during the sacred severity of custom that the era of the Republic had, or under the arrogance of the empire it is well known to everyone who thoroughly studies the history of the Romans that bathing in this way was a common, nearly daily, habit. From this even if a single man, or relatively rich citizen had one privately, nevertheless many public baths were set up in which the plebs washed as they wished.”¹⁰²

This first picture of the Roman baths is egalitarian. It's important that it began as a Republican tradition and was available to all. This opening image evokes the baptism, the water that any Catholic was entitled to, regardless of social class. From this pious image, Biondo traces Rome's sharp decline. He details the emperors bathing habits, how they “mixed into the common mob.”¹⁰³ Note here how the noble peasant of the Republic has morphed into a vulgar faceless crowd. Marcus Aurelius attempted to turn things around by forcing men and women to bathe

¹⁰² “Romanis autem sive adhuc sancta in morum severitate illa quam rei publicae tempora habuerunt sive sub principum fastu frequentem ac prope quotidianum fuisse lavandi usum omnibus qui illorum gesta perlegerunt est notissimum. Hinc et si unus quisque vel mediocriter dives civis privatum habuerit multa tamen balnea publice sunt instituta in quibus plebs ad libitum lavaret.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 1

¹⁰³ “Re postmodum ad principum luxuriam perducta nihil magis populare factitarunt illi quam quom promiscue cum volgo lavabant.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 1

separately. Biondo admires this, saying that he was “a philosopher mindful of his modesty.”¹⁰⁴

But soon he comes to the conclusion of Rome’s tragic arc:

“Capitolinus wrote that Commodus washed seven times a day and ate there, and Pertinax, his successor, although he was more modest than many, nevertheless washed in the public baths on his birthday, with Commodus’ servants. Capitolinus also wrote that Gordian the younger was so desirous of bathing that he washed four or five times a day during the summer, twice in the winter. Likewise he says that Gallienus the younger washed seven times a day in the summer and two or three times in the winter. He adds later: “When he went into the gardens that bore his name, all of his officials followed. The prefects would go and the masters of office would all have fears and wash themselves in baths with the prince. They even let in beautiful women and girls and ugly old women with them, and when he did this he said it was to make fun of them.” The luxury of the emperors was taken to such a point that modesty and sobriety were no long preserved in anything. Patricians built extravagant gardens, but the emperors went even farther with their baths.”¹⁰⁵

With these two images of Roman bathing culture, Biondo tells the same story that he did with his examination of the Esquiline. He is so drawn to this narrative because it demonstrates that beneath the pagan decadence, there’s something worth saving about Rome’s history. His treatment of the *balnea pensilia*, a heating system for water invented by a patrician, speaks to Biondo’s attitude toward the past: “a bath would unworthy of all imperial expense if they left out this thing which Sergius Orata, a mere citizen devised.”¹⁰⁶ Biondo here highlights the fact that the opulent structures of the baths are built upon the innovation of a Republican citizen, the very antithesis of the dissipated princes he condemns. This is the way he wants the Pope to see the past, not as a uniform whole to be condemned, but as alive as the present, full of forgotten and useful inventions waiting to be brought back from the darkness.

¹⁰⁴ “Et Julius Capitolinus scribit M. Aurelium Antoninum philosophum modestiae consulentem tria principaliter corexisse quod matronarum mores defluentes composuit in civitatibus sederi in equis aut vehiculis prohibuit et lavacra mixta submovit” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 1

¹⁰⁵ “Idem Capitolinus Gordianum juniorem lavisse in die septies aestate hieme bis vel tertio additque infra: “Quom iret ad hortos sui nominis omnia officia sequebantur. Ibant praefecti et magistri officiorum omnes adhibebantur conviviis et natationibus lavabant simul cum principe. Admittebantur etiam aepe mulieres pulchrae et puellae et cum his anus deformes idque quom faceret se joculari dicebat” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 1

¹⁰⁶ “principes ut credo indignum existimantibus luxu imperatorio si quod ausus est Sergius orata civis ipsi ad luxuriam omississent.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 2

After this sweeping look at Roman bath culture, Biondo returns to his topographical program. He takes us with him through the Suburra and the Carinae, but as he descends the last slope of the seven hills he becomes overwhelmed by the densely collected antiquity of the forum and the Campus Martius:

“because everything is so old and because a city this large has infinite parts, innumerable buildings that, because of their number, have been described by no one, even when they were intact, which we have read, we cannot hope to preserve a certain order or even consider their intention.”¹⁰⁷

Biondo, here, is on the verge of drowning, of losing himself in the sheer amount of information before him. To keep his head above water he finally addresses the formal tension present in his work between the macro and the micro. He decides on another way to view Rome, one that will allow him to tell his story of humble beginnings nearly destroyed by excess and long flight of years, and to further hint at the need for a distinctly humanist renewal:

“Thus, in order to present these buildings, although single and spread sparsely, with a certain order, comprehensively, I will encompass whatever is left by dividing it into four parts. Things reserved for religion and ceremony will be in the first part, in the second things for administrating the republic, in the third things that pertain to spectacles and games, in the fourth certain smaller things, partially to make clear the larger themes, and partially to complete my program. However, I don’t want to speak about these parts in any way other than it is necessary in order to describe the single occurrences in the location in which they happened.”¹⁰⁸

This last caveat makes it clear. Biondo knows he is walking a very fine line. The last thing he wants to do is jeopardize the order he originally set down, to pull us away from our tour. In order to understand why he felt that he had to, what power there is in this broader view of the city, we

¹⁰⁷ “Nam in tanta rerum vestustate et infinitarum tantae urbis partium innumerabiliumque aedificiorum a nullo dum etiam integra fuerunt quod quidem legerimus descriptorum multitudine certum ordinem servare nec posse speramus neque etiam ducimus id tentandum.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 39

¹⁰⁸ “Itaque ut singula sparsim quodam tamen ordine comprehensa possimus explicare quadripartita distributione quickquid est reliquum complectemur. Ut primo loco sint quae ad religionem ceremoniasque secundo que ad rei publicae administrationem tertio quae ad spectacula et ludos pertinuerunt quarto minutiora quaedam partim superiorum declarationi partim implendae intentioni nostrae plurimum facientia. Quibus de partibus non amen aliter dicere est animus quam ut singulos actus tantisper describamus quoad loci in quo gereretur id munus indicium fuerit neessarium.” Biondo *Roma instaurata* II 39

will have to follow him through these four sections. In each, he shows us a different cross section of the same phenomenon. Rome has fallen, and every stone proves it, but in each of these institutions lies the key to their own renewal as the foundations of a new Christian empire. Biondo hopes to show his readers, both the policy makers of his time and the scholars of the future, that Rome can only rise again under the benevolent guidance of a humanist ruler. Only such a ruler, one who has learned the lessons the past has to teach him, can transform the Roman people from a ragtag group of ignorant peasants, to the noble farmers of the Republican era. In these final four sections, Biondo hopes to make Eugene into such a leader.

Roman Religion

The topic of this section is perhaps the trickiest of the four for Biondo to handle, since a discussion of pagan religious practices would have immediately alienated Eugene IV. For this reason, Biondo's account skips over them almost entirely. The only sections that directly deal with Roman religious life are short passages quoted from Varro on the etymology of *templum* [temple] and *ara* [altar]. Instead, Biondo focuses on the philosophies at the root of specific aspects of Roman religion, morals that can fit into a Christianized worldview. Biondo emphasizes that his contemporary world has actively obscured these lessons. The composite picture of Roman history that he assembles from snapshots of destroyed religious sites shows the Christian world that there is something still to be learned from pagan culture.

The first of these snapshots is Biondo's discussion of the Lacus Curtius. It begins as an extended digression from the section on the temple of Jupiter Stator. To avoid placing a pagan god at the helm of the government, Biondo focuses on the building's location in the city, the

slope of the Palatine facing the forum, through a gate called the *Porta Palatii*. Biondo uses this kind of associative leap to turn the discussion of Roman religion towards monuments more friendly to the Christian reader. It is at this point, thrice removed from the original subject, that the Lacus Curtius appears.

“... the Lacus Curtius, where the knight Curtius stood on the shore after he emerged from a deep swamp, was near the gate on the opposite side of the Forum where the tower called the Pallara by the common people is now. There certainly is a depression which lies between the lake itself and the temple of Faustina which is now the church of Saint Lawrence in Miranda, and the monuments of the emperor Nerva, which is now called *Archa Noe* [Noah’s ark]. It is now called the *Palus* [Swamp]¹⁰⁹”

What captivates Biondo here is the gap between the lofty origins of the Lacus Curtius and its contemporary name: “the swamp.” Biondo proceeds to give three different origins of the Lacus Curtius.

“Varro has more information on the Lacus Curtius than Livy, and his words are reproduced here: “It’s established the the lake in the forum is called Curtius after Curtius, but it has three separate histories. For Procilius does not publish the same one as Piso and neither does Cornelius. It is related by Procilius that the earth had split open in that location and the situation was brought to the seers by order of the Senate. The response of the gods was to fulfill the demand by the shades: that the strongest citizen be sent to them under the earth. So Curtius, a strong man, mounted his horse in full armor and rode from the Temple of Concordia straight into the pit. After this, the ground closed up and buried his body, but it left a monument to his family. Piso writes in his *Annales*: ‘During the Sabine war between Romulus and Tacius, the strongest Sabine man Metius Curtius, when Romulus with his men made an attack from the high ground, retreated into the swamp which was in the forum before the sewers were built, and from there took his men back onto the Capitoline: the name comes from this lake.’” Cornelius and Luctatius write that this place was struck by lightning and was closed up by order of the Senate. Because this was

¹⁰⁹ “Livius item in primo dicit in quo loco Livii ostenditur Lacum Curtium “ubi primum ex profunda emersus palude equus Curtium in vado statuit” ad aversam Fori portam fuisse ubi nunc Tyberis est quae vulgo Pallara appellant et quidem locus depressus qui lacum ipsum et Faustinae templum in quo sancti Laurentii in miranda est ecclesia atque imperatoris Nervae monumenta ubi nunc Dicitur Noe arca interiacet. Palus nunc appellatur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 44 quoting Livy 1.13.6

done by a consul named Curtius, whose colleague was Marcus Megentius, the place is called the Lacus Curtius.”¹¹⁰

By including each ancient transformation of the myth, Biondo highlights how much his own time has obscured ancient stories that should have continued relevance. This depression between the forum and the Palatine is the only historical record of an ancient battle for the city’s definition, a heaven-sent miracle, or, most significantly, a story of self sacrifice. The Varronian version of the Lacus Curtius shows the eponymous *equites* saving the city by destroying himself. This idea, the sacrifice of one noble man to save the rest, is reminiscent of Christianity’s own foundational myth. Biondo here shows his reader that the contemplation of the sacrifice, or at least the acknowledgement that it occurred, could bring moral benefit, that this piece of their city is full of potential significance, even one thousand years later. Instead, *quattrocento* Romans call it “the swamp.”

Biondo moves from this example of modern diminishment to a symbol of Rome’s noble past: the temple of Janus and the coins that bear his doubled face. These symbols date back to Rome’s idealized origins. To explain their significance he quotes Ovid:

“There, for a long time, the nation bore the name Saturnia; The land was also called Latium because of the god *latent* there. Later generations represented a ship on their money, a testament to the arrival of the god. He took care of the land which was washed on its left side by the Tiber.

¹¹⁰ “Sed de lacu Curtio plura quam Livius M. Varro habet cuius haec sunt verba: “In foro lacum curium a Curtio dictum extat et de eo triceps historia. Nam Procilius non idem prodidit quod Piso nec quod is Cornelius. A Procilio relatum in eo loco dehisse terram et id ex senatus consulto ad aruspices relatum esse responsum deum Manium Postilionem postulare id est civem fortissimum eodem mitti. Tum quendam virum fortem armatum ascendisse in quum et a concordia ersumcum equo in eo praecipitatum. Eo facto locum cohisse atque eius [corpus] divinitus humanasse et reliquisse genti suae monumentum. Piso in Annalibus scribit: “Sabino bello quod fuit Romulo et Tacio virum fortissimum Metium Curtium Sabinum quem Romulus cum suis ex superiori parte impressionem fecisset in locum palustrem qui tum fuit in foro antequam cloacae sunt factae secessisse atque ad suos in Capitolium recepisse. Abe eo lacum invenisse nomen.”” Huicque opinioni Livius in VII lib assentiri videtur. Cornelius et Luctatius scribunt eum locum esse fulguritum et ex senatusconsulto saeptum esse. Id quia factum est a Curtio consule cui **M. Genutius/Genucius/Megentius** fuit collega Curtium appellatum.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 45 quoting Varro *De lingua latina* 5.148-149 The name of the senator is M. Megentius in Raffarin Dupuis, M. Genutius in D’Onofrio and M. Genucius on thelatinlibrary.com.

Here, where Rome is now, an unspoiled forest flourished and was a great kingdom for the few cows.”¹¹¹

This bucolic landscape is the mirror image of the sparse farmland that erased the history of the Palatine. Contemporary Roman farms represent oblivion to Biondo, the slow consumption of history, but this ancient wilderness functions as a garden of Eden, the god-sown seed from which that history grew. Biondo’s Rome does not lack wilderness, that is not the point here. It lacks the moral consciousness that Biondo imparts upon its ancient counterpart. It is this kind of morality that he hopes to return to the *quattrocento* wilderness.

Biondo brings these two Romes, the noble ancient Rome and the debased modern Rome, crashing together at the *Asylum*, one of the most crucial sites for the definition of Roman identity. He first explains its ancient significance. Romulus grew the city by accepting anyone that came to the temple, regardless of their crimes. In this way, the city of Rome became what it was. For Biondo, there is something admirable about the ancient function of the *Asylum*. This ubiquitous acceptance has a parallel in Christian ideology. God’s kingdom, like Rome, is open to all. As Biondo locates the *Asylum* in his vision of Rome, however, it has a slightly different function:

“Therefore I say that the Asilum [Asylum] occupied the entire area from the fallen Tarpeian rock to the bridge of Santa Maria and from there to Vesta, the Temple of Janus into the roots of the Aventine, which we now see mostly inhabited by prostitutes so that now another Asilum seems to have been built for loose women, fugitives from their parents and their husbands.”¹¹²

¹¹¹ “Inde diu Saturnia nomen dicta quoque est Latium terra latente deo. Quam bene posteritas puppim signavit in aere hospitis adventum testificata dei. Ipse solum coluit cuius placidissima laevum radit harenosi Tybridis unda latus. Hic ubi nunc Roma est incaedua silva virebat tantaque res paucis pascua bobus erat” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 48 Quoting Ovid’s *Fasti* 1.233

¹¹² “Asilum [Asylum] igitur dicimus omnia occupasse loca quae nunc a collapsio Tarpeiae saxo ad sanctae Mariae pontem et hinc Vestae inde Iani templo in Aventini radices a protitutis mulieribus nunc maiori parte habitata videmus ut mulieribus impudicis a parentibus virisque profugis alterum nunc asilum [asylum] videatur institutum.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 58

This modern *Asylum* has kept its original function, but changed it just enough so as to be unrecognizable. The new city that this new asylum creates is, in Biondo's view, a debased one, only fit for society's outcasts. For Biondo, this change represents a degradation of the very idea that Rome was founded on, from an idea of acceptance that any Christian would respect to a tolerance for immorality. Biondo's city is the mirror image of this noble ur-Rome, populated by a faceless uncultured mob who mock their own ancient heritage which, despite being pagan, has elements which are worth preserving. A moral consciousness, which would enoble this diminished city, can only be revived by careful rule. For the rest of his work, Biondo hopes to show how Eugene and the papacy can make this change.

Roman Government and Administration

Just as his section on Roman religion had little to do with ancient belief, Biondo makes it clear that discussion of Roman government will not directly deal with Roman politics, but rather the significance of certain spaces within the city¹¹³. The first half of the section is given to Republican, rather than Imperial buildings: the Rostrum, Comitium, and other places the senators would come into contact with the people. The later half of this section is dedicated to large monuments and infrastructure the products of imperial Rome. Biondo emphasizes the shift between building in the forum and the Campus Martius, from Republican engagement with the citizens to the benevolent detachment of the imperial period. He uses the dilapidated state of the city around him to highlight the lost virtues of both eras, but, in one of the most damning passages for *quattrocento* Rome, he provides a brief ray of hope: a model for reform.

¹¹³ "De his quad ad rem publican spectaverunt doctor ill paefamur now illicit scibere non institute sed loco rum description in quizes re public cure el aliqua ex parte a maioribus gerebatur. [I will reveal one aspect of what's going to be said about their affairs of state: that I do not intend to give an account of their politics, but a description of the places in which their government were conducted, even in part, by our ancestors.]" Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 61

In Biondo's discussion of the *Comitium* the three time periods that form the crux of his narrative, the noble Roman Republic, the decadent Roman empire, and the ignorant *Quattrocento*, come together in a single location. He begins by attempting to pinpoint the *Comitium*'s location, a simple task even in the *campo vaccino*, as they called the forum then, but when he finds it, he does not like what he sees:

“Concerning this subject [the Comitium], before I can say what it was, with the prick of pain spurring me on, I want this to be known to the men of our time and future generations: it is *pigs* now that I often see being sold there, and in no other location, because of a public decree.”¹¹⁴

As he did on the Palatine, and at the site of the Lacus Curtius, Biondo highlights the ignorance of his age by showing the ignoble uses to which these great sites of been put. This is not the wilderness of the golden age, the symbol of godly indulgence, or the chaste farms of the Republic; these farms of full of mud, pigs, excrement. This squalor represents the ignorance that Biondo hopes to wash away by returning the history to the ruins of Rome.

He restores the history to the Comitium by breaking his own rules, and linking that place to its ancient political function. To truly bring home the dilapidated state of the *quattrocento*, Biondo expounds on ancient *comitia*, ancient Roman elections, pulled from Livy and Aulus Gellius. He was particularly fascinated with the way senators were accountable to the people, since he lived in a time when most of the political decisions were made behind closed doors. It is most certainly a jab at the conciliarism that birthed the Council of Basel and their anti-Pope that he says: “...the loss of liberty is proportional to the loss of elections.”¹¹⁵ This loss occurs in the ancient world at the beginning of the Empire:

¹¹⁴ “De quo quid fuerit priusquam dicamus doloris impetu nos trahente nostris et futrorum saeculorum hominibus notum fore volumus porcos nunc ex publico aetatis nostrae instituto ibi et nullo alio in loco quod saepe vidimus vendundari.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 67

¹¹⁵ “...ut tantum libertas detrimenti fecereit quantum sensim comitiis est detractum.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 68

“Gaius Caesar having been assumed into perpetual dictatorship with stolen goods and fractious means, did not dare to offer an election to everyone. As Suetonius wrote: ‘these things occurred with the people, so that, except for the competitors for the consulate, half would be announced as the people wanted, and half would be as he had given.’”¹¹⁶

Caesar’s disregard for the proper order is reflected in the political situation of Biondo’s day, in the vanquished council of Basel’s disrespect for the traditional way in which Eugene IV was elected. Biondo’s analysis again recreates Rome’s decline and explains the debased state of the *quattrocento* streets. The foundation of the morality that ennobled the Republican farmers was taken away by the backroom dealings of the Empire, creating the power games that plagued the papacy of his day, as well as ignorant bureaucrats who turned the last symbol of political freedom into a pig market. This tripartite narrative has been built onto the structure of the Comitium. It begins as a gathering place for Republican citizens, renovated by Julius Caesar, and finally in Biondo’s time, covered by the soil of a barren rural life. This section on the Comitium brings the reader from the Republic to the Empire, but how did the greatness, flawed as it was, of Imperial Rome give way to the desolate farms of the Quattrocento? That desolation is a physical sign of the intellectual poverty Biondo sees around him, which has as much to do with the collapse of the city’s infrastructure as the loss of history, for the two are inexorably linked.

As he brings his section on Roman government and infrastructure to a close, Biondo takes us from the failing Empire to the empty streets he sees around him. Here, with his discussion of the aqueducts, he makes connection between loss of infrastructure and loss of history abundantly clear. It is hard for the modern mind to fully grasp the significance of the aqueducts to Roman life in this period. When the aqueducts ceased to be functional, Rome’s

¹¹⁶ “Gaius Caesar aerario expilato et dictatura per factiosos in perpetuum assumpta comitia in totum auferre non ausus est. Ea cum populo sicut Suetonius scribit sortitus est ‘ut exceptis consulatus competitoribus de cetero numero candidatorum pro parte media quos populus vellet pronunciarentur pro parte altera quos ipse dixisset’” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 68 quoting Suetonius *De Vita Caesarum* 41.2

population decreased significantly. This decline changed the center of the city from the Forum Romanum to the Campus Martius, as the remaining population crowded close to the Tiber. The aqueducts were a symbol of a lost Rome, a Rome made possible by clean water, where rates of disease were exponentially lower, and people lived high on the hills, only descending to the Campus Martius to pray at temples or go to the public baths. An educated reader would have these associations in mind as he began this section. The destruction of the aqueducts created the poor farmers that Biondo laments, and for him, the lack of water symbolizes a lack of knowledge. He begins by setting out the contemporary theories of their destruction:

“I see two causes offered by the common people for such a massive fall on the part of the city of Rome in the case of the collapse of the aqueducts through the destruction of their structures, these being old age and the the cruelty of the Goths. When I free them from their unjust reputation, undeserved, and brought against them as a false charge, the theory of old age, which supposedly destroyed the aqueducts, will also be freed of its enmity.”¹¹⁷

In this opening statement, he hints that, in refuting these two theories, he will finally explain the dilapidated state of his contemporary Rome and complete his narrative of the city’s decline and fall, the transformation from Saturnian paradise to squalid hovel.

Biondo first takes it upon himself to clear the Goths’ name. He does this by introducing the figure of Theodoric, the gothic king:

“When it comes to the Goths, I said it before and I’ll say it again-- Theodoric, who was the first king of the race of ostrogoths and subdued Rome 42 years before our lord, took care of the city of Rome with highest honors. He restored its walls, theaters, amphitheaters, palaces, baths, sewers and especially the structure of the aqueducts. He took care to take the thorns from the trees and renew things in each part so that throughout the seventy years in which the Ostrogoths ruled over the kingdom of Rome and over Italy, it was never necessary to long for

¹¹⁷ “Quod vero causas tantae iacturae quantam fecit urbs Roma in aquarum eiusmodi per formarum demolitionem aversione duas vulgo afferri videmus vestustatem scilicet et Gothorum crudelitatem hos ab iniusta immerito et per calumniam nota cum pergavero vestustas etiam quo ad formarum demolitionem sua invidia liberabitur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 99

the love of Roman institutions that possessed Octavian Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, or Alexander Severus.”¹¹⁸

Biondo’s Theodoric, the foreign king occupying the city who nevertheless treated it with respect, who preserved its history, is a direct model for papal rule in Rome, which returned after years in exile as an invading force. Theodoric is a better ruler than a Roman could ever be, comparable with the most prudent leaders of the ancient world. Biondo hopes that Eugene will become like Theodoric, equal parts scholar and emperor, and restore dignity to the city, making it a world capital again. The language that Biondo uses to describe Theodoric’s reverent restoration, “he took the thorns from the trees,” again implies that Rome needs to be groomed to return it to its once grand past. Biondo hopes to see a Rome stripped of its thorns, where ancient greatness makes both the intellectual and physical landscape flourish again.

Biondo creates a concrete image for this change by quoting a letter of Theodoric’s on the aqueducts, related by Cassiodorus. In what turns out to be a treatise on water resource engineering, Theodoric (in Cassiodorus’ words) makes an explicit connection between the return of ancient knowledge and the return of nature’s beauty.

“I discovered by a report of your greatness that a conduit master has come from the African lands, where that art is always attended to with great enthusiasm in places of thirst, a man who might be able to bring fertile water to dry locations so that with his talent he can make these desiccated areas into places fit to live in, full of water. Consider that this will be a favor to me, that this admirable practice explained in the books of our ancients might come to our time. The prospective conduit master discovers water using many signs, like flourishing plants and tall trees. In such land, sweet water is not far off, the fullness of the shoots always smiles so that there is water rush, the soft withe, the stout blackberry, the

¹¹⁸ “Et quidem quantum ad Gothos attinet, Theodoricum qui fuit primus gentis Ostrogothae rex et Romam duo de quadraginta annis dominio subactam tenuit et alias diximus et identidem affirmamus urbem Romam summis beneficiis prosecutum fuisse moenia ilius theatra amphitheatra palatia thermas cloacas et imprimis aquarum formam instaurari arboribus sentibus purgari et aliqua ex parte refici curasse ut erannos septuaginta quibus ostrogothi regno Romae et Italiae sunt potiti Octavii Augusti Traiani Hadriani Antonini Pii aut Alexandri Severi amorem in Romanam rem desiderari nequaquam oportuerit.”Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 100

light willow, a veritable city of green and all the kinds of trees which luxuriate in happy prosperity throughout the moist earth”¹¹⁹

This passage, which contains the most florid images of nature in *Roma Instaurata* provides a way out of Rome’s seemingly uncontrollable descent. To enliven the dead Rome that Biondo sees around him, Eugene must find those who understand “the books of the ancients” and make use of their skills to bring back the city’s lost golden age. In *quattrocento* Rome, the humanists are the “conduit masters.” Biondo here advises Eugene, by Theodoric’s example, to curate the history of the streets around him, to bend the river of history and water the fields of Rome again. This is the only way the papacy can bind itself to the city and assert itself on the international stage as the master of a restored Rome.

Biondo moves from this image of verdant hope to one of utmost desolation. He categorically denies that the aqueducts fell simply because they were old, since he sees larger ruins still standing in the fields just outside Rome. In light of this, Biondo knows that there can be only one culprit:

“Therefore the only hands that must be accused and renounced are those shameless hands that belong to those who, in order to build private and certainly ugly structures, did not fear to take stones either to be cooked down into lime or taken into walls of their homes from the majesty of the battlements.”¹²⁰

Here Biondo paints the clearest picture of what he is up against. Because the citizens no longer have any understanding of the past, Biondo’s Rome is consuming itself. He goes on to state that

¹¹⁹ “Magnitudinis vestrae relatione comperimus aquilegum Romam venisse de partibus Africanis ubi ars ipsa pro locorum siccitate magno studio semper excolitur qui aridis locis aquas possit dare venatiles ut beneficio suo humida habitata faciat loca nimia sterilitate siccata. Hoc nobis gratum fuisse noscite quo industria illa maiorum libris exposita nostris temporibus veniat comprobanda signis quippe virentium herbarum et proceritate arborum viciniam colligit diligenter aquarum. Terris enim quibus dulcis humor longe non est ubertas quorundam germinum semper arridet ut est iuncus aquaticalis vimen laetum validus rubus salix lenta populus virens et reliqua arborum genera quae per terrenam humiditatem felici prosperitate luxuriant.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 101 quoting Varro *Variae* 3.53

¹²⁰ “Solae igitur incusandae et detestandae sunt manus improbae illorum qui ut privata et quidem sordidissima erigerent aedificia lapides aut incalcem decoquendos aut casarum muris adhibendos ab illa moenium maiestate” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 101

the only way time plays any factor in the aqueducts destruction is that, as the government of Rome fell apart, people stopped caring enough to maintain them.¹²¹ Using this logic, Biondo carves out a place for the papacy in his narrative of Rome's decline. The papacy has to shepherd the people, to educate them. In order to revive the dead landscape of the city, Eugene IV will have to act as another Theodoric, and, using the discipline of humanism, give the people back their noble heritage whether they remember it or not.

Roman Spectacles

In his section on spectacles, Biondo tells the same story, filtered through a different lens. The end of the second book was dedicated to the relics of the theater, which were ephemeral, since there were few permanent theaters in Rome, but Biondo begins the third with the relics of the gladiatorial games, whose architecture still loomed over Rome. Biondo's discussion of theater gives another account of Rome's moral decline under the empire. In his history of the Colosseum, he shows, again using the example of Theodoric that a humanist understanding does not blindly reproduce the past, but evaluates and edits it. Biondo's renewed Rome must be curated by a great leader, one who understands the history he invokes.

As he did with the other Roman institutions, Biondo stresses that theater had virtuous beginnings. Republican theater helped the people obtain emotional release and distracted them from the troubles of their lives. As he moves towards his discussion of mime, however, Biondo cites Seneca¹²², who traces the awful change it wrought on the morals of the city. Mimes

¹²¹ "ut tamen nos etiam aliqua ex part vetustati deferamus eam dicemus nulla ratione magis formas aquarum demolitam fuisse quam quod urbe Roma ceteris in gubernationis suae partibus senescente servandarum quoque formarum cura cessavit. [So that I defer in some small part to time, I will say that it destroyed the forms of the aqueducts only in so much as, while Rome was growing old in all parts of its governance, care for its service structures also ceased.]" Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 101

¹²² Seneca *Epistola* 1.7.2-4

glorified all the worst human actions, and instead of releasing tension, created a sordid hunger that could never be sated.¹²³ All of this is fairly standard fare for scholars of the ancient Roman theater, but what makes Biondo's analysis stand apart is how he explicitly connects this artistic and moral decline to the physical form of the theaters:

“...a huge change was made not only in the works which they endeavored to produce but also in very building and decoration of the theater. First from the rustic hill vaulted with trees, the scene, as I said above, was built into a brick, or stone and marble structure. The luxury of those who came before us had progressed to such a point that the entire apparatus of the games was made of either gold or silver or ivory. Pliny in his third book: ‘and we have made things which our descendants will think belong in fairytales.’”¹²⁴

This last sentiment of Pliny's lends an ironic twist to the way the Empire changed the city of Rome. The things they built are the stuff of fairytales, because, for Biondo and the rest of the humanists, the only evidence they ever existed lies in the descriptions of Pliny and other historians that documented the city. Biondo looks at these imaginary records as the modern archaeologist examines layers of soil. They allow him to trace the change in Rome's built environment that accompanied a change in its moral one, a change that affected even the sound of Roman instruments:

... Horatius in his *Ars Poetica* also demonstrates that there was also a change in the tone of the music along with the buildings and the wealth of the scenery: ‘The flute was not, as now, bound with orichalcum, a copy of the tuba, but thin and simple with a small lip. It was easy to blow and easy to bring among choruses and not slow to fill the dwellings with breath where a great number of the people, since they were few, good and chaste, would avidly come together’”¹²⁵

¹²³ Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 119, 123

¹²⁴ “Sed non solum in muneribus quae edi consueverunt in scaena verum etiam in illius aedificio ornatuque ingens facta est mutatio. Primo enim ab agresti tugurilo arboribus camerato scaena ut diximus in latericiam laideamve ac marmoream molem erecta est. Posteriorum autem luxuria eo postmodum processit ut omnis illius ludorum apparatus vel aureus vel argenteus vel eburneus fieret. Plinius libro XXXIII ‘Et nos fecimus quae posteri fabulosa arbitrabuntur.’” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 124 quoting Piny 33.16

¹²⁵ “Mutationem etiam in musicorum modulatione pariter cum aedificio et muneribus scaenam habuisse ostendit in arte poetica his carminibus: ‘Tibia non ut nunc orichalco iuncta tubaeque aemula sed tenuis simplex foramine parvo aspirare et adesse choris erat utilis atque nondum spissa nimis complere sedilia flatu quo sane populus numerabilis utpote parvus et frugi castusque vere avidusque coibat.’” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 124

Biondo keeps coming back to the loss of the “few, good, and chaste,” because he thinks that it might be possible to reverse the process. As he ends the second book of *Roma Instaurata* and begins the third, he moves from his discussion of the theater, which he dismisses as “only ruins,”¹²⁶ to the remains of the gladiatorial games, the most egregious example of Rome’s moral decline, which were still standing. The skeletal structure of the Colosseum, which casts its shadow on Biondo’s streets, gives him the opportunity to show how the decadence of Imperial Rome was transformed into the wasteland of the *Quattrocento*. He yet again uses the example of Theodoric to show Eugene IV how the papacy might reverse this process and reclaim Rome’s honor for Christianity.

In Biondo’s discussion of the Colosseum, he uses two letters of Theodoric, again relayed by Cassiodorus, to show us another side of the great conservator: a ruler in a battle with Rome’s past. Theodoric attempts to edit history, to eliminate the aspects of ancient Roman culture that he sees as amoral, but, at the same time, he struggles to preserve the traditions that made the city great. Theodoric, in these passages, demonstrates the critical engagement with the past that Biondo wants Eugene IV to practice.

The first of these letters is a response to the Roman people’s petition to use the stones of the Colosseum to reinforce the crumbling Aurelian walls. From what we saw of Theodoric earlier, it would be fair to expect that he would be against the desecration such an important monument, but this time Theodoric enthusiastically approves:

“I give you the license over the stones, which you have supplied from the amphitheater, fallen a long time ago and which offer no ornamentation to the public besides the presentation of unsightly ruins,

¹²⁶ “Sed de theatro satis cuius solae cernuntur ruinae. Ad exponenda alia transeamus quorum fabricae pars nunc extet.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* II 124

provided that you put them to public use so that what once could be of no use, lying there, can rise in the form of the walls.”¹²⁷

Theodoric is exercising a very specific kind of judgement here, one that has not factored into Biondo’s preservationist ideology previously. His appraisal of whether a monument is “useful” to the public or not seems to be the guiding principle by which the city of Rome is recreated for another age.

This realization does not come without some wistful protest from the antiquarian in Biondo, who called this deleted part of the Colosseum the Amphitheater of Titus, and locates it right next to the ruins that still stand:

“It would surprise no one that no foundation no ruin of this amphitheater can be seen now, which Cassiodorus called an ellipse, because the Roman people was allowed by Theodoric to take every stone from the foundation up for the restoration of the walls. We so many examples of this every day that, for this reason alone, the buildings of ancient Rome despise us. In many locations I now see vines where I once saw the highest buildings their blocks of square tiburtine stone cooked into lime.”¹²⁸

We can see in this passage however, a kind of deference to Theodoric’s way of thinking. Biondo does not invoke a moral philosopher or ancient historian to denounce the predation of the Colosseum. The reason for this tacit agreement becomes clear when he examines the function of this destroyed part of the Colosseum:

“In the ellipse of the amphitheater, adultery, incests, and the rest, the incitements to luxury and effeminate games were displayed but here is the greatest example of cruelty: Desirous men were thrown to their deaths, set to do battle with wild beasts. I will explain with an example from Cassiodorus: Theodoric, the king, when he was in Ravenna, once he granted the Senate and the People of Rome everything that was instituted during the Republic and the time of the

¹²⁷ “Saxa ergo quae suggeritis de amphitheatro longa vetustate collapsa nec aliquid ornato ublico iam prodesse nisi solas turpes nuinas ostendere licentiam vobis eorum in usus dumtaxat publicos damus ut in murorum faciem surgat.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 6 quoting Cassiodorus *Variae* 3.49

¹²⁸ “Nec moveat quempiam nulla nunc fundamenta nullas ruinas videri illius amphitheatri cuius rotunditatem prolixam appellat Cassiodorus quod populus Romanus a Theodorico permissus in murorum illa instauratione funditus asportarunt. Cuius rei tanta per singulos dies videmus exempla ut ea solummodo causa nos aliquando Romae fastidiat habitatio. Multis enim in locis vineas videmus ubi superbissima vidimus aedificia quorum quadrati lapides Tiburtini in calcem sunt concocti.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 7

Empire, he also allowed them to hold fights in the amphitheater, in accustomed manner, with wild beasts.”¹²⁹

In this letter, Theodoric condemns the gladiatorial games.¹³⁰ He gives detailed testimony about their cruelty, outlining the various ways in which the participants’ lives are put at risk for sport, and finally distances himself from the whole affair: “But you, for whom it is necessary to exhibit such things to the people, pour money with generous hands so that you can give their misery its desired prize.”¹³¹ In this last moment, Theodoric relinquishes control over Rome’s destiny, abandoning it to the murderous desires of the *populus*. Perhaps this is how Biondo views the poor farmers who entomb precious statues in their walls, a ravenous mob dead set against the return of a Rome more noble. Biondo uses Theodoric’s ultimate failure to encourage Eugene to stand up, to trust the vision of the past set before him by the humanist movement, to use the best parts of Rome’s past and create a new, Christian, golden age.

Rome Restored

It is not until the end of book 3, the end of *Roma Instaurata*, that we get a glimpse of this Roman paradise for the fifteenth century, the Rome that Biondo sees around him, only waiting to be born. Biondo begins this section at the end point of Rome’s decline, with an image of a city

¹²⁹ “In ea amphitheatri rotunditate proluxa non modo adulterii incestus et ceterae luxuriae incitamenta aut effoemiantes ludi edebantur sed maximae crudelitatis exempla certaturi cum feris mali avari homines morti obiciebantur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 8

¹³⁰ “Si consularem magnificentiam provocant qui pro incerta corporum flexibilitate luctantur si organo canentibus redditur vicissitudo praemiorum si venit ad precium delectabilis cantilena quo munere venator explendus est qui ut spectantibus placeat suis mortibus elaborat? Voluptatem praestat sanguine suo et infelici sorte constrictus festinat populo placere qui eum non optat evadere. Actus detestabilis certamen infelix cum feris velle contendere quas fortiores se non dubitat invenire. [If the man who fights relying the uncertain flexibility of his body provokes the good will of the consuls, if the chance of reward is given to those singing on the organ, if a delectable song becomes precious, what service does the fighter fulfill, who works himself to death for the pleasure of the audience. He is in charge of pleasure by authority of his blood and hastens to please the *populus* who do not want him to escape, bound by his unlucky fate. It is a detestable act to fight this unlucky contest with animals, who will certainly prove themselves to be the stronger ones.]” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 9 quoting Cassiodorus *Variae* 5.42

¹³¹ “Sed vos quibus necesse est talia populis exhibere largata manu fundite praemia ut haec miseris faciatis esse votiva.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 9 quoting Cassiodorus *Variae* 5.42, D’Onofrio has “nos” instead of “vos,” but the fact that the imperatives are second person plural lends more credence to Raffain-Dupuis’ “vos”

devouring itself. Nevertheless, he ends the book by plotting Rome's upward arc. He gives his patron Eugene IV a way of bringing his *renovatio* off the page and onto the streets--a new, uniquely humanist vision of history and its role in the contemporary world, that allows Biondo to easily dismiss the rivals for Rome's political significance.

Concluding his trip around the city, Biondo says that Rome is "still admired not only in Europe, but Asia as well, even if it seems entirely different than when it was most powerful."¹³² It is his ability to see that difference, as well as the reasons for continued reverence, that gives his vision its power:

"Although I am so affected by the Roman name that I care for nothing, except religion, with greater reverence, I not have allowed myself to be lead by passion so far away from true evidence that I cannot determine the distance that separates the Rome of our own time from the time when it was empowered by the majesty of the empire."¹³³

For Biondo, the past is not sacred. His humanist worldview allows him to critically evaluate the past, to separate it from the present. He has dedicated *Roma Instaurata* to the study of that separation, for in it he sees the key to a new Roman kingdom, a Christian kingdom that makes the best parts of the past sacred.

Biondo cannot help but see the history in the streets, but he is not lost in the ancient world. He has the ability not only to guide the reader through space, but through time, to see how Rome has preserved some vestige of its former authority:

"I am not one of those whom I see doing nothing other than spurning the present state of Rome, thinking it worthless, as if the memory of Rome had entirely died with all the legions, consuls, the Senate and the ornaments of the Capitoline and Palatine. It lives, though, it lives even now and although it has been spread over a smaller space of the

¹³² "...et si [Romae] primae illi potentissimae multo dissimilem non parum tamen Europae et Asiae partibus venerandam." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 84

¹³³ "Et quidem licet Romano nomini ita affecti sumus ut nihil post religionem maiori colamus veneratione non tamen passione ita abduci a vero iudicio nos patimur quin discernamus quantum longe urbis Romae nostri temporis rerum statusque conditio ab illaquae olim illi affuit potentatus et imperii maiestate." Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 84

world, the glory of the city of Rome certainly rests on a more solid foundation.”¹³⁴

Biondo’s Rome, like a martyr, has been debased, tortured, torn apart by its own inhabitants, only to be born again, this time for eternity. Only by studying how Rome had changed could Biondo perceive the ways it stayed the same.

By cultivating this model of history, Biondo is able to identify the threads of Rome’s grand past woven into its diminished, but holy present. In this final section, which he set aside for the completion of his program, Biondo pulls on these threads to bring out his vision of a renewed Rome, a redefinition of pagan symbols of authority as the basis for a Christian empire. He begins with the military, a symbol that would have been a sore spot for a secretary of Eugene’s papacy, since the Vatican was under siege twice during those years:

“Rome still possesses a certain authority when it comes to kingdoms and peoples for the protection and extension of which there is no need for legions, cohorts, towers and garrisons, not soldiers on horse or foot. Now there is no draft to pick soldiers who either freely give their names or are compelled to serve, no troops from Rome or Italy to be lead against the enemy, or protect the limits of the empire.”¹³⁵

Biondo here, by using these words, “legion,” “cohort,” “tower,” invokes the places he has taken us throughout the city that were associated with these institutions, sanctifying them and putting them in the service of the Christian faith.

He continues with each level of government, stripping away the soil of the Forum, the Capitoline, the Palatine to the ancient pavement, all the while exorcising all the worst parts of the past:

¹³⁴ “Sed contra non sumus ex illis quos videmus praesentem Romanae rei statum haud secus spernere et pro nihilo ducere ac si omnis eius memoria simul cum legionibus consulibus senatu Capitolii Palatii que ornamentis penitus interiisset. Viget certe viget adhuc et quamquam minori diffusa orbis terrarum spacio solidiori certe innixa fundamento urbis Romae gloria maiestatis.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 85

¹³⁵ “Habetque Roma aliquod in regna et gentes imperium cui tutando augendoque non legionibus cohortibus turmis et manipulis non equitatu peditatuque opus nullo nunc delectu militum qui aut sponte dent nomina aut militare cogantur eductae Roma et Italia copiae in hostem aut imperii limites costodiuntur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 86

“No blood is spilt in service of our present fatherland. No slaughters are committed. But through the foundation of eternal religion, our God and our Master Jesus Christ the highest emperor, the citadel and the house established in Rome and the triumphs of the martyrs held here one thousand four hundred years later, through the relics of the saints in every temple, altar, and shrine in great, glorious, Rome, a great part of the world protects the name of our city, which they once only trembled at, with pleasure rather than by force.”¹³⁶

In this new Christian golden age, Jesus is the emperor, the Pope is his eternal commander¹³⁷ and the curia is his senate.¹³⁸ Rome’s slow, quiet destruction has allowed its foundation to be calcified like a church relic, growing harder and more holy.

Biondo then moves from a metaphorical association between pagan and Christian Rome to an economic one: “. . .now, when each state accepts blessings from the Roman Pope almost all of Europe sends greater, or certainly equal tribute to from their incomes to Rome than they ever did of old.”¹³⁹ The substance of the city’s stronger foundation is the expansive political influence of Christianity itself. Because of Biondo’s vision of this new empire, he will always see Rome as the center of the Christian world. However, his contemporary political situation, with Avignon and the repeated siege of Eugene’s papacy still in recent memory, does not necessarily support this viewpoint:

“However, there will always be someone who contends that the reverence held out to the Pope and the cardinals by the world, the great sums of money sent by the people should confer dignity and success on

¹³⁶ “Non sanguis ad praesentem servandam patriam effunditur non mortalium caedes committuntur sed per dei nostri et domini nostri Iesu Christi imperatoris vere summi vere aeterni religionis sedem arcem atque domicilium in Roma constitutum doctosque in illa ab annis mille et quadringentis martyrum triumphos per dispersas in ominibus aeternae et gloriosissimae Romae templis aedibus sacellisque sanctorum reliquias magna nunc orbis terrarum pars Romanum nomen dulci magis subiectione colit quam olim fuit solita contremiscere.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 86

¹³⁷ “Dictatorem nunc perpetuum non Gaii Caesaris sed piscatoris Petri successorem et imperatoris praedicti vicarium pontificem summum principes orbis adorant et colunt. [The leaders of the world now give their allegiance not to Gaius Caesar but an eternal commander, the successor of Peter the fisherman and the stand in for the aforementioned emperor: the Pope.]” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 87

¹³⁸ “Senatum praesentis Romae cardinales ecclesiae post ponticem orbis veneratur [The Cardinals of the church are revered after the Pope. They are the Senate of Rome now.]” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 88

¹³⁹ “Quid quod maiora vel certe paria priscorum temorum vectigalibus Europa paene omnis tributa Romam mittit dum singulae civitates a Romano pontifice accipiunt beneficia.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 90

a city other than Rome, who recalls that Avignon, Bologna, Florence, Ferrara, at one time were decorated with the same glory.”¹⁴⁰

There were other more powerful Italian city states that could better protect the fragile papacy, so recently transplanted in Italy again. Without Rome the papacy could never again be a significant player on the political stage. However, in order for it to last there, the city had to be reborn. The new conception of history that Biondo lays out in *Roma Instaurata* is essential to this renewal:

“And I cannot refuse to admit [that Avignon, Bologna, and Florence could be papal cities]. But the city of Rome has certain things all its own, so famous, so high, and so worth admiring that they cannot be found in another part of the world, and cannot ever be moved.”¹⁴¹

With this passage, Biondo rejects all other versions of the future but his own. For Biondo, as he goes on to describe Rome’s significant Christian relics, Rome is ennobled by its history, the golden age hidden just under the cobblestones.

In order to found a humanist Rome, he has to help Eugene IV see the city as he does. This is something that he has done throughout *Roma Instaurata*, revealing his papal projects as the first steps to a new Christian relationship with the pagan past. In the final passages of *Roma Instaurata*, he fits one of the Pope’s most important projects into this model of Rome’s rebirth:

“Not only do the people of Europe honor Rome and her holiness, but your work, Father Eugenius, with as much care as expense made it so that even people from Asia and the most remote parts of Europe and Africa do as well, since I saw Greeks, Armenians, Bosnians, the Nestorians from Europe and the Georgians from Asia minor, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Cilicia and Syria, the Scythians, the Albanians, Ireland

¹⁴⁰ “Verum hanc summo pontifici et cardinalibus exhibitam ab orbe reverentiam eas a populis missas ingentes pecunias posse etiam alteri civitati quam Romae dignitatem emolumentumque afferre quispiam contendet et Avinionem Bononiam Florentiam Ferrariam ea aliquando fuisse gloria decoratas allegabit.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 90

¹⁴¹ “Et nos quin id quoque fateamur recusare non possumus. Sed propria quaedam habet urbs Romana adeo praeclara excelsa admiranda ut ne dum alibi in orbe inveniatur sed nec etiam ea transferri liceat optari.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 91

and even Ethiopians from Africa united with the western Church and reconciled to Catholic trust and Roman service.”¹⁴²

From Biondo’s classicizing viewpoint, Eugene IV has expanded the Roman empire far beyond the bounds that ancient Rome set. He has made Rome a world capital and brought the multitudes flocking back to the city again. Biondo follows them through the city streets and uses their example to push Eugene further, to ask him to make Rome’s history breathe again:

“They surround the basilicas, temples, chapels and single shrines of Rome. When traversing the haughty palaces of the old Roman princes, the highest buildings built for showing spectacles, the tall gates of the baths and the unimaginable work of the aqueducts, not a single one of them is so stupid or dull of spirit not to ask what they are and what they’re for, to delight in the things before their eyes and want to know them.”¹⁴³

Through the eyes of the masses Biondo connects a pilgrim’s love for Christianity and a humanist’s passion for the past. To these new observers there is nothing wrong the pagan ruins. In fact, they make Rome seem even more grand, curious, and unique. They stimulate the mind as the Church does the heart. It is through this synergy that Biondo sees Rome restored:

“This is how the glory of Roman majesty lives even now, fixed in on a more solid foundation. A great part of the world submits its neck to the name Rome out of sweet reverence, freely and without the clatter of weapons.”¹⁴⁴

This is the final image of *Roma Instaurata*. Biondo closes the work quietly, without much fanfare, by dismissing this last section as a fit of passion that drew him away from his true task:

¹⁴² “Nec Europae solum populi Romam et eius sanctimoniam venerantur sed tua etiam pater Eugeni opera factum est tum cura tum etiam impensa ut ex Asia quoque et finitimis illi Europae et Asiae partibus ost iunctos occidentali ecclesiae Graecos Armeniosque Bosnenses ex Europa Nestorianos quoque et Georgianos ex Asia minori Ponto Paphlagonia Cilicia et Assyria, Scythia, Albanis, et Iberia et demum Aethiopes ex Africa catholcae fidei et Romanae ecclesiae conciliatos viderimus.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 111

¹⁴³ “Romam adeunt Romae basilicas templa sacella et singulas aedes circuunt quorum nullus tam hebeti stupidove ingenio qui superba Romanorum olim principum palatia superbissimas spectaculis aedendis institutas extruiones thermarum celsos fornices et insana aquaeductorum opera perlustrans quid fuerint quidve sibi voluerint singulos sciscitans obvios vidisse scivisse non laetatur.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 113

¹⁴⁴ “Itaque viget adhuc solido innixa fundamento Romanae gloria maiestatis. Et non parva terrarum pars sponte et absque armorum strepitu dulci reverentia Romano nomini colla submitti.” Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 114

routinely cataloguing Roman ruins.¹⁴⁵ Biondo attempts to let himself off the hook with this ending. It maintains the pretense that this is a humble guidebook, not a map that presumes to lead the Pope himself to salvation. The careful reader, however, can easily see through this rhetorical twist into the subtle beating heart of Biondo's Rome. He has taken the impermanence that surrounds him, the topography of a Rome in ruins, and, using the study of the past, reimagined it as the Eternal City which lives in our minds even today. Biondo, armed only with ancient manuscripts, restores power to a papacy under attack. His reformulation of Rome as a sacred Empire leaves no room for argument, no way for the last proponents of the Avignon regime to contend that the papacy should not be at Rome, no way for Council of Basel to assert that the Pope is irrelevant. With *Roma Instaurata*, Biondo accomplishes more with the pen than Eugene IV did with the sword, albeit a sword that was forced upon him. For, through Biondo's dutiful engagement with history he caught a glimpse of the Renaissance twenty years before it began. The true task of *Roma Instaurata* is to help Eugene IV see it too, to convince the one with the power to make it all possible of the legacy hidden in the stones around him. The fact that it doesn't take much convincing for us to see it, is a testament to Biondo's legacy.

¹⁴⁵ "Sed quando a proposito digressi sumus qui ab aedificiorum locorumque urbis innovanda memoria differendis cultus et vigentis adhuc reverentiae rationibus diu immorati sumus ad ipsas urbis aedificiorum redeundum esset si plurimum quam hucusque descripsimus indivimus per omnia urbis loca a nobis dimissorum certiore dare noticiam possemus. [But I have wandered far from my original premise. I, who, from discussing with renewed memory the buildings and the places have been delayed a long time in theories of culture and living reverence, would return to the remaining buildings of the city, if I were able to give a more certain account of the buildings I have missed than what I have described or indicated through all the locations in the city.]" Biondo *Roma Instaurata* III 114

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Appendix

Flavio Biondo's *Roma Instaurata*

Excerpted and translated by Ryan Warwick

Praefatio: Many things which are now seen in the city of Rome, the mistress more of ruins than of edifices, persuade me to create this publication on behalf of your power, most sacred Pope Eugene, but this one thing compelled me the most: there has been so much ignorance of the study of the humanities in previous generations that, since few of the structures of this very city which once existed are understood in their single parts not only by the inexperienced multitude but also by those who are more learned with respect to doctrine, we then see many, nearly all things fouled, or rather defamed, by false and barbarous names. Therefore, in short, it seems that Rome, the parent of our genius, the nursling of our bravery, display of praise, height of glory, the garden of of all good things that the world has, obscured by its structures, will suffer a bigger loss of celebrity and fame than we see has happened in the case of earlier wealth and power. The return of your pontificate onto its seat confirmed our resolution to write, a return so useful and necessary for the its conservation that it is evident that the papacy already destroyed by calamity and decline, would be completely lost if you had been absent another ten years. Not only do you nurture Romans by your presence in the curia, a thing which mostly benefits the opulence of the city, but also in many locations you restore and remake fallen, misshapen buildings at the greatest cost. This is certainly honorable, a deed most fitting for a magnanimous *princeps* and one which surpasses in praise and glory all the foundations that were built and the structures of buildings that were made when Rome once blossomed by the degree to which the poverty of our age has a need for the immense wealth of our forebears. I owe everything I have to your holiness and for this reason I will not assert that you proceed to renew Rome with the remnant in letters of my small genius as much as you do by the labor of cement workers or carpenters. This renewed account of my works adds to the restoration of our city, which might please in particular the sanctity of your dignity and add to your glory, that of the Roman Popes who came before you. While describing the old parts of the city and their new names, I will explain through which Pope or other christian the basilicas, temples, and other sacred places which we call *ecclesia* were founded, begun, or renewed. While describing the magnificence of our city, inasmuch as I will not defraud eminent Romans of praise, even if they are idolaters and gentiles, I have a mind to highlight the glory of our martyrs, namely whenever someone conquered by endurance or triumphed by succumbing to the pleasure, the insanity, of tyrants. I will thus approach your glory for this duty which I have taken up, having trusted that it will be that our descendants will decide at some later time whether or not at this time of such great loss I was able to imitate with my undignified pen the architecture that has been built: the basilica of the prince of the apostles, remade and renovated in great part, as well as the walls of the Lateran palace, or the large bronze doors added to the most famous temple of Saint Peter, or the restoration of the suburban walls of

the Vatican palace and the paved roads of the city. Our descendants will decide whether a restoration remains stronger and lasts longer when made with lime or brick or *materia* (?), with stone or bronze or, perhaps, with words. But now, let me turn back to my great work.

Liber Primus

1. Urbis Situs: The ancients write that Rome is in Latium, situated on the river Tiber and five thousand steps from the Tuscan Sea.

2. Nominis Causa: Marcus Varro and Titus Livius as well as Patavinus Sallustius confirm that its name comes from its founder Romulus, and the name Romulus comes from the fig tree under which the flow of the Tiber left him and his brother Remus. Ovid wrote in his poems: It was a tree, the traces remain, and what is now called a Rumula Fig was then called a Romula Fig.

4. Portarum Vocabula: Pliny wrote that in his time there were three gates that were open and seven that were closed. He didn't write down their names and I was not able to satisfactorily discover them, although I know that to investigate all the locations of the ancient name of the gates in our present age to be superfluous because in the work of Livy and other writers, other names of gates are discovered which those who remained in the center of the city as Rome grew left out, along with what the gates looked like and their use. And indeed I have discovered the names of the gates which were around at the time of the ancients: Flumentana, Collatina, Collina, Quirinalis, Exquilana, Viminalis, Nevia, Querculana or Querqueculana, Gabuisa, Lavernalis, Ruquilina, Rutumena, Saginalis, Latina, Appia, Capena, Tregemina, Aurelia, Fontinalis, Carmentalis which they call Defiled, Pandata or Libera, Mugonia which they call Trigilia, Catularia and Triumphalis.

5. Portarum Romae Etymologia: Festus Pompeius wrote that this was the etymology of most of them: One is called Flumentana because they say that the Tiber once flooded into it, one Collatina from the town Collatia near Rome in which the wealth of other cities was collected. Collina was called Aegonensis because there were those on the Quirinal hill who called it the Aegon which the Quirinal was called first because it (the Aegean Sea?) went onto the Quirinal hill or because the temple of Quirinus was near it. One was called Querqueculana because an oak tree situated itself just inside the walls. The ancients said that the Lavernians were thieves because they were under the the care of the goddess Laverna in some hidden and out of the way location, from this a gate was named Lavernalis. One was called Rudusculana because it was left rough and unpolished. Rutumena was called this from the name of a certain charioteer. The Fontinalia were sacred to fountains for which reason a gate was called Fontinalis at Rome. A gate was called Catularia at Rome because not that far away from it dogs were burned to placate the Dog Star Canicula, which was hostile to the crops, so that the growing grain might be led fully to maturity. A gate and a hill were called Viminalis because there it is said there was a forest of willow there although Marcus Varro wrote in *De Lingua Latina* that the hill was named for a temple to Viminus in that location. As much as can be attained with truth for the gate Capena, Solinus said that an Italian king from the island of Sicily along with some people from Syracuse

had come to Janus and with his counsel and aid founded a city near Albula with the name Capena from which, afterward came the name of the gate Capena.

6. Tres Portae Urbis: And now we will set forth the three which are in the outmost location, Carmentalis, Pandana which is also called "free" and Mugonia which is also called Trigilia. The city got the first gate after it was built by Romulus although Varro says that Pandana belonged to Saturn's city and not Rome. However since Rome grew without form or function, they retained the name of the second one for a long time. Festus said that Carmentalis was called Scelerata, the defiled: because 36 Fabii marched through it against the Etruscans along with their 50 client soldiers. They were all killed near the river Cremera. Ovid also said in his Fasti: The road closest to the gate of Carmen is on the right of Janus: Don't go through it, whoever you are. It holds an omen. The rumor is that thirty Fabii went through it. It isn't the gate's fault but it's still bad luck. I have discovered the 23 names of the gates that I said from the oldest sources but in our age Rome only has 13 unless I should want to add the gates of the Vatican suburbs and the city which we will show to have been the Civitas Leonina, the newest of them all, and explain their new names in their own section. It would be difficult enough however to apply the ancient names to the gates which we see today in the city of Rome and on the Gianicolo.

7. De porta Populi quae Flumentana:

8. De porta Pinciana quae Collatina:

9. De porta Salaria quae Collina:

10. De porta Sanctae Agnetis quae Viminalis vel de quinque portis simul quando et a quibus Milvius aedificatus extitit:

11. De porta Sancti Laurentii quae Exquilina:

12. De porta Maiore quae Naevia:

13. De porta Sancti Iohannis quae Caelimontana

14. De porta Gabuisa quae Methodi

15. De porta Latina

16. De porta Appia olim Capena

[sources] **18. Arcus Veteres a Romulo Positi:** The Romans, even at the height of their wealth, never allowed the ancient strongholds, which Romulus built out of brick, to be changed into marble ones lest the memory of the founder of their city perish. In our age we see that they have collapsed where the churches of *S. Maria de la Gratia* and *S. Maria Libarachi de l'inferno* now are and the road is nearest to someone going in a chariot approaching the Appian Gate [?]. And the *Porta Juvenalis* isn't called the *porta humida* (wet gate) without merit, allegedly because it, among others [?], is in a recessed location abundant with waters washing into the Tiber. Livy in the Macedonian War: "The *Censors* located a road that is to be extended from the *Porta Capena* to the temple of Mars." Likewise Livy in the second Punic War: "The temples dedicated by Marcellus were seen by every foreigner (From outside places??). The messengers from every

city in Sicily went towards that place." And in book 9: "Marcellus dedicated a temple to Virtue in that year near the *Porta Capena*." But I saw in an ancient description, whose author I read in *Biblioteca Cassinensis* was Sextus Ruffus, an exconsul, although he was buried because of the carelessness of the librarians, that these shrines were placed in the first region (??) of the *Porta Capena*. And I said above that Solinus wanted that gate to be called such after the city of Capena which was built by Italus.

19. De Trigemina Porta:

20. De Carmentali porta: There is another gate within the tiber the mention of which is frequent among the ancient writers, called the *Porta Carmentalis*, which we suppose did not have any use as a gate in even the age of Titus Livius, much less ours. It was near the cliff which lead through the *Pons Sublicius* into the *Gianicolo*. This locations seems to be past the church of *Sancta Maria de Schola Graeca* or , as they say, in *Cosmedin*, near the first foothills of the *Aventine*, where now we see theives cut the oldest marble arches from their foundations so that they can be cooked down into lime.

21. Arcus Horatii Coclitis:

22. Transtyberina quae Janiculum: But now let us cross the Tiber. The rabble have long since called this part of the city of Rome the region *Transtyberina*, but our ancestors called it the *Janiculum* (*Gianicolo*) from the beginning and for quite some time. This first name of the region certainly deceives even the most learned of editors, because on the very top of the hill, where the sacred virgins now live, there allegedly was a temple of Janus, from which Vergil says in book 8: "Father Janus founded this city, Saturn founded that city. The name of this one was *Saturnia* and the name of that was *Janiculum*." And Ovid in his *Fasti*: "My citadel is the hill which the *cultrix* bestows with my name and this age calls it the *Janiculum*." Livy, however, at the beginning of his *Ab Urbe Condita*, in the history of Ancus Marcus, holds thus:

23. Pons Sublicius: "The *Janiculum* also was added to the city, not because of a lack of space but in order that the citadel might not belong to the enemies. It was useful to join it to the city not only with a wall, but with a pile bridge because of the convenience of the path." (1, 33, 6) If therefore the walls kept to the bridge, not only the hill, very distant from the river itself, because some people wanted it from Ancus, but also the whole of the *Gianicolo*, now the *Transtyberina* region, was fortified. Livy in his second book: "When the *Janiculum* was captured with a sudden strike and the enemies rushed swiftly down from it". And a bit later "Now there would be more enemies on the *Palatine* and *Capitoline* than on the *Janiculum*."

24. Tres portae Ianiculi in genere:

25: De porta Portuensi:

26. De porta Sancti Pancratii quae Aurelia:

27. De porta subtus Ianum quae Fontinalis

28. De Aedificiis Janiculi in genere: I now should move on to the Vatican Suburbs but only after I explain the location of the Gianicolo or the Region across the Tiber (Trastevere), as it is split from the rest of the parts of the city by the river and the wall, and whether the buildings which it once had, and the ones which we now see or the ones that are able to be pointed out, were built by emperors or Popes or by the people.

29. Ratio constructionis pontis Sublicii:

30. De thermis Severianis et Aurelianis:

31. Janiculum aliquando fuisse urbem Ravennatium: I put forth that the part of the city known as the Gianicolo or the region across the Tiber is called the city Ravennatium by we who wrote the history of the Martyrs. The reason for this bears more careful repeating.

32. De classibus apud Misenum et Ravenas: Octavian Augustus was quietly invested with power after Marc Antony and Cleopatra were killed. Among many things which he most prudently provided, he created two fleets: one at Misenum, the port of Lucania, with which he protected the islands of Italy and the maritime hour [shore] of the Gauls, Spain, Africa and Mauritania and the blows of the northern Ocean; the other at Ravenna in the location of Cardia which afterwards was the town of *Classensis*, parts of which fleet were present to aid those who needed it on the Adriatic coast, The Illyrican, Dalmatia, Epirus, Greece, Tracia, Pontus, Meotida, and Asia verging on our sea. No one who has read the Roman histories is undecided that so many ships, as many as was appropriate for those for whom the care of the guardianship of the empire was commissioned, needed a large army. Because it was the principal care for the Roman Senate or rulers of Rome that, because we spread in many directions, the multitude, to whom there had been no place publicly assigned for living, not be able to frequent Rome, the region across the Tiber was assigned to the army of the fleet of Ravenna, which afterwards was called the City Ravennatium.

33. Callistus papa in via Aurelia:

34. Felix primus papa ecclesiam sui nominis in Aurelia:

35. Adeotatus rimus ecclesiam ad ontem Meruli:

36. Hadrianus Primus formas Sabbatinam et Joviam restituit: Hadrian the first was a Roman Pope who, among many things worth talking about in their own locations, restored the forms of the waters of Sabbatinus [the Sabbath?] and Jupiter at great personal cost and with great labor on the part of the Roman people, one at the hundred gates [???] near the basilica of the prince of the apostles and the Vatican suburbs, another through the hill of the Aurelian gate and road, part toward the Aurelian bridge, which is now called Rupto, since it is broken, with the result that it flows into the city, part as it is hardly contained within its ducts. The fact that in a little more or less than sixty years no remnants of such a great work appear either on the Gianicolo or on the Vatican.

37. Duae turres ad Navalia a Leone quarto

38. Quid Vaticanus: The Vatican remains, about which Festus Pompeius wrote this: “The hill is called the “Vatican” because at that time the Roman people received an oracle from the prophets (*vates*) as the Etruscans were repelled.” Aulus Gellius says this about the hill in the eighteenth book of his *Attic Nights*: “And we have heard that the field of the Vatican and the god that is its guardian are called this because of the oracles (*vatacinia*) that were accustomed to occur in the field by the power and whim of the god.” But, aside from this, Marcus Varro in his *Libri Divinarum* gives us another reason for this name. Just as a god was called Arius and a altar (*ara*), which is under the *Nova Via*, was erected because the divine voice came forth there, so a god was called Vaticanus, in whose power was the beginnings of the human voice, since a baby, as soon as it is born, gives for the first syllable in *Vaticanus*, for that reason the sound of a new voice, with the sound being pushed forth, is said to *vagire*.

39. Vaticanum regionem Leo IV papa muro cinxit et Leoninam civitatem appellavit: The Pope Leo the fourth first fortified this part of the city of Rome with a wall and named it the *Civitas Leonina*, after his own name, but we spoke of the reason for fortifying it above (short a causa w gerund): In order that, as the Saracens not be able to seize, defile, and tear down the basilica of the prince of the apostles any further, as this had happened a short time before.

40. Sex portae civitatis Leoninae in genere et statim particulariter: The fort had six gates, which still stand today, and the first of these, which opens to the Gianicolo, is called the *Sancti Spiritus* from the church that lies beneath it. Another, situated high on the hill, is called *Pertusa*. *Tertiae* is now the name of the one that stands under the palace of the pontifex, but Pope Leo gave it the name *Sancti Peregrini* for the church at the end of the road. The fourth, now closed, which would lead toward the school of the Lombards and the Saxons, is called *Posterula*, and he christened the fifth gate, which leads to the fields, with the same name as the tomb of the emperor Hadrian, now called Castel St. Angelo. The sixth gate is the *Porta Aenea*, which leads to the bridge of Hadrian and the city. It pleases me, after I have described the gates to the city which stand in our day as much as I am able, to indicate the location of the one gate that Rome considers most famous.

41. Porta Triumphalis ubi fuit et simul territorium Triumphale ac pons Triumphalis: This gate is the *Triumphalis*. Through it and none other are triumphs led. And so I can recover this thing lost entirely in the shadows by a more exact method, a work which, if the works of men hold firm at all, must flash with eternal clarity, I will first tell you its location. Then I will put forward the evidence on which my assertion stands. The bridge the foundations of the pillars of which are now seen in the Tiber near the Hospital of *Sanctus Spiritus*, as well as the gate on the deepest bank of the Tiber, the mound of the foundations of which still stand, and the road from the bridge to the obelisk of Caesar and the altar that lies in front of the basilica of St. Peters, following the foot of the Vatican hill, all are named *Triumphalis*. This road, I might contend, was

extended no further than the Basilica of St. Peter. No, it even stands to reason that this road was not longer than this because it was adjacent to something, either a basilica dedicated to the sun or an obelisk and a temple of Apollo called *Triumphale*. Josephus in the seventh book of *De Captivitate Iudaica* has clearly and abundantly examined the thing I said about the gate, describing the triumph of the emperors Titus and Vespasian. He said that the emperors who had been sleeping not in a major temple but the temple of Isis that night went through “Octavian’s paths” where the senate and the honored knights waited. And when favor decorated them with military honors, praise, and prayers celebrated according to tradition, they returned to the gate which from this received its name: the fact that the procession of *triumphators* has always been lead through it. The end of the procession was the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. There is not infrequent testimony about the territory called *Triumphalis* in the life of Saint Peter, prince of the apostles by Saint Hieronymus, the *Presbyter*, as he preferred that title, or, as some desire, the writings by Pope Damasus where it is said that Saint Peter was buried in the church of his name which was next to a temple of Apollo built in the Triumphal territory. And our age keeps this reputation to this day as the bridge from which we said that it was for nobles and the people who till the land never cross it. They have, incidentally evidence of this change that was made on the Kalends of the month of August or Sextilis by the memory of the victory of Octavius Caesar Augustus over Antony and Cleopatra for the liberation of Saint Peter from prison and the chains of Herod from where the festal day of Saint Peter in chains is celebrated, the ashes of Gaius Caesar were placed in a special obelisk which can be seen in the Triumphal Territory. I also contend that the temple of Isis was for Minerva in Sextus Ruffus’ description of the city of Rome, whose name still endures, then called Chalcidica and Via Lata. Suetonius Tranquillius explains “Octavian’s paths” in these words: “They buried their remains in the Mausoleum. He (Octavian?) built this work along the via Flaminia and the bank of the Tiber, in his sixth consulship, and he made the surrounding forests and paths public for the use of the people.” A little bit before this Suetonius recalls the *Porta Triumphalis* where he says that certain senators decided to lead Augustus’ funeral through it. Thus Vespasian and Titus, once they had spent the night at Isis on the Via Lata, they descended towards the paths of Augustus, which is now called “Augusta”. And from there, once the Tiber had been crossed, through the closest bridge, the foundations of which are seen they returned towards the *via* and *porta Triumphalis* where Hospital de Sancti Spiritus in Sassia now stands.

42. Hospitale sancti Spiritus in Saxia: In order to arrive at the reason for the name “in Sassia” of the hospital I will first reveal the many changes that have occurred there. After the war of the Lombards, which I have shown afflicted Italy for two hundred and forty years in “the history of the decline of the Roman Empire, was ended by the effort of Charles the Great, the king of the Franks, the Pope Hadrian the first saw fit for it to be donated by the Romans to the Saxons, and, a short time later, to the Lombards--a group that must not be hated entirely. And the Romans,

since it didn't seem best to give them a safe place within the walls, placed them on the Vatican, which was then unfortified, so that they would inhabit the buildings on that road from the Tiber to the Triumphal territory since the Triumphal bridge was ruined then. The history of Hadrian himself and later the Roman Pope Leo the fourth indicated this and recorded down to the finest detail, and of those two Hadrian, as I recall [?], is said to have cared for the Longobards and the Saxons once they were allies and subjects. The story of the life of Leo however contains that he christened the gate in the middle of the walls from the tomb of Hadrian to the palace of the passages which lead to the street of the Longobards and the Saxons, with the name Posterula. From this it came to be that that most famous hospital, built by Innocent the third, is called In Sassia from the street of the Saxons on which it was built.

43. Quid fuit mons qui in Vaticano: The rumor, perpetuated over many years and by the writings of many authors has involved many, even those who are not uneducated, in error that there was a palace of Nero on the hill that, being steep, included the hospital I mentioned earlier in the Vatican suburb. We do not doubt that this is indeed false and we will reveal where the palace of Nero was when we have come to the private (or lost?) buildings of the city. Cornelius Tacitus, in whose work the life of Nero is considered closely, says that a space in which he could ride horses without a public spectacle was closed in the hollow of the Vatican hill. A little bit to the other side he added the same thing (another hollow?) in the woods which he placed around his naval lake to build (PURPOSE INFINITIVE?) meeting places and taverns. There was then, on that hill, a temple of the god Vaticanus which I revealed early was described by Aulus Gellius.

44. Naumachia ubi fuit: The naval lake, or, as they are called in the Greek language, Naumachia, was next to this same hill under the foothills of the *mons Aureus* which leads to the *porta Pertusa* and where we see the gardens newly begun in the dry mud. For this reason a great part of the Vatican was called Naumachia in many of the apocrypha that I read and in the life of Saint Peter about which I spoke, it is even said that the church of Saint Peter was built near the Naumachia and the hospital, which Pope Leo the third built from the region of the church of Saint Andrew dedicated by Pope Simachus the first and of Saint Petronilla where the temple of Apollo lies toward the obelisk, this was also named Naumachia.

45. Locus martirii Beati Pauli apostoli: But since we have come to the works of the Saints, I will weigh in publicly concerning the location of the suffering and final resting place of Peter prince of the apostles, which we consider. For although there is constant rumor that he had suffered at Terebinthus between two posts, it is entirely unknown where that is and there are some who seek to decorate the Gianicolo with this honor falsely. In answering such a great question, I will offer testimony which will have to all the more authority because, taken up by the enemies of the faith, it will be left without any hint of adulation. Cornelius Tacitus, after he told of that remarkable fire which burned Rome for seven days in the time of Nero, disputing much about the reasons of this fire had this to say: "The infamy would not diminish either with human

wealth, or the expenditures of the *princeps*, or gifts to the gods, so that it would not be believed that the fire was ordered. Therefore Nero, so that he could crush this rumor, brought people before the court and exacted the most careful punishments upon those whom the common man, under torture named as Christians. The originator of this name was Christ. He had been killed under torture by the *procurator* Pontius Pilate while Tiberius was emperor and the superstition that surrounded his death, that was repressed at the time, began to crop up again not only among the Jews, the origin of this evil, but through the whole city where all atrocity and shame flow together and are celebrated. Therefore there was a huge multitude of those people who, first taken because of this evidence, were confessing, a multitude convicted by the hatred of humankind. Humiliation was heaped upon the dying: they were covered in animal hides, so that they would be killed by mutilation from wild dogs or, hung on crosses so that they could die by power of flame, and, when they day waned, be burned as torches as a night light. Nero had offered such a spectacle in his own garden. And he had circus games, dressed as a charioteer, mixed with the common people or pushing the gathering onward. From then on, although seemingly pity had been turned towards the ones who deserved it and against the guilty and the newest examples, he began to go forward not as though he took up the the common good, but the evil of just one man.” We demonstrated above that Cornelius Tacitus wrote that Nero enclosed a space in the Vatican valley a space in which he could ride horses away from the public eye. And in this location he said that he offered his own gardens for the spectacle of the tortured christians and put on his circus games.

46. Circus Neronis ubi: We do not doubt that this space was enclosed within the Vatican valley, the walls of which, demolished into many parts, and the gates, stripped of their seats can be seen through the vines which border the tomb of Hadrian. Although Pliny, when he makes mention of the obelisk always designates that it was placed in the circus of Gaius (Caligula) and Nero.

47. Quando sepulchrum Hadriani, nunc castrum Sancti Angeli et pons illi subiectus: And since there wasn't either the tomb of Hadrian itself or the bridge that was joined to it which were works from the hundredth year after Hadrian was emperor, I do not believe without merit that the circus of Gaius and Nero occupied the part of the suburbs which is the Vatican and the gardens continued from the enclosure of this circus to the Tiber.

48. De hortis Neronis: Peter was crucified in these gardens and in that location where the Church of *Sancta Maria in Transtiberim* stands, since many Christians were tortured, killed, and brutalized there. I would also believe truly that the Terabinth tree which, just as it excretes the gum for which it is named so it is the most desirous of moisture, was on the bank of the of the Tiber to which the church is said to be near. The things are contained in either pictures or writing about the about the two *metae* between which the martyrdom of Peter is said to have been committed confirm our opinion. For granted that the tomb of Hadrian was not one of the *metae* in the time of Peter and Nero, as we showed previously, we still contend that those men who

wanted to commit this occurrence to letters or to reveal it to the laymen in a picture, accepted this sign of the *metae* only because there was nothing more certain. There is another tomb which I have seen despoiled of its marble, whether this was in Nero's time I don't know. But now I return to other parts of the Vatican.

49. De ecclesia Sancti Petri: Many people have written that the basilica of Saint Peter was the work of the emperor Flavius Constantinus, who had the cognomen magnus.

50. Simachus papa primus fecit palatium Sancti Petri:

51. Honorius primus ecclesiam Sancti Petri tegulis aeneis cooperuit:

52. Donus primus papa paradisum marmore stravit: Donus the first, a Roman Pope, built the altar of the dedicated basilica, which is called Paradisum, out of extant marbles (spolia?). I believe that these marbles have held onto remnants of that famous *meta*, the one that was despoiled, though by who I have said I don't know.

53. Nicolaus tertius de Ursinis palatium auxit:

54. Nonifacius nonus id ornavit:

55 Leo quartus civitatem leoninam Corsis replevit: This magnanimous Pope refilled the city, fortified, as we said with a wall and called *Leonina* after himself, with Corsicans who, fleeing the persecution of the Sarracens, emigrated en masse. Taking up great care for the place and for the Basilica he made many things which in sixty years, as much separates this time from theirs, had entirely collapsed from old age, and they would have, in a short time, gone entirely to nothing unless you had made an effort, most holy father Eugenius, so that we now delight to see these things renewed.

56. Eugenius quartus ecclesiam Sancti Petri suppellectile donavit: Where Leo decorated the church with gifts, you made it even better, since it has now been appointed with a new ornamental ministry of sacred things equally,

57. Idem sacristiam tectumque ecclesiae innovavit: and a greater roof besides, for the most part new, and since new rooms of the sacristy were built.

58. Idem portas aeneas: You will see that you have been surpassed by Leo in only one single thing: the fact that he gave silver doors to the church and you gave bronze, except that their magnificence will seem equal, that since the silver gates were made with no fine craftsmanship, as the bronze ones can be gilded and inlaid with the great histories of the union with the Greeks, the Armenians, the Ethiopians, the Jacobins and other peoples with your work and expense for the church of the *concilator*, so the price of bronze and gold and craftsman has surpassed the cost (of a silver gate) fourfold.

59. Idem aerarii officinam: Why should I even mention the fact that where Leo built a guard tower that was the first of all its kind in the world, you built an room for the treasury and the most elegant gate of the palace.

60. Idem aream palatii et vias urbis stravit: The area around the palace and the road that leads into the city and splits into many parts of the city afterwards, both of which you paved, are of such great honor that it seems that the city of Rome has returned from another time, many centuries ago.

61 De obelisco Vaticani: The Vatican field has no the structures of the Gentiles which exist besides the obelisk of Gaius (Caligula) about which, because it now stands unique from larger ones, I judge that it is not absurd to speak more. It stands to reason that these stone structures did not come about by the effort or intent of any Roman. For Pliny of Verona and Ammianus Marcellinus explain that those which either were or are now seen at Rome, either standing or not were taken from Thebes or other cities of Egypt. Pliny in his thirty sixth book contends that the one that is seen on the Vatican is the third obelisk out of the greater ones that had been brought, and in the sixteenth book when he discusses the size of the trees he has this to say: “The fir tree seems to be a source of exceeding wonder on the ship which brought the obelisk that was stood up in the Vatican circus and four blocks of stone for standing it up. There was nothing seen on the sea more admirable than than this ship. It had one hundred and twenty *modii* of lentils for its ballast. It’s length stretched along a great part of the Ostian port on the left side. There it was sank into the sea by emperor Claudius. The thickness of this tree measured four human forearms clasped together.”

62. De obeliscis in genere: Ammianus Marcellinus has a most pleasant account about obelisks in the seventeenth book of his histories which it is appropriate to insert here: “While Orphitus was commanding his second prefecture an obelisk was set up at Rome in the Circus Maximus about which I will now discuss a bit, because it is timely. The founders of Thebes named the city *Hecatompylon* when it was founded in previous centuries because of the ambitious phalanx of its walls and the hundred gates that were famous to attackers at one time, and the province around Thebes is still called this. At the beginning of Carthage splitting itself apart, the leaders of the Phoenicians oppressed Thebes with a sudden rush. and after it was repaired Cambyses, the king of the Persians, being desirous and savage towards other nations attacked, after Egypt was run through. so that he might take the enviable wealth from there, not even sparing offerings to the gods, and he, while racing chaotically through the looters, tangled in the loose folds of his clothing, fell prone and lethally wounded by his own dagger which he wore strapped to his right thigh which was left bare in the sudden rush of the battle, he nearly could have died. A long time after that Conelius Gallus, the *procurator* of Egypt during the rule of Octavian, exhausted the city since many of his men were intercepted and turned back, since he was called into court on the charge of treachery and despoiling the provinces which the emperor had given to him to watch over, degrading them even more with fear of the nobility, he lay down on his drawn blade. He wasTh if I guess correctly, the poet Gallus, whom Virgil celebrates with gentle song in the last part of his Eclogues. In this city among the immense trenches and buildings spread out

showing the traces of Egyptian spirits, we see many obelisks and other things lying around and broken which the ancient kings brought either from peoples conquered in war or prospering in the height of their power, searching through the veins of the mountains or among the farthest islands of the world, that were cut from the ground and raised again for the gods above in the name of our religion. There is however an extremely tall stone obelisk in the shape of a kind of *meta* rising toward an observably uncanny height and in order that it portray (emulate?) its radius, getting more slender little by little, a narrowness produced towards the top in its square appearance, it has been made lighter by the hand of its builder.

63. De obeliscorum figuris hierographicis: An ancient authority of early wisdom has carved those symbols with countless forms called hieroglyphs, which we see cut into it. Sculpting many kinds of birds and beasts of another world they demonstrate that their memory that was sent forth or the released prayers of their kings endure and are even more widespread far into the following ages of the emperors. The distinguished and copious number of letters expresses whatever is possible for the human mind to conceive, in this way the ancient Egyptians wrote but single letters served for nouns and verbs; they sometimes meant whole phrases. This principle has an example of this in these two cases: They assign the word for nature to the vulture, because, as natural history records, there are no males among these birds, and they indicate the king with the sign of a bee making honey, demonstrating with these signs and many besides that sweetness in a ruler must be paired with a sting.

64: De obelisco qui iacet in Circi hortis: When Octavian Augustus brought two obelisks from the Egyptian city of Heliopolis, one of them was set up in the Circus Maximus, the other in the Campus Martius, he did not dare to either drag or move the latter one, which arrived only recently, because he was frightened by the difficulty posed by its size. Those who don't know the ancient method of shipping teach that he left it untouched because it was dedicated as a special gift to the Sun God and was placed among the shrines of the most ostentatious temples which they could not reach, although it towered over everything. But Constantine, not making much of the structure, tore it from its foundations, and thinking he committed no crime against religion if he took this miracle from one temple and dedicated it to Rome, that is, the temple of the whole world, let it lie a long time, while the tools for the crossing were prepared and once it was taken across the Nile and moved out of Alexandria, a boat was built for its heretofore unseen size and was powered by thirty rowers, but after these things were provided, and after life left the previously mentioned emperor, interest grew lukewarm. Later it was finally placed on a ship and moved through the seas and the rivers of the Tiber, which seemed to fear that it hardly could bring this thing through the difficult places in its flow, a thing which the distant and unknown Nile had sent, and it was taken down on the street of Alexander three stones from the city. There it was placed on a cradle and dragged gently through the Ostian gate and the public fish market, and then finally brought into the Circus Maximus. After this only the raising remained which they

expected to complete either with great effort or not at all. After high wooden beams were built so that you could see a forest of machines, a large and long rope was woven from what seemed like a million threads, fashioning a chisel of exceptional density. To these things this mountain etched with letters was attached and it was gradually pulled up through the empty air, hanging for a long time, with many thousands of men struggling with things resembling the posts of a mill, it was placed in the center of the circus and a bronze sphere, shining with gold leaf was placed on top of it, and once the sphere was touched by the power of the daylight fire, it was therefore taken down, a golden imitation of a torch, also in gold plate, was placed there, which looked as if it were overflowing with bright fire.” Following ages transported other obelisks, one of which one was set up in the Vatican the other in the gardens of Sallust and two in the monument of Augustus. Besides that which was written above about the letters called hieroglyphs Marcellinus said only this, likewise in his twenty second book where he discusses about the writings on the pyramids of Egypt: “there are caverns and winding recesses which as is said those of the ancient traditions, long since dead, built, carved out with toilsome ditches, knowing that a flood would come and, fearing that the memory of their ceremonies would be obliterated. And they wrote many kinds of birds and beasts into the carved walls and innumerable species of animals which are called hieroglyphic letters.” And Cornelius Tacitus writes: “The first Egyptians made sense of their minds with the figures of animals and the most ancient monuments in human memory are seen with these letters pressed into the rock.” I have now certainly wandered far enough from the oldest walls of Rome. I now must return to the monuments of our ancestors and the remaining parts of the city.

65. De montibus urbis in genere: There are seven hills in the city. The Capitoline which is also called the Tarpeian, the Aventine, the Palatine, the Caelian, the Esquiline, the Viminal and the Quirinal, the Gianicolo was added afterwards to make eight.

66. De Capitolino monte: The hill is called the Capitoline because here, as Marcus Varro writes in *De Lingua Latina*, when the foundations of the temple of Jupiter were being laid, a human head is said to have been found. Before this, the hill was named the Tarpeian after a vestal virgin Tarpeia who was killed by the Sabine armies and buried there. The memory of her name remains because the cliff on the Capitoline is still called the Tarpeian rock. Before they say that the hill was called the Saturnian hill and the land around it was called the Saturnian land, as even Ennius called it. It is written that there was an ancient town in this land called Saturnia, and three ruins now remain, one which is the temple to Saturn in the narrows, one is the gate of Saturn which Junius wrote was there, which is now called Pandana. Virgil in his eighth book: “From here he led (Aeneas) to the Tarpeian seat and the Capitoline, now golden, then bristling with woodland shrubs.” We judge that the other testimony about the Capitoline from the ancients is superfluous to offer here because it is so famous.

67-71 are almost entirely quotes from Varro

67. De Aventino:

68. De Palatino:

69. De Caelio:

70. De Exquiliis:

71. De Quirinali et Viminali:

72. Quae fuerit prima urbs a Romulo aedificata: Since all the hills have been explained I will describe the city that was founded by Romulus as ignorance of it has come about because of the many narrations afterwards. We see that only the Capitoline, or Tarpeian, Palatine, and Aventine hills are closed in by valleys, along with those which come in between. From this it makes sense that Titus Livius explained that the remaining five hills were added. He says this in the first book of his history of Tullus Hostilius: "Rome, in the meantime, rose from the ruins of Alba; the number of citizens doubled. The Caelian was added to the city and Tullus captured a palace there by which it was held in greater numbers, and he lived there." The second hill that was added to the new city was the Gianicolo. Livius in the history of Ancus Marcius: "The Janiculum was added not because of the poverty of the location but so that the fields not ever belong to the enemies." Afterwards three more hills were added by king Servius. Livy again in the first book: "It seemed that the city must grow. He added two hills, the Quirinal and the Viminal. There he increased the Esquiline and, since the place had become dignified, he lived there. He fortified the city with trenches, embankments, and a wall." Cornelius Tacitus, however, seems to feel differently about the perimeter of the first city; these are his words: "The furrow that designated the town began from the Forum Boarium, where we see the golden bull, the plow because that kind of animal pulls a plow, so that it reaches the altar of Hercules. Starting there, stones have been placed at certain intervals, through the steep parts of the Palatine hill to the altar of Cossutius, soon to the old Curias, then to the sanctuary of the Lares and the Forum Romanum. The Capitoline was added not by Romulus, but by Titus Tatius." Going forward towards our goal, the description of the buildings and locations of this city, which now has eight hills, I will proceed to show whatever each has intact or destroyed, ancient or new. Thus afterwards I will easily reveal the ruins that are on the cliffs and in the valleys and in the other parts of the city.

73. Quid habuerit habeatque nunc Capitolium: It shames and disgusts me to report the ugliness that is beginning on the Capitoline. This is the hill that Marcus Cicero called the house of the gods because it was inhabited greatly and often by Quirites before he went into exile, and Virgil called it golden, as it was even thirty years after Cicero and Vergil had left this life. Ammianus Marcellinus demonstrates [the hill's beauty] in his history of Constans son of Constantine. Constans coming from Constantinople, where he was born and raised, to Rome for the first time was struck dumb as he looked around the city. These are the words from book 16: "Then surveying the placement of the parts of the city and the suburbs through the tops of the seven hills, through the cliffs and plains, he was awaiting whatever was first to come forth

among the rest: the temple of Tarpeian Jupiter excelled as a god does over the earth.” And Later Ammianus in his 22nd book, describing the marvel of Egypt says this: “They approached temples supported by high pediments. Among these the Serapaum stood out which, although of course it is diminished by our feeble description, was ornamented with massive pillars, and the breathing art of its signs and the remaining multitude of arts, so that after the Capitoline, through which Rome glorified herself into eternity, nothing in the world can be seen that is so ambitious.” The most learned and great man Cassiodorus echoing this opinion in his first edict of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, through which he orders the restoration of the fountains of Rome, says this: “The forum of Trajan is miraculous to see even under constant attention. To climb the capitoline is to surmount human genius”. Now truly besides the brick house of Boniface the ninth built over the ruins, which would have disgusted the Roman citizen with its mediocrity, allotted for the use of senators and lawyers, besides the church of the brothers of Saint Francis of the Ara Caeli, built on the foundations of the temple of Jupiter, the Capitoline or Tarpeian hill is ornamented with nothing like the buildings it once had. I don’t think it necessary to write the what locations the Capitoline had. For when it was assigned to religion principally, it had over sixty altars, chapels, sanctuaries, shrines, and temples, the names of which, if I thought it expedient to my endeavour, would be easy to review in the writings of the ancients. But lest we overturn the opinion of the common people and the inexperienced who contend that the capitoline was the home of the emperors and the senate without any evidence, we will put forth the words of Valerius Maximus from his sixth book: “Where Marcus Manlius repelled the Gauls, there he fell because he tried to nefariously oppress the liberty he defended. This was said in advance of doubtless just vengeance for this: “You were Manlius when you were among the Senones. After you began to imitate them you were treated as one.”” As punishment for this a mark has been inserted into eternal memory. Because of this it has been sanctified in law that no Patrician is to live on the *arx* or the Capitoline, because he lived there, where we now see the shrine of Moneta.

74. De sacris locis Capitolii: But it is fitting to say a few things, about the sacred locations that this hill had which are more visible now. The most famous temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus in the *arx* had been placed near that place which is now called *Salvator in Maximinis*; and the Temple of Janus, guard of the Capitoline *arx*, was where there now is the location of the prison and the guard of the biggest criminals, which they call the Cancelleria. Also very famous on the Capitoline and very close to the Tarpeian rock, there was the shrine of Juno Moneta, about which Livy says this in his seventh book: “A dictator vowed the temple of Juno Moneta, and condemned because of this prayer once the victor had reclaimed Rome from dictatorship, he abdicated himself. The Senate ordered that two men be appointed to making over the temple in accordance with the greatness of the republic. The location was decided in the citadel where the house of Marcus Manlius Capitolinus had been.” I have already mentioned

above that the house of Manlius was near the Tarpeian rock. And Virgil says “in sum Manlius is the guardian of the Tarpeian citadel.” There is also a great inquisition by our men of the Capitoline cliff through which there is a public stair into the citadel. Titus Livius says this in the sixth book of his Macedonian war: “The Consuls ordered the Numidian fugitives who then were 1,200 strong on the Aventine, to cross the Esquiline through the middle of the city, since they judge them no longer fit to attack the valleys and buildings of the gardens and the memorials, and the hollow paths all around in the future. And once certain people had seen them running from the citadel and the public descent on horses, they shouted that the Capitoline was taken.” From this I say that there was a public descent from the Capitoline toward the part of the *arx* which, turning toward the Aventine, now looks on the church of Saint George at the Golden Cloth (San. Georgio in Velabro).

75. Quid Aventinus habuerit et nunc habeat: I am not able to speak as much or as certainly about the Aventine. This hill has many buildings, the most notable of which were the altar of Hercules which Livy in his first book says was first placed on the Aventine by Evander and the temple of Juno which according to Livy in the second book of the Second Punic Wars Camillus dedicated to a statue of the goddess because when asked if it wanted to go to Rome, it responded that it did, and it was taken from Veii to Rome, and a shrine by the same Camillus that he dedicated to his mother Matuta after the triumph was conducted. There were also temples to Diana and Minerva on the hill, as well as to Luna about which Ovid in his *Fasti* says: “Luna rules the months: Luna on the Aventine knows the times of the month that must be taken care of with a plow.” There is also a fountain from which Faunus and Picus the satyrs drank and Numa Pompilius placed a vine and intoxicated the satyrs. From there Ovid says: “There is a black grove of oak on the Aventine where, upon seeing it you would say there is a spirit. A field in the middle and a spring of endless water full of green moss flows from a rock.” There is the cave of Cacus, of even greater fame, which is now seen above the Church of Sancta Maria in Schola Graeca (Santa Maria in Cosmedin) where the Aventine looks on the Palatine hill. About this cave Virgil says this in his eighth book: “Here was a cave of the half man Cacus, carved out of in a huge recess.” And further: “Alcides was there and, victorious, was driving his huge cattle and the cows filled the valley and the stream, but the mind of Cacus was made wild by Fury.” And further: “One of the cattle returned the call and moored under the vast cavern and foiled Cacus’ hopes of ownership.” And further: “But the cave and the the huge kingdom of Cacus appeared stripped of its roof” Ovid in his *Fasti* “Cacus, the fear of the Aventine and the infamy of the woods.” There was also a grove of laurels sacred to Jupiter in which Valentianus the second, son of Constantine's companion and Galla Placida was killed, as Pliny wrote in his *Natural History*. There was also a shrine of Liberty which Gracus established to be made with money from fines. Of all of these as well as the many buildings and locations that are praised by the ancients in writing, which it has been the easiest to commemorate, not one trace exists from the foundation

on up. But small parts of one thing that is still a source of marvel in our eyes, is still seen: the aqueducts of Claudia and Martia which had been built through the hill in a stupendous effort. Julius Frontinus in his second book says this about the aqueducts: “And it [water] is given to many people by means of a careful partition, distributed into the regions in which lone fountains were servings, for example on the Caelian and the Aventine into which only Claudia used to flow through the neronian arches where whenever a defect arose, the most inhabited hills would be thirsty, whereas now most of the water and in particular the Martia, which has returned even more full, lead all the way to the Aventine.” Cassiodorus writes about this same form of the Claudia fountain where Theodoricus orders that the crumbling aqueducts be restored: “Who has fit words to explain that the Claudia fountain which has been built on such a high structure thus onto the top of the Aventine that, since the water has fallen from such a height, it seems to irrigate the top of the hill just like the whole valley?” The hill also has the Monastery of Saint Sabina, which in the time of Pope Sixtus the third a certain bishop named Peter coming from Illiricum took care to build with his own money. It has another monastery of Saint Boniface. These two monasteries have are conspicuous because of the richness of their building and their ornaments even into our age. The rest of the hill is covered in either ruins or vines.

76. Quid Palatinus habuerit et nunc habeat: The palatine has much fewer things intact than the Capitoline or Aventine. For besides the church of Saint Nicolas build by Pope Calixtus the second, and even this is only barely holding together, this hill has no famous buildings. However, ruins that must be admired among all those in the city indicate the type and amount of buildings that used to exist. Livy in his first book bears witness to the fact that Evander settled the hill and afterwards fortified it. But although, first the kings, then the consuls and after that the emperors, had a great part of the hill as their dwelling, no one has written who built so many buildings. I can believe this happened for no other reason than that certain single individuals with no sign of building made added small pieces which writers failed commit to letters since they didn’t seem worthy. However Livy says this in his third book: “The shrine of the leader Vaccus Fondanus was on the Palatine which was called the field of Vaccus after the building was torn down and distributed.” And in his Macedonian war: “Marcus Junius Brutus dedicated a shrine to the great mother of the gods on the Palatine. And the games that were set up in honor of this dedication were called the Megalesia.” Suetonius says that Gaius Caesar built a temple of Apollo on the Palatine, and Livy in the 8th book about the Second Punic war says that they carried the great mother of the gods that was brought from Greece into the shrine of Victory which is on the Palatine, and Helius Lampridius wrote that Varius Heliogabalus the Emperor dedicated many things on the palatine hill and made a temple there. *I see that it is now possible to call this very hill, which, as I explained with Varro before, had a three reasons for its name, can be called Ballatium, because wherever the great mound of ruins does not prevent it, or the vines hanging from the arches do not cover everything, the entire hill has been turned into a pasture not just for*

sheep, but mares and oxen and goats. Because of this I sometimes have entered into various debates with myself as to what can be supposed about the rest of Rome when I see those three hills, the first and only that were brought together into the first city, led nearly to the point of desertedness that Rome had when it wasn't yet founded. The location of the Palladium was in that part of the Palatine which, having turned northwards, we see verging into the Triumphal arch of the emperor Constantine. Its noted ruins exist, having two gates from marble still intact, easily surpassing in their beauty all other gates of other buildings which Rome now has, either new work or old. A church was enclosed in the same span of the walls which now the common person incorrectly calls Pallaram instead of Palladium, San Andrea de Pallara, a small but ornate church in which the Pope John, the eighth who had this name, is buried. A vineyard covers the remaining parts of the Palladium, encircled by a high wall, the bounty of the most noble man Dominicus Capranicensis, the sign of the sacred cross, the cardinal guardian of the sacred Roman church, whom prudence and the height of counsel rendered most decorated with letters, hardly less than his cardinal dignity gives him fame. This word Palladium bears some explication. When Jupiter saw that his wife Juno was sterile, he hit his own head and Pallas emerged, already armed. From this Lucan says in his ninth book: "Even Pallas loved her, who was born from her father's head." And Ovid in the third book of his *Fasti*: "Did she break forth with her own shield because she was born from the top of her father's head without a mother?" Cicero said in the third book of *De Natura Deorum* that she was the inventor and first lady of war. On account of this, she is called Bellona by some, the sister and charioteer of Mars, Statius saying this: Bloody Bellona rules the black reins with her hand and spurs the horses with a long spike." For, fierce in her stare and decorated in her weapons, she is said by the poets to carry a long spear with a crystalline shield and to wear an embroidered peplos. She is also described as a virgin and unmarried, as Virgil says in the second book of the *Aeneid*: "Part were astonished at the deathly gift of unmarried Minerva." But when Pallas the giant son of Titan, closest to the gods, and, as Cicero wants, her father, tried to inflict his strength on this virgin Pallas, she annihilated him. She is called Pallas after this giant, as some assert. For she was first called Tritonia because she was first seen around the lake of Triton. Others however prefer to think that the name Pallas is from the Greek "Bibro", which can be translated "vibro" [brandish] in the Latin tongue; from this it is said that she is accustomed and skilled to brandish a spear. There is also her cognomen Minerva, as if she warns [mineo] her strength, as Balbus has interpreted Cicero in the second book of *De Natura Deorum*. As certain people suppose she is called this because she is diminishing strength ["minuens nervos"] because she weakens the strong bodies of those who some work with their best arts. For she is also known as the goddess of wisdom and the inventor of all arts. Servius is a witness of this, in his commentary on the second eclogue: "She was born from the head of Jupiter." And Ovid supposes in the third book of his *Fasti* that makers of wool, fullers, weavers and other craftsmen made sacrifices to her with these prayers: "Look to her, you who bring

sacrifice from your torn robes, Look to her, whoever prepares copper tools for wool.” In the same book without title: “Take craftsmen into your arms, Minerva.” Virgil in his third eclogue: “The arts that Pallas herself founded.” Her temple at Miletus, according to Herodotus in the first book of his histories, was particularly worthy of admiration, but it was said to have been burned by Alyattes. Among them Pallas was called Assisia. The Palladium was named after Pallas because there was an old wooden statue of Pallas in Troy which moved its eyes and spear, as Servius says in his commentary to the second book of the Aeneid. For there was a citadel dedicated to Pallas and when a citadel was built on top of it, the statue fell from the sky and stood itself in that location in the temple, not yet covered in bronze. Soon an oracle was given by Apollo that the civilization would be destroyed if that statue were ever carried through the walls.” And Ovid most eloquently pursues this in the sixth book of his *Fasti*: “At that point in the Trojan war when Ulysses and Diomedes penetrated into the citadel through tunnels, after they cut down its guardians, they stole the statue.” After this, as Servius attests, when Diomedes was warned in an oracle, he wanted to return it to the Trojans, and tried to offer it to Aeneas, when he was travelling to Italy, and when he found him giving sacrifice with his head covered, lest he ruin the order of ceremony, certain sailors accepted this “Palladium”. Because the Julian line is not sacred to Minerva, but that of those sailors. Virgil says in his fifth book: “The one man whom Tritonia Pallas taught.” Servius the commentator says that certain people have written that the Palladium was discovered in by the Trojans in the time of the war against the Mithridates and that it was brought to Rome by Gallus Fimbria because he was advised to watch over such a thing by a special priest. From this Lucan writes: “The only one for whom it is right to see the Trojan Minerva.” The Palladium was in the Roman shrine of Vesta explains Pliny in his seventh book of his *Natural History*, Pliny who when he narrated the great praise of Lucius Metellus, which demonstrated his own happiness, which no other man has touched since Rome was founded, put forth: “All these things are able to be refuted in one case, that Metellus spends his old age blind, because he lost his eyes in a fire, when the Palladium is stolen from the shrine of Vesta: miraculous, but a sad event nonetheless. Because of this he ought not to be called unlucky, but, all the same, he cannot be called lucky.” and further “The Roman people, because there was no other of such advanced age granted him the privilege of being carried to the in a chariot whenever he came to the senate. A great and exquisite gift, but in exchange for his eyes.” Juvenal observes this about the same Metellus in his third satire: Rome a witness as holy as the host of the spirit of Ida, let him step forward: either Numa or the man who cared for trembling Minerva in a burning shrine.” Scipio Nascia was the host of the spirit of Ida, the man whom Pliny in the seventh book of his *Natural History* and his grandson in his *On Famous Men* write that when he was young, the senate and the people praised in their judgement as the best of all Roman men, because he brought an Itean mother coming from Pessinus not only into the city but to the Pallatium all the way from the sea. Ovid explains in the second book of the

Metamorphoses that Numa, who, Livy writes in the first book of *Ab Urbe Condita*, was the second Roman king, the son of Pompilius born from the Sabine Cures, is most famous in his own time for his justice and piety: “Fame destined Numa for power, renowned for his pronouncement of the truth.” Metellus is the third whom Juvenal says saved the Palladium from the fire, about which he says again in his satire *Credo Pudicitia*: “Tell your grandchildren about Lepidus or blind Metellus who was blinded when he saved the Palladium from the burning shrine of Vesta.” The Palladium, after this, was placed in the most famous location of the palatine, the ruins of which, as I said, are possessed in our time by the Capranicensis family. But, so that we can return from where we digressed above, although the change is great and miraculous which Rome made on the Palatine, Aventine and Capitoline hills, nevertheless ancients made as many changes around the virtue and character of men as around public and private governance, changes that we will omit because they are not of our age or this project. The most similar thing to the sparseness in the hills is the exceeding solitude of those working in single parts of Rome. Juvenal offers the opposite of this phenomenon in these verses about the Rome of his time: “He who would offer marbles rushes forward, he pays great prices, one man for blank and shining signs, another for something famous of Eufrantor or Polykleitos, these ancient ornaments of our Eastern ancestors.” And further “There was the source of sickness: crossings by curved art of the cart paths and the noise of the standing mules would rip sleep from Drusus and from the seals.” And further: “The tunics, just mended are ripped. The tall fir tree ripples as the cart comes and the other wagons carry a pine, they tipped from on high and threaten the people. For if the axle that carries the Ligurian stone leans down and pours it overturned above the crowded group, what survives from the bodies? Who finds limbs, who finds bones? Each peasant’s body would be crushed and lost.”

77. Quid Caelius mons habuerit et nunc habeat: Livy wrote this about the Caelian hill in his first book: “The Caelian hill was added to the city and Tullius took the seat of his kingdom and lived there, where it was more densely populated.” And further: “He built the Curia which is called the Hostilia in the age of our fathers.” And still further “The people of Alba Longa settled that hill.” Suetonius wrote that the emperor Vespasian built the temple of divine Claudius on the Caelian hill, and Julius Capitolinus wrote in the history of the tyrant Tetricus: “The House of Tetrici was on the Caelian hill, opposite Lisius Metellinus.” The *Officia* of Marcus Cicero have this in their third book where he examines defects being disclosed in the sale of goods or not. “When augurs were going to conduct and augury in the citadel, and they ordered Titus Claudius Centimanus who had buildings on the Caelian hill, to demolish them because their height blocked the auspices, Calphurnius Lanarius bought them.” There were also shrines, altars and temples on this hill to Faunus, Venus, Cupid, and other gods. The description of the city which we attribute to Sextus Rufus, places many public buildings on this mountain: A great market, brothels, a cave of the Cyclops, five cohorts of the vigil, travellers camps, the Spoliarium and the Armory. We will say what we have discovered about these in following sections.

78. De ecclesiis quas nunc habet Caelius mons:

79. De forma Antoniana:

80. Hadrianus primus papa Claudiam formam:

81. Hospitale Sancti Salvatoris:

82. Ecclesia Sanctorum Quatuor Coronatorum:

83. Hospitale magnum Lateranense:

84. De ecclesia Lateranensi: We have come to the Lateran church of the chief of the Apostles, the most famous in all the world for its holiness, and the structure of its most holy shrines. The building which was given by Constantine to Sanct Sylvester the Pope, is called the Basilica of Constantine. It is also called the Lateran Basilica, because this area is said to have been the location of the palaces of the most noble family of the Lateran. Julius Capitolinus says of Marcus Antoninus Aurelius: "He was educated in the location in which he was born, in the house of his grandmother next to the shrine of Lateran." And saint Hieronymus says of Marcella: "Who would believe that a woman would give penitence in the houses of Lateran who was cut down publically by the sword of Nero. We believe that he was the person about which Tacitus wrote these words: "Death was deferred for Suelius Caesoninus and Plancius Lateranus." and a little further: "Nero added the next slaughter of Plancius Lateranus a consul designate so quickly that he was not allowed to embrace his sons, not even the brief right of delay." Since this is the primary seat of the Roman Popes, it was once inhabited by most of them. Recently the palaces, worthy of the principate around which the basilica was built, have for the most part fallen into disrepair, since they have suffered from lack of habitation for some small amount of time.

85. Eugenius quartus palatium Lateranense instaurat: But you, father Eugenius, have proceeded to perfect restorations, first the gateway of the court, then the other parts around it, at great cost.

86. Idem monasterium exaedificat sumptuosissimum: You added a monastery of great and, in our age, even excessive work, the foundations of which, when they were dug out high in the vineyards, they revealed how much magnificence was there once, when by eight and ten feet under the vines and dug up earth in the garden appeared gates, rooms, pavement and columns of diverse colors lying there, mosaiced tablets of marble, statues of ingenious craft and other things which, after being excavated, not only surpassed the buildings in our age, but in many generations before in all the cities of Italy.

87. Amphitheatrum Statili Tauri:

88. Ecclesia Sanctae Crucis:

89. Cartusienses:

90. Quid in Exquiliis fuerit sitque ad praesens: We will then investigate the buildings of the Esquilines. We put forth that the Esquillines are two hills using Varro. There is nevertheless a more famous part which beginning from the forum of Trajan and the towers which we now call

Comitus and Militia, stretches through the hill, the name of which is now Caballo, to the baths of Diocletian and stops at the gate once called the Esquiline now called the Sancti Laurentii or Taurina. From the baths of Diocletian continues the other part of the Esquilines, through the hill which now has the most famous basilica, Santa Maria Maggiore, and stretches through boundaries of the churches of Saint Anthony, Saint Praxedris, Saint Vitus in the Market, and Saint Eusebius, toward the memorials of Gaius Marius where it hits all the way up to the via Lavicana, which splits the Caelian hill from the Esquilines, beginning from the amphitheater or, as it is now called, the Colloseo, and continuing toward the churches of the four Martyrs, Clement, Peter, Marcellinus, before it hits the gate once called the Naevia, now called the Major. Nevertheless the hill which following this road, leads from here towards the Four Martyrs and Clement, there toward the chains of Saint Peter and Martin in the Hills, up to the memorial of Gaius Marius, is counted as part of the Esquilines, but has its own name: the Carinae. It has been set, according to custom, that I explain in the following sections what buildings, either old or new, the Esquilines have. But, because we do not hesitate to say that there would be some who look for another designation besides that of our authority on the name Esquiline, we have presented the two hills that remain in the entire city. Certain description of these reveals a more certain Esquiline. We see in Varro and in Livy that the Capitoline, Aventine, Palatine, Caelian and the Gianicolo are included in part in the first city, partially by the kings. Livy writes in his first book that the king Servius, when he had the will for growing the city, added two hills, the Quirinal and the Viminal, then he added the Esquiline and there, as it was worthy to inhabit, he surrounded the city with a mound, trenches, and a wall.

91. Quirinialis et Viminalis colles quid habuerint aut nunc habeant: Since I have already explained enough about Quirinal above, that it is the one which stretches from the porta Flumentana, now called Populi to the porta Collina now called Salaria, it is necessary that the Viminal which was added to the city at the same time, was connected with it. Thus the hill which behind Saint Suzanna, stretches along gardens of Sallust was the Viminal and the name viminal was given to the gate at which it stops, called sometimes Domina, sometimes Saint Agnes sometimes Numentina. Let also follow and be necessary that after Servius, once the Quirinal and Viminal were added, also built up the Esquiline, he chose to split the hill which lay between them toward the Caelian and there were able to be no more than two Esquilines.

92. Quid Suburra: Lying between the split Esquilines a small hill, where the Monastery of Saint Lorenzo in Panisperna can be seen, is called the Subbura.

93. Montes quae secerni non possunt: It does not escape me that the hills describe above are at points so intermingled that it is not possible for a division to be perceived or understood between them even by someone looking closely. Because of this I want those who are more experienced to consider with me that there are reasons for the continuity of the hills that make the city of Rome a marvelous and amazing place, beyond the trust of those who ignore such reasons. Firstly

because we said the Quirinal hill once stretched to the Porta Flumentana or Flaminia, which we now all Populi, I have one small correction: we confess that the hill which the Quirites called the Quirinal was added by Tarquinius Priscus, about who Pliny begins to speak in third book.

94. Quid agger Tarquini: “Rome is closed on the east by the rampart of Tarquinius Superbus, miraculous among the first structures. For he leveled it with the walls where there lay a large flat approach.” There is also that hill which, jutting over the monastery now called Santa Maria in Populo, we see stretches all the way to the foundations of the Pincian palace. As the rampart is added with miraculous and exceeding craft to the cliff of the Quirinal which is top on one of all the hills of the city, so the valleys and lakes by which others carved out hills, are have been made level by fallen arches. And what is more the largest arches have been built over these same rivers and dug out places, weighted down stillmore by even larger ones built later, and the “urbs pensilis” (hanging city) was built on these guts of the hills, hollowed and dug out.

95. Urbs pensilis: This is a passage from the second book of Livy’s *Ab Urbe Condita*: “Tarquinius building the forums in a circle and making a sewer which, known as the *Cloaca Maxima*, was a receptacle for all the was of the city under the earth--new magnificence has hardly been able to equal these works at all.” And Pliny from his thirty sixth book: “besides the sewers, this is greatest work to speak of, with the hills hollowed out and, as I mentioned previously, the hanging city and the path underground. Marcus Agrippa made this in his aedileship after his consulate: the torrent with seven rivers, led together, takes everything and then carries it away, brought together in a headlong rush.”

96. Quae in Exquiliis, Quirinali, Viminali, Carinis, et Suburra fuerint sintque nunc: But now we will describe the old and new buildings of the Esquiline Quirinal and Viminal hills as well as the smaller mounds of the Carinae and the Suburra, trusting that we will place before your eyes the knowledge, obscure to many as it was was to us, of locations that were once famous. We will now omit that part of the Esquilines which begins toward the towers Comitatus and Militaris and will reserve that description for the forum of Trajan, of which they are a part.

97. Corneliorum domus:

98. Statuae iacentes in montibus: On the road of the Corneliae to the left two huge colossus statues of old half naked men can be seen which, remain with the rest of the body, above ground as a chest, and a head, and they recline one of their arms, and in the other they are outfitted with a horn of plenty. Apollodorus, who described Rome before year one hundred affirms that these statues are of Saturn and Bacchus and adds that the temples of these gods were in the nearby ruins, of which the the frontispitium is not entirely lost.

99. Caballi Praxetilis et Phidiae:

100. Horti Maecenatiani:

101. Habitavit Virgilius in Exquiliis:

102. Malae Fortunae fanum. Vicus Sceleratus:

103. Qui ex Romanis boni coloni fuerunt: Before Rome had the luxury which the emperors brought to the world, the Esquiline was decorated with rustic men tilling the earth honorably and with much praise in their time. For Livy when he said in his eighteenth book: “to till the field badly was judged fit for punishment, and as Cato reports, they thought it great praise when they called someone a good man and a farmer,” added later: “The rustic tribes of those who live in the field are most worthy of praise.” There were only four from the parts of the city in which they lived called the Suburra, the Palatine, the Collina, the Esquiline. That which the triumphal men or the emperors chose to build unheard of structures upon, the ruins of which we now admire, the peasants left behind and, moving into the fields and suburbs, they built another almost-Rome which would be outside the walls. We neglected to say this thing in our description of the gardens of Maecenas. When Horace in his odes tried to dissuade Maecenas from building such luxurious buildings, he gave these verses: “What about the fact that you, greedy man, rip up the closest boundaries of your fields and jump beyond the limits of your clients? They are kicked out, both man and wife, carrying their fatherly gods in their robes, as well as their dirty sons.”

104. De thermis Dioclitiani: How many sons, either born to a high station or plebeian and rustic, do we think that the Emperor Diocletian cast into the fields and suburbs so that he could build his baths on the Esquiline which neither victorious and violent barbarians, nor age, nor the immoral hands of those who take stones and marble into other more lowly building projects were able to destroy even over one thousand three hundred years after the decline of the Roman empire with the result that no miraculous building now exists, such that the four greater palaces of the princes anywhere in Italy cannot be equalled in any way in greatness and richness of its craft. We will still not know enough even if Trebellius Pollio thought rightly when in the history of the thirty tyrants, he wrote this about Piso: there were chariots of him with statues made of marble, where the baths of Diocletian were built later, which were just as eternal as a coronation.” In these baths of Diocletian there is now a church of Saint Ciriacus, almost destroyed which is now a Cardinal titulus, and was dedicated by the prince in the gates of the baths itself to Ciriacus in honor of the martyrs, allies of Christ. These martyrs were employed in building the baths. When Maxamian, called Caesar by Diocletian, saw the christians celebrate a festal day, Diocletian subjected them to an inquisition, and when they rejected the idols, he killed them. But to collect the things that must be said about baths into this book would be excessive, these things must be reserved for another volume.

Liber Secundus

1. **De thermis in genere:** I have discovered that there were twelve baths in the city: the baths of Agrippa, Nero, Vespasian, Domitian, Anoninus Pius, Alexander, Gordian, and the Severan baths, the baths of Diocletian, Marcus Aurelius, Constantine, and the Novatian baths. I will point out their locations as much as I am able once certain things about the theory behind this practice have been explained. First, they have taken this word “thermae” from the greek, which means hot. For this reason we see that places which are designated for bathing in hot water, or sweating, the room being made hot by by fire in a lower vault, are properly called “thermae” in Latin. Either during the sacred severity of custom that the era of the Republic had, or under the arrogance of the empire it is well known to everyone who thoroughly studies the history of the Romans that bathing in this way was a common, nearly daily, habit. From this even if a single man, or relatively rich citizen had one privately, nevertheless many public baths were set up in which they plebs washed as they wished. There exists a letter of Marcus Cicero in which he tells his wife Terentia that a basin must be be in the bath. There’s also another of these letters, this time to his brother Quintus, proconsul of Asia, in which he informs him about the baths in Arpina that he was overseeing construction of. Sergius Orata, while the Republic stood, was the first of anyone, as Valerius Maximus wrote in his sixth book, to begin to make “hanging baths” [*balnea pensilia*, baths that had an underground heating system]. After that, since the state was lead into the luxury of the emperors, they made nothing more popular than when they bathed, mixed in with the common mob. This is what Helius Spatianus is talking about when he says this about Hadrian: “He bathed publicly and more frequently and with everyone. A joke of his made in the bath at one of those times became famous: When, at some time he saw a veteran that he knew from the military scrubbing his back and the rest of his body on the wall, he asked why he was giving himself to the attentions of the marble, instead of a scrubber, and once the heard that this was because the veteran didn’t have any slaves, he furnished him with slaves and their expenses. But when, on another day, a group of old men also scrubbed themselves against the wall, with the hopes of receiving the same generosity from the emperor. He ordered them to brought to him, and then he told them to take turns scrubbing each other.” Julius Captiolinus wrote that Marcus Antoninus Aurelius, a philosopher mindful of his modesty, essentially corrected three vices which brought the declining morals of the Roman matrons back under control: he prohibited them to ride horses or carriages in the cities, and he removed the mixed baths. Capitolinus also wrote that Emperor Commodus washed seven times a day and ate there, and Pertinax, his successor, although he was more modest than many, nevertheless washed in the public baths on his birthday, with Commodus’ servants. Capitolinus also wrote that Gordian the younger was so desirous of

bathing that he washed four or five times a day during the summer, twice in the winter. Likewise he says that Gallienus the younger washed seven times a day in the summer and two or three times in the winter. He adds later: "When he went into the gardens that bore his name, all of his officials followed. The prefects would go and the masters of office would all have fears and wash themselves in baths with the prince. They even let in beautiful women and girls and ugly old women with them, and when he did this he said it was to make fun of them." The luxury of the emperors was taken to such a point that modesty and sobriety were no long preserved in anything. They went over the limit when it came to baths, as many citizens had done with gardens [translation needs refining, maybe it's more like "patricians made going overboard in building their gardens the norm, but the emperors passed even that level of excess when it came to their baths"]. Thus, under the name "Thermae", there are these extravagant buildings that many emperors built. Ammianus Marcellinus says this about them in book sixteen: baths built in the style of the provinces.

2. **In thermis balnea:** In these thermae there were baths for bathing, and those accessible on one floor to themselves, but also there were hanging ones which are easy to understand if one inspects the canals covered in soot through which water flows into the Baths of Diocletian. In the minds of the emperors the bath would unworthy of imperial expense if they left out this thing which Sergius Orata, a mere citizen devised. There were even wide chambers in these baths, surrounded by the richest colonnades and containing buildings in their courtyard, built with the most exquisite arches in which there were lines of massive marble columns of all colors. It is established some of these columns are seen lying there, some intact and some broken. We know that some others have been moved into the basilicas.
3. **Erant natatoria et nemora:**
4. **Thermis aliqui bene usi fuerint:** Despite this, I see that some emperors put the baths to good use, because, while the the Roman people, coming into these buildings, washed and played, while they watched those playing, in the meantime they melted the the cold of the winter and sooth the heat of the summer and make the entire city more calm. I will demonstrate, in a later section, that circuses theaters and amphitheaters were built by the emperors for this very reason.
5. **Thermarum amplitudo et usus a principio:** Helius Spartianus said a lot of important things about the baths in his life of the most famous emperor Alexander Severus. It is easier to understand here than in other books how great the size of the baths was and to what use they were put by the emperors. I want to insert these words of Spartianus, scattered throughout his book, here: "Alexander prohibited mixed baths in Rome, siince it was prohibited before Heliogabalus had allowed it. He imposed a very wise tax on the

gold beaters, glassblowers, the furriers, the locksmiths, the gold and silversmiths and all the other arts. From this tax he ordered that baths that he built and presented for public use...

6. **Quando thermae primum populi usibus deputatae:** He annexed the public forest for the baths and added oil to the lamps of the baths, since before they were not open before dawn, and were closed before the sun fell.” And below: “He restored the works of the old emperors and himself constructed new things upon them, the baths in his name, joined to those which were called Neronian. He made a forest for his baths from his private land which he had bought, tearing down the buildings. He finished the baths of Anoninus Caracalla, and ornamented it with added pools. He invented *opus Alexandrinum*, this is the use of two marbles, porphyry and Spartan, and even after he decorated his palace.” And another passage: “He frequently used baths with the people, his and those of his predecessors, mostly in the summer, turning back to the palace, still in his bathing suit.
7. **Alexandrinae thermae ubi fuerunt:**
8. **Agrippinae thermae ubi fuerint:**
9. **Antonianae thermae ubi fuerint:**
10. **Neronianae thermae ubi fuerint:**
11. **Titi Vespasiani thermae ubi fuerint:**
12. **Thermae Domitiani et alia eius opera:** I have certain and full knowledge of Domitian, whether about his baths or his other works. For Petrus the librarian said that Pope Sylvester built a church, which, afterwards was named after him, in the Baths of Domitian. Suetonius wrote that Domitian had naval battles with nearly opposing, in a place dug out and surrounded by buildings near the Tiber lake. And later: “the temple of the Flavian *gens* and the *metodium* and the *naumachia* [place for the naval battle] were built by the same man.” We have seen four large bricks extracted from the ruins which surround the church of Saint Silvester and the convent, now a famous monastery. Part of these had letters from a seal pressed into the cement before it dried. Some said *Domitiana major* some *Domitiana minor*. From these I make the conjecture that some project by Domitian, either the baths or the *naumachia* now must remain and can now be seen on all sides of Saint Silvester.
13. **Naumachia Domitiani ubi fuerit:** Since* the lakes have been dug up around and all the way up to the Tiber in which he held naval battles and *naumachia*, there exist definite traces, covered by vines, between the Via Flaminia and the Pincian hill, surviving all the way up to the monastery of Saint Silvester.
14. **Arcus Domitiani Triumphalis nunc dictus Triphali:** We have no doubt that that marble arch, which is now seen nearly intact, called *Triphali*, between the churches of Saint Silvester and Lawrence, touching the Via Flaminia, was put there in honor of Domitian.

On it it is possible to see them emperor, as Suetonius describes, tall, but here sitting and sleeping, dreaming that Minerva, whom he worshiped superstitiously, left from her temple and said that she could not protect him anymore, because she had been disarmed by Jupiter.

- 15. Palatium Sancti Laurentii in Lucina:** So it follows that the great arches and massive foundations above which the noble palace were built, in which John Picard from Gallia, the cardinal of Morini now lives, were among the things that Domitian built. Cardinal John of Roven renovated this palace twenty years ago at great expense. It was built on the aforementioned ruin's of Domitian's buildings by the English Cardinal in the 300th year after the millenium. Cardinal John from Morni, who I mentioned above has built it up and decorated with with such expense that the city of Rome has nothing more beautiful except the papal palace, the house of Saint Peter.
- 16. Thermae Severianae ubi:**
- 17. Thermae Gordianae ad Sanctum Eusebium:** Julius Capitolinus wrote a only things about the baths of Gordian, but they must be admired all the same. For when he said that the palace of the Gordians stood on the *via Praenestina*, he added that it had twenty columns, all monoliths and that there were baths there of the sort that nowhere had anywhere in the world then besides the city. Therefore since the *via Praenestina* is the one that lead to the Esquiline gate, now the gate of Saint Lawrence it follows and will make complete sense that this most splendid house and the baths of the Gordians were where now, past Saint Eusebius, many ruins of great size are seen.
- 18. Thermae Aurelianae ubi:**
- 19. Thermae Constaninianae:** We read that the tradition of Apollodorus that the baths of Constantine were on the Esquiline, where now the stone horses of Praxiteles and Phidias can be seen. Four marble statues of foot soldiers stand in the portico contiguous with those horses, the bases of which is inscribed the name Constantine. But you will find that no mention of the baths of Constantine has been made by the ancient authors besides Ammianus Marcellus who in his twenty seventh book, when he says many things about Lampadius the prefect of the city, wrote these words: "This prefect was attacked by frequent uprisings, the greatest of all of them was when the lowest of the *plebs* gathered together and burned his house near the baths of Constantine with thrown torches."
- 20. Novatiana thermae:** The baths that I said were finally called Novatian were recalled by Petrus Lateranensis, the librarian of the church(or the author was saint Hieronymus or Pope Damasus) in his life of Pope Pius who was the third Roman Pope after Saint Peter.
- 21. Ecclesia Sanctae Pudentianae a quo cuonstructa:** It is written that this Pope Pius, at the request of Saint Praxedris, dedicated a church in the baths of Novatius on the *vicus Patricii* in honor of his sister Santa Prudenziana. But in the history of the martyr Saint

Lawrence I read that the convent of San Lorenzo in Panisperna was built in the baths of Olympias.

- 22. Thermae Olympiadis:** and we see that these very same ruins which certainly are great and distinguished, wrap around the monastery of Saint Lawrence which I already mentioned as well Santa Pudenziana and the the palace, so that there was one rather than two baths; although in such miraculous mix of ruins which the city of Rome now has, it's not possible to tell where there were two or more buildings anyway. In this way, the crowd of all the other ruins remain that on the hill of the Suburra from the aforementioned church of Saint Lawrence to the road once called the *vicus patricii*, which leads to Santa Maria Maggiore, and there verges into the the flat part of the Suburra, and if the palaces of the emperor Decius are as Apollodorus described, the two baths of Olympias and Novatus are small! But there have already been more than enough things said about the baths. We must return to the Esquiline hills from where we left.
- 23. Trophaea C. Marii ubi et quid:**
- 24. Basilica Cai et Lucii a Caesare facta:**
- 25. Macellum ubi et quid:**
- 26. Arcus Sancti Viti:**
- 27. Quid fuerit in Viminali colle:** After the Esquiline has been left behind so that I can say what buildings the Viminal hill, I don't know anything certain besides that three of the most beautiful houses (palaces?) in the entire entire world were on that hill, as Pliny wrote in his seventeenth book: The first belonged to Marcus Crassus the orator. The next and even more amazing belonged to that Quintus Catulus who routed the Cymbri with Gaius marius, and afterward gilded the roof of the Capitoline and adorned it with Cymbrian spoils. A third most beautiful house belonged to Gaius Aquilius, a Roman knight whom a knowledge of civil law made famous. This was the man whom Marcus Cicero said in *De Officiis* invented the law about fraud and whose piece of extant legislature is most famous for the *Lex Aquilia*. The arches of the subterranean foundations of these outstanding houses can be seen covered in vines near Saint Susanna but not many remains of the upper stories from either these or other buildings survive in the vines.
- 28. Horti Sallustiani:** Whether the gardens of Sallust, the huge ruins of which are known by this name to the people, are on the Viminal or the Quirinal hills or in both, I cannot determine satisfactorily. The ruins of these gardens are great and stupendous. We see the remnants of its walls and arches that stretch from the gate once called the Viminal, now called Saint Agnes, into Collina, now Salaria, nearly to Santa Susanna.
- 29. Quid fuerit in Quirinali colle:** I already said what buildings once were and presently are on the Quirinal hill when I tried to demonstrate a certain location for the *porta Collina*.

Besides this Livy in the Macedonian War said that the shrine of Fortuna Primigenia was on the Quirinal hill, the shrine that Gnaeus Domitius the urban praetor dedicated as a prayer for victory in the first Punic war.

- 30. De Carinis, Suburra, Tabernola, Via Sacra:** Since the hills of Rome as well as the baths have been pointed out as much as I was able, I will try to set out the Carinae, the Suburra and the Taburnola, as well the Via Sacra, because Marcus Varro described them as the most famous places in the city. For when he says many things about the parts of the city in his *De Lingua Latina*, ancient things that had no less value than the things that now barely survive which were new and intact in the age of Varro himself, he wrote some things which it is elicited that in between the flats of the Esquiline and the Caelian hill where now the monastery of San Andrea where the slope from the Trophies of Marius intersects the *via Lavicana* leading towards the Lateran palace, stood the Tabernola, a region of the city called this, which part, entirely full of vines and thickets closest to old Merulana, has this name. Varro wants to the Carinae to begin from this location, part of the length of which would end near where the head of the Via Sacra begins.
- 31. Via Sacra ubi:** He said there that this road was called “*Sacra*” because augures brought sacred things were brought along it monthly from the *arx* for the augurs, And he added that only one part was known to the common people, which is for the one going from the forum to the first slope. I particularly see that it is placed here when Peter the Lateran Librarian, in the life of Felix the third the Roman Pope, he wrote that he built the church of San Cosma e Damiano on the via sacra in the temple of Romulus or the city of Rome. This is the first slope slope which leads from the Forum Romanum to the nearby portico of Cosma e Damiano and there to Santa Maria Nova through the Arch of Vespasian to the old cura in which augurs holding their seats proceeded to make their predictions.
- 32. Curia vetus ubi:** For in this part of the Carinae, where now we see the great gates standing near San Pietro in Vincoli among the wasteland of ruins across from the amphitheater, now called the Colosseum, was the Ancient Curia and even in that time it was called that in the documents of the notaries and by the the inhabitants,
- 33. Item Via Sacra ubi:** so it stands to reason that the Via Sacra was the one which lead those setting out from the Curia, following the amphitheater towards the northern region under through aforementioned arches of Titus Vespasian all the way to Saint Hadrian, and the nearby *arx* of the Capitoline.
- 34. In Carinis quid:** In the Carinae besides the ruins of the ancient curia and the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, which is now famous and beautiful, there are also the special churches of Saint Martino Ai Monti and Santa Lucia.
- 35. Ecclesia Sancti Petri:** Out of these three churches, what the origin of Saint Peter in Chains (San Pietro in Vincoli) is take from the following, as the *presbyter* Bede wrote:

Eudoxia who was the wife of Arcadius Superior, when at Hierosolyma she found the chains from which Peter the prince of the apostles, bound in prison by Herod, was saved, took them to Rome, and because she hated the pagan ritual of celebrating the sixth day of the calendar [sixth month??] in memory of the victory of Augustus over Antony and Cleopatra, she petitioned the Roman Pope, the senate, and the people to declare that the day of the sixth month which was called August for four hundred years, be celebrated in the memory of the liberation of Saint Peter and where that day gladdened the crowned people as games were played through the theaters, fora, and crossroads with the evisceration of sacrificial animals, a remission of all sinners, indulged by the high pontifex through the common bond of the blood and body of the lord, would feed at spiritual tables the souls of those penitent and sprinkled with ash in this church built for the purpose.

36. Ecclesia Sanctae Luciae:

37. Ecclesia Sancti Martini in Montibus:

38. Suburra ubi: West of what was in the Carinae, it is easy to see the Suburra. Varro affirms that the Suburra is called this because it is under the wall of the Carinae (sub muro). From this it will be clear that the road, full of people living on it, which stretches from Santa Lucia to San Adriano in the middle of which is a turret called the Suburra by the people, was the principal part of the Suburra. Its additions were introduced which I mentioned in the two hills of the Esquiline. The most certain evidence of my assertion is in the life of Pope Saint Gregory where Peter, the Lateran librarian, says that the Pope himself founded a church of the Goths which is in the Suburra and named after the virgin Agatha.

39. Ecclesia Sanctae Agathae in Suburra: We see that this church in on the hill which from the first part of the Esquiline, past the houses of the Corneli, which verges on the flat part of the Suburra. Saint Gregory recalled the dedication of this very church in his dialogue saying that when, going to conciliate, he celebrated the mass which was defiled by the king of the goths, a demon came out of the altar in the shape of a pig and as the people who had come for the service crowded around and looked, it fled and never reappeared [compar[a]vit, compare? definitely not compareo, which makes sense here]. For the parts of the city which, having defined and certain boundaries, are able to be depicted and explained more easily, I will try to approach another method of explanation for the remainder of this book. For because everything is so old and because there are infinite parts of such a large city, innumerable buildings that, because of their number, have been described by no one, even when they were intact, which we have read, we cannot hope to preserve a certain order or even consider their intention. Thus, in order to present these buildings, although single and spread sparsely, with a certain order,

comprehensively, I will encompass whatever is left by dividing it into four parts. Things reserved for religion and ceremony will be in the first part, in the second things for administrating the republic, in the third things that pertain to spectacles and games, in the fourth certain smaller things, partially to make clear the larger themes, and partially to complete my program. However, I don't want to speak about these parts in any way other than it is necessary in order to describe the single occurrences in the location in which they happened.

- 40. De his quae spectaverunt ad religionem in genere:** As for religion, the first altar was placed on the Aventine by Evander, dedicated to Hercules--this appears originally in Livy.
- 41. Ara quid:** Marcus Varro gives meaning to the term *ara* [altar] thus: "where the corn was cut so it could be threshed is called an *area*; because of the similarity to these, pure locations in the city are called *area*; from this altars of the gods are *ara*, because they are pure, unless they are called *ara* because of the *ardor* (flame) for which they are built."
- 42. Quid templum:** I say that the first temple was dedicated by Romulus where we see the church of the monks of the Ara Coeli. Marcus Varro, when he sets out many things about the vocabulary of the word temple, concludes that they are called that because of the *contemplation* that happens there.
- 43. Jovis Statoris templum:** A description of the other temple dedicated by Romulus, the temple of Jupiter Stator where all the spoils of the war against the Sabine's were brought, has many places worthy of notice. First, I don't doubt that it was in the foothills of the Palatine, facing east near the part of the Capitoline that is now inhabited where we see the high tops of walls still standing. I have also said that next to this location are the ruins of the ancient gates built by Romulus
- 44. Porta Palatii ubi:** Livy first said that the Palatine gate was closest to this temple, through which there is the easiest access to the Roman Forum. In this part of Livy it is explained that the Lacus Curtius, where the knight Curtius stood on the shore after he emerged from a deep swamp, was near the gate on the opposite side of the Forum where the tower called the Pallara by the common people is now. There certainly is a depression which lies between the lake itself and the temple of Faustina which is now the church of Saint Lawrence in Miranda, and the monuments of the emperor Nerva, which is now called *Archa Noe* [Noah's ark]. It is now called the *Palus* [Swamp]
- 45. Lacus Curtius:** But Varro has more information on the Lacus Curtius than Livy, and his words are reproduced here: "It's established the the lake in the forum is called Curtius after Curtius, but it has three separate histories. For Procilius does not publish the same one as Piso and neither does Cornelius. It is related by Procilius that the earth had split open in that location and the situation was brought to the seers by order of the Senate. The response of the gods was to fulfill the demand by the shades: that the strongest

citizen be sent to them under the earth. So Curtius, a strong man, mounted his horse in full armor and rode from the Temple of Concordia straight into the pit. After this, the ground closed up and buried his body, but it left a monument to his family. Piso writes in his *Annales*: “During the Sabine war between Romulus and Tadius, the strongest Sabine man Metius Curtius, when Romulus with his men made an attack from the high ground, retreated into the swamp which was in the forum before the sewers were built, and from there took his men back onto the Capitoline: the name comes from this lake.” Cornelius and Luctatius write that this place was stuck by lightning and was closed up by order of the Senate. Because this was done by a consul named Curtius, whose colleague was Marcus Megentius, the place is called the Lacus Curtius.”

46. De Jani templo:

47. Numisma Jani:

48. Latium ubi primo fuit: A verse of Ovid: “The reason for the ship remains: the lightning god arrived on a ship to the river Thuscus after he travelled the whole world. I remember that Saturn was received by this land; he was expelled from the heavenly kingdoms by Jupiter. There, for a long time, the nation bore the name Saturnia; The land was also called Latium because of the god *latent* there. Later generations represented a ship on their money, a testament to the arrival of the god. He took care of the land which was washed on its left side by the Tiber. Here, where Rome is now, an unspoiled forest flourished and was a great kingdom for the few cows.” And when Ovid gave his theory of the Gianicolo, which I quoted earlier, he came to the our temple of Janus about which we are concerned: “Since there are so many Jani [temples of Janus?], why do you stand sanctified in only this one, here where you have temples joined to the two fora?”

49. Boarium forum:

50. Piscarium forum:

51. De Velabri nominis ratione: Since mention has arisen of the church of Saint George which is a cardinal titulus of Columna, our Maecenas, I will explain that the use of this name is corrupted. It should not be called *In Velo Aureo* [at the Golden Cloth] but *In Velabro* [sail or awning]. For Marcus Varro, while explaining the reason for the word Aventine, says that he greatly suspects that the Aventine is called this because of transportation, that, because the hill was separated from the rest of the city by swamps, everyone was transported to it by ships. The evidence of this is the fact that this part is called *Velabrum* from this action of conveying people with *velatura* [sails], from *vehendum* [conveying] as *merces* [price] is from *merendum* [appraising],

52. De clivo Capitolino:

53. Argiletum quid:

54. Ecclesia sancti Georgii:

55. Item de foro Boario:

56. Templum Vestae:

57. Asilum [Asylum?] ubi:

58. Pars rupis Tarpeiae corruit nuper: Ovid also in his third book clearly demonstrates that the *Asilum* was under the Tarpeian rock, the greatest part of which, equal in magnitude to a great house, collapsed in recent days and crushed five men in a hostel, just like Livy once wrote happened in his *Macedonian War* with a similar rock in a similar location, the *Via Lungara*. Ovid, when he said many things about shields, also wrote these verses: “Romulus, when he surrounded the grove with a high rock “Whoever you are, flee here and you will be safe.” *Therefore I say that the Asilum occupied the entire area from the fallen Tarpeian rock to the bridge of Santa Maria and from there to Vesta, the Temple of Janus into the roots of the Aventine, which we now see mostly inhabited by prostitutes so that now another Asilum seems to have been built for loose women, fugitives from their parents and their husbands.*

59. Templum Asili [Asyli?] quid: And so it’s not absurd that I seem to think that this ancient temple, which was built on four large rock and dedicated to *Santa Maria Aegyptiaca* near the area of the bridge of *Santa Maria*, was once the temple of *Asilus* [Asylum]. But it would be too hard to describe all the temples, and it isn’t helpful, since there will many occasions for their descriptions in their respective locations.

60. Curia Vetus ad quid:

61. De his quae spectaverunt ad rem publicam in genere: I will reveal one aspect of what’s going to be said about their affairs of state: that I do not intend to give an account of their politics, but a description of the places in which their government were conducted, even in part, by our ancestors. The first place seems to have been the *Asilum*. There, Livy in his first book says: “Romulus instituted 100 senators, either because this number was enough or because there were only 100 people able to be made into senators. They were called “Fathers” and “Patricians” because of honor paid to them by their offspring”. Varro explains that the first location, which was assigned to the one hundred Fathers, was connected to many other places, which I think must also be pointed out.

62. De Rostris, Comitio, Graecostasi et Senaculo in genere: When Varro says that the king Tullius Hostilius built the *Curia hostilia* he follows with: “Before the *Rostra*, on it’s right, the location of the *Comitium* was built, where the emissaries from the different peoples were sent so that they could be before the senate. Here the *Graecostasis* owes its name, as it is part of the whole. The *senaculum* is above the *Graecostasis* where the *Aedes Concordia* and the *Basilica Opima* are. The place where the Senate or Senior members of the government stand is called the *Senaculum*.” The four places which were always in

greatest use when it came to the administration of the Republic, are the Rostra, the Comitium, the Graecostasis and the Senaculum. I will follow Varro's order.

63. Rostra quid et ubi:

64. Graecostasis ubi:

65. Senaculum ubi:

66. Aedes Concordiae ubi:

67. Comitium ubi fuit: The fact that the Comitium was to have been in the Forum Romanum between the tower which is called Pallara and the location of the Lacus Curtius, and the foothills of the Palatine, which we see looming over the Forum, and the monument to Faustina or the church of San Lorenzo in Miranda, this would be easy to figure out from the things said above. Concerning this subject, before I can say what it was, with the prick of pain spurring me on, I want this to be known to the men of our time and future generations: it is *pigs* now that we often see being sold there, and in no other location, because of a public decree. This place, since it had no buildings for many generations, was first built up in that year after Hannibal came to Italy, as Livy writes in the seventh book of *The Punic War*. Suetonius is the author who says that it was restored by Gaius Caesar.

68. Ad quid Comitium institutum: The word comitium explains both a place and a communal activity, as Aulus Gellius explains in his *Attic Nights*. Enough has been said about the location but I will say a bit more about the act. In two locations, the forum as I said above, and the Campus Martius, all the generals, consuls, praetors or other magistrates were selected. There were three methods by which this selection was conducted, concerning which the sixteenth book of Aulus Gellius says this: "This is written in the book of Julius¹⁴⁶ Felix: "When suffrage come from the races of men, there are curiate assemblies, when from age and census, centuriate, when from regions and locations, tribunal"" Then we see in the second book of Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*, in the struggle that the senators had each year with the people they were not able to avoid Volero being made a tribune by the plebs that a formal request had to be made to the people in order for magistrates of the plebs to be elected publically. Through this method of the tribunal elections from all those coming from the regions and locations for suffrage of whatever age and condition, a multitude of the plebs are established with voting rights where in centuriate assemblies which come together for one day the senators go among their clients and the plebeians and ask who they want to vote for. Therefore besides the severity of the Senate's deliberation, I see nothing that the Romans made that is equal to the institution of having elections [*comitia*]. Elections, the true and solid pillars of freedom and the republic have so much power that the loss of liberty is

¹⁴⁶ The correct book of Gellius is 15 and the text there reads Laelius Felicis

proportional to the loss of elections. Gaius Caesar having been assumed into perpetual dictatorship with stolen goods and fractious means, did not dare to offer an election to everyone. As Suetonius wrote: “these things occurred with the people, so that, except for the competitors for the consulate, half would be announced as the people wanted, and half would be as he had given.” From this I infer the thing that many people have discussed before me: those who have decided to seek public office were accustomed to obtain the power of running from the Senate or the people and when the day of the election arrived the candidates come forward and each make their case for seeking office so each can have a reason for their worthiness.

69. Comitia etiam in campo Martio solita haberi:

70. Locus proprius campi Martii pro comitiis:

71. De monte Citatorum:

72. Campus Martius quid:

73. Aqua Virginea:

74. De Mausoleo Augusti: For in that part, which because it was lower, they called the Valley of Mars, where Caesar built a *naumachia*, Octavian Augustus later built a mausoleum which was a burial place not only for himself but for all other emperors. Suetonius says this about it: “They buried his remains in the mausoleum. He had built this tomb between the *via Flaminia* and the bank of the Tiber in his sixth consulship.” Suetonius neglected to describe its beauty and craftsmanship because he thought that it would be eternal. But Cassiodorus, the last of those who wrote about Ancient Rome while it still stood, wrote things about the mausoleum that I don’t think can be admitted for in any way, because now the only arch, remains standing on the foundations in a low valley, which is commonly called “Augusta.” It’s so covered by plants that it never lacks for animals, abandoned by their masters, that graze on it. These are the words of Cassiodorus: “But Augustus the master of the the world expanded into the Valley of Mars, rising his work up under his own power, erecting a building that was much admired by the Romans--the immense mound, fortified, was contained by the hills, where the evidence of this great wealth was closed up. They built twelve gates, one for each sign of the zodiac.” Cassiodorus also added other things which I will explain in describing the locations of spectacles.

75. De obeliscis Campi Martii duobus:

76. De columna coclide Antonini:

77. Italos ad Comitua Romam venisse plurimos:

78. De insula quam in urbe facit Tyberis:

79. Gelasius II papa ecclesiam Sancti Bartholomaei in insula:

80. Pons insulae:

81. Eugenius IV pontem Valentiniani stravit lapide tiburtino:

82. De aerario ubi:

83. Aerarium ad quid:

84. Primi aris thusi nota: Ianus bifrons:

85. Primi argenti signati nota:

86. Argentum Romani non aurum in tributis imperaverunt:

87. Iudiciorum loca:

88. Castra Ravennatium, Misenatium, Peregrina: From here Ravennatium about which we spoke on the Gianicolo and Misenatium and the camps of the Peregrine soldiers on the Caelian hill were instituted by Augustus. Tiberius began the one thing most dangerous to liberty and even the empire: as Suetonius wrote “he established camps in Rome in which praetorian camps were contained that had wandered before this and were dispersed through houses.

89. Castra praetoria ubi et ad quid:

90. Aedes castrorum:

91. De portu Romano:

92. De pontibus in genere:

93. De arcubus in genere:

94. De aquaeductibus in genere:

95. Aqua Martia:

96. Aqua Virginea:

97. Aqua Claudia:

98. De causis ruinae aquaeductorum: This quote from Frontinus also mentions this, and I insert it here: “The highest arches were raised to one hundred feet in some places. You could compare the number of structures necessary for so many aqueducts to the pyramids, or any other useless relic of the Greeks, which nevertheless was celebrated with fame.” I see two causes offered by the common people for such a massive fall on the part of the city of Rome in the case of the collapse of the aqueducts through the destruction of their structures, these being old age and the the cruelty of the Goths. When I free them from their unjust reputation, undeserved, and brought against them as a false charge, the theory of old age, which supposedly destroyed the aqueducts, will also be freed of its enmity.

99. Gothos non diruisse aquaeductus: When it comes to the Goths, I said it before and I’ll say it again-- Theodoric, who was the first king of the race of ostrogoths and subdued Rome 42 years before our lord, took care of the city of Rome with highest honors. He restored its walls, theaters, amphitheaters, palaces, baths, sewers and especially the structure of the aqueducts. He took care to take the thorns from the trees and renew things

in each part so that throughout the seventy years in which the Ostrogoths ruled over the kingdom of Rome and over Italy, it was never necessary to long for the love of Roman institutions that possessed Octavian Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, or Alexander Severus. Because I don't doubt that this will be unbelievable to many of the ignorant, I will confirm this with a single piece of evidence on the aqueducts. The one who will bring this testimony is not only incredibly learned, but also a Christian, with a life worthy of praise, first he was a Roman senator and then he was a monk:

Cassiodorus. "A certain man had come to Rome from Africa, and he was experienced in irrigation, bringing water to the city. Once he was made more certain about this man's arrival from the city, King Theodoric sent these letters from Ravenna to Rome and the other provinces."

100. De aquilego inveniendis aquis deputato: "I discovered by a report of your magnitude that a conduit master has come from the African lands, where that art is always attended to with great enthusiasm in places of thirst, a man who might be able to bring fertile water to dry locations so that with his talent he can make these dessicated areas into places fit to live in, full of water. Consider that this will be a favor to me, that this admirable practice explained in the books of our ancients might come to our time. The prospective conduit master discovers water using many signs, like flourishing plants and tall trees. In such land, sweet water is not far off, the fullness of the shoots always smiles so that there is water rush, the soft withe, the stout blackberry, the light willow, a veritable city of green and all the kinds of trees which luxuriate in happy prosperity throughout the moist earth. These and other things are the evidence of this art: when, with night coming, dry wool is placed on the ground. If water is near, then its moisture is discovered in the morning. Once the sun has risen, experienced masters examine the places and where they see an increase in the consistency of even the smallest amount of moss, then it is certain that the thing they seek will easily be found. They also produce a thin column of a certain type of smoke which extends as high in the sky as they think that hidden source of water is deep; so that it's remarkable, because through these and other diverse signs, they predict the definite measure, how deep they demonstrate the sought after water to be. They also predict the flavor of water so that he doesn't seek the bitter kind with prejudicial labor or ignore the sweet kind undeservedly. Following this science, the Greeks passed it down beautifully, among the Romans Marcellus does as well, who drags the waters not only from underground streams but from moved from the very mouth itself. They say that waters which burst forth to the southeast, are found to be sweet, clear and because of their lightness the most healthy. The ones that flow in the northwest are esteemed as being too cold and unhealthy because of its heavy sediment. And therefore, if your knowledge see by this account that it is skilled in both reading of

codices and real practice of the things that I spoke of, then you will have your need met and receive a post abroad paid for by public annuity and payment from those who will benefit from your art. For although the Roman city is abundant with channels supplied with water and, rejoicing in its fountains and the happiest inundation of structures, most of the suburbs have been discovered to lack this, and of course value is recognized in the man who is considered necessary to an individual part. This man is to join by machines so that the waves which he searches for, grow light for him and are made to flow by art, since they aren't able to flow upward in nature. Therefore this man would be considered among the masters of the remains of this art and it will be thought that there's nothing desirable that the Roman city is not able to obtain under my power." I think I have explained enough that the Goths did not destroy the aqueducts but took great care to restore them and even build new ones.

101. *Vetustatem non fuisse omnino causam ruinae aquaeductorum:* I don't think that age was the cause of such a bad thing, because in the just short of 1000s, as many as passed since the destruction of the Goths, it could not have fallen or vanished so much as solid structures the parts of which we now see intact that were far removed from the profit of the multitude. Therefore the only hands that must be accused and renounced are those shameless hands that belong to those who, in order to build private and certainly ugly structures, did not fear to take stones either to be cooked down into lime or taken into the walls of their homes from the majesty of the walls. So that I defer in some small part to time, I will say that it destroyed the forms of the aqueducts only in so much as, while Rome was growing old in all parts of its governance, care for its service structures also ceased. Frontinus also had these words about the care that was once brought to the aqueducts: "I find that a watch was accustomed to be assigned to each fountain and a certain number was placed as a necessity around each of the ducts outside the walls, it was decided that craftsmen were to be had from the city and indeed so much so that the names of those who were going to be given this position, were distributed through each of the region on signs. Great care was taken in testing these engineers throughout the *censors* at one point and then the *aediles* while the province fell to the consuls as it appears from the thing which was done while Gaius Luctatio and Ceson were consuls. How much care there was that someone not violate the aqueducts and not dare to divert it, could become evident from many things, but this is one of those: the fact that the Circus Maximus did not have water even during the days of the games unless the *aediles* or the *censors* approved. We read in Athenius Capito that this practice endured even after the government passed into the hands of the emperors under Augustus. Even the fields that were irrigated with public water against the law were distributed to the public." And further: "For this reason the *aediles* were ordered to choose in each district two men who

either lived there, or had business there, at whose order the public water would leap forth. First Marcus Agrippa, after he performed this consular *aedileship*, was the seemingly perpetual curator of his own works and wealth who wrote down what should be given to the public waterworks, what to the lakes, and what to private use, at least while the treasury permitted. He also had his own establishment of the waterworks, which protected the ducts and the reservoirs and the lakes. Augustus made this service, left by him as a hereditary duty, a public office.” And further Frontinus says these words about the decision of the senate: “The senate decided that when those who are in charge of public water are outside the city for the sake of this office, two lictors, three public servants, architects and scribes and secretaries, bailiffs and secretaries were assigned, as many as were had to distribute the grain to the people.”

102. De locis spectaculorum in genere: Now that the two other categories outlined above have been fulfilled as much as I’ve been able, I proceed to the third: the places built for spectacles and games. Now is the time to describe the scene, the orchestra, amphitheaters, the arena and circus games.

103. Theatri origo:

104. Scena quit sit fueritve:

105. Orchestra quid:

106. De theatro temporario:

107. Theatra duo versatilia:

108. De theatro Pompei:

109. Atrium Pompei. Porticus Pompei

110. Theatri et scenae locus: But I contend that the location of the theater and the scene is closer to San. Lorenzo.

111. Ecclesiam Sancti Laurentii in Damaso: For in the life of Pope Damasus whether the man himself or Saint Hieronymus or Peter the librarian wrote them, these words are found: “He built the basilica for San. Lorenzo, the one which takes its name from its founder, next to the theater of Pompei.” The rooms of this church are inhabited by the cardinal Ludovicus who has decorated it at great expense. He is your chamberlain, Pope Eugene, famous for a double glory obtained first by your grace and second by your wealth, for Niccolo Piccinino, defeated and utterly wiped out at Anghiari and for Francesco Sforza repelled at Picenum.

112. Atrium Pompei ubi Satrum dicitur: I ought to believe that the atrium of Pompei, which they now corruptly call Satrum. And the portico is now seen semi-intact where the tallest columns, almost twelve, stand, hardly far removed from the Capitoline or the Tarpeian cliff. Where Pompei’s estate, which Marcus Antony lived in after he died, was I

am not able to guess. We are here entangled by many the layers of this subject all occurring at once.

113.Theatri usus quis fuerit: For if I want to explain theater satisfactorily, I should describe its parts and at the same time games and the spectacles in the giving of which the machines were invented. And indeed as much pertains to the scene, we see that it either existed at the same time with temporary theater or was equally instituted with Pompeian theater, at a certain time in the age of Cicero and before him it was held in use.

114.De spectaculorum origine:

115.De histrionibus:

116.De Roscio:

117.De Aesopo:

118.Scenae usus quis fuerit:

119.Pantomimi ad quid:

120.Tragoediae recitatio:

121.Comoediae recitatio:

122.Pantomimi in scaena actus

123.Mimi quid:

124.Scenae aedificii magna mutatio: However, a huge change was made not only in the works which they endeavored to produce but also in very building and decoration of the theater. First from the rustic hill vaulted with trees, the scene, as I said above, was built into a brick, or stone and marble structure. The luxury of those who came before us had progressed to such a point that the entire apparatus of the games was made of either gold or silver or ivory. Pliny in his third book: “and we have made things which our descendants will think belong to fairytales. It was Caesar, who, after he was dictator, in his *aedileship*, used a silver apparatus at his father’s funeral ceremonies, and then seems to have been the first to depict wild beasts in silver on his equipment, a practice that was soon copied, even in the surrounding towns. Gaius Antonius built a scene made of silver as well as Lucius Murena.” And Pliny also in his 19th book: “Catulus, when he was about to dedicate the Capitoline, made shade with linen cloth in the theater. And likewise Lentulus Spinter first brought two sails into the theater at the games for Apollo.” As I said above, Nero, as he was about to capture the kingdom Tiridas of the Armenians, built a gold facade for the theater of Pompeii. Horatius Flaccus wrote in a letter to Numatius how the pantomime is able to assume so many different shapes, which I mentioned above: when the pantomimes, about to prepare their theatrical spectacle, asked Lucullus for clothes in which they could impersonate the various ages and conditions of mankind, Horace says what follows in his poems: “Lucullus, as they said, when he was asked if he could supply one hundred *chlamydes* for the scene said “How can I provide so many? I

nevertheless will seek and give as many as I have.” A little bit later he wrote that he had five thousand *chlamydes* at home; he could supply them either in part or entirely.” Horatius in his *Ars Poetica* also demonstrates that there was also a change in the tone of the music along with the buildings and the wealth of the scenery: “The flute was not, as now, bound with orichalcum, a copy of the tuba, but thin and simple with a small lip. It was easy to blow and easy to bring among choruses and not slow to fill the dwellings with breath where a great number of the people, since they were few, good and chaste, would avidly come together. After the Victor decided to extend the fields and a broader wall surrounded the city and the spirits had to be pleased with daily wine and festal days without punishment, a great license was introduced into measures and melodies.” But enough about the theatre. Only ruins remain. I will move on to explain other things which have a part of their edifice intact.

Liber Tertius

1. Quid sit amphitheatrum:

2. De amphitheatro quod nunc Colosseum: But wherever other amphitheatres might be I don't doubt that Titus Vespasian either began and completed himself the construction the one which is now called the Colosseum or finished it after his father started work. For as we explained about many and most recently about Pompey, the Roman princes built all their monuments in one place. The temple of peace, now broken to pieces, also the work of Vespasian, then the most famous arch of Titus, his son, on which the candelabrum and other spoils of the Jews can be discerned, all lead in a triumph, we see all this near the Colosseum so that it can in no way be doubted that all the buildings either of the monastery of Santa Maria Nova or the great ruins near it verging on the Colosseum were part of the temple of peace and other buildings of Vespasian and Titus

3. Thermae Titi Vespasiani:

4. De templo Pacis

5. Colosseum fuisse harenam: It seems to us that from two theaters which Cassiodorus asserts were joined in the amphitheater the part on which the Colossus stands was called the "arena." Similar buildings which exist intact, one in Verona, the other Pola of the Illyrians, are called "arenas." The other and greater part, named with the more certain word "amphitheater" has collapsed because of time and its own weight, along with the best years of the Empire. I want to offer certain testimony of this. While Theodoric the goth ruled Rome, and as I recently said, nurtured it like his own child, the Senate and the people of Rome, desiring to restore the walls which the Visigoths destroyed in part but also had collapsed because of age asked for the stones of the amphitheater for their restoration. The king responded in this way:

6. Epistola per quam saxa amphitheatri conceduntur: "Loyalty, which precedes good rule, is welcome and I am grateful for it, and if anything is asked for which I am able to grant, it will be accepted. It is nothing short of happiness for a ruler when those that serve him desire the thing which is useful since it saves of the trouble of thinking when subjects arrange for their own future. Such was the tenor of your suggestion. You undertook exactly this kind of care in fortifying your walls, and so I deem it worthy to give you absolute authority over this matter. I will not worry at all about this, and you should soon expect the reward of my thanks. The fortification of your city strengthens me as well and anything that suddenly befalls you speaks volumes about my own defenses. Therefore I give you the license over the stones, which you have supplied from the amphitheater, fallen a long time ago and which serve no ornamentation to the public besides the presentation of unsightly ruins, provided that you put them to public use so that what once could be of no use, lying there, can surge in the shape of the walls. So continue confidently whatever caution requires for fortification and whatever ornament requires for

beauty, knowing that there will be as much gratitude from me as your own city bestows upon you.”

7. Amphitheatrum Titus ubi fuerit: I contend and confirm that there was a part of the amphitheater, oblong and now demolished between the destroyed part of the arena which now exists and the arch of Constantine and the huge ruins which rise near the first foothills of the Caelian--I assert that these ruins were the foundations of the Curia Hostilia. It would surprise no one that no foundation no ruin of this amphitheater can be seen now, which Cassiodorus called an ellipse, because the Roman people was allowed by Theodoric to take every stone from the foundation up for the restoration of the walls. We so many examples of this every day that, for this reason alone, the buildings of ancient Rome despise us. In many locations I now see vines where I once saw the highest buildings their blocks of square tiburtine stone cooked into lime.

8. Quae munera ederentur in amphitheatro: In the ellipse of the amphitheater, adultery, incests, and the rest, the incitements to luxury and effeminate games were displayed but here are the greatest examples of cruelty: Desirous men were thrown to their deaths, set to do battle with wild beasts. I will explain with an example from Cassiodorus: Theodoric, the king, when he was in Ravenna, once he granted the Senate and the People of Rome everything that was instituted during the Republic and the time of the Empire, he also allowed them to hold fights in the amphitheater, in accustomed manner, with wild beasts.

9. Epistola ostendens amphitheatri crudelitates: I insert this letter because it contains that spectacle and all things which I listed above: “If the man who fights relying the uncertain flexibility of his body, provokes the good will of the consuls, if the chance of reward is given to those singing on the organ, if a delectable song becomes precious, what service does the fighter fulfill, who works himself to death for the pleasure of the audience. He is in charge of pleasure by authority of his blood and bound by his unlucky fate hastens to please the populus who do not want him to escape. It is a detestable act to fight this unlucky contest with animals, who will certainly prove themselves to be the stronger ones. There is a single presumption in lying, a unique solace in deception. If Anyone should not be good enough to flee the beast, he would at the same time not be able to be buried, The body is destroyed while the man still lives and before it is treated harshly as a corpse, it is summarily devoured. The captured one turned into food for his enemy and, oh the horror, sates the one whom he hastened to kill. This spectacle, famous for its trappings, but foul for the action they represent is restored in honor of Scythian Diana, who rejoices in the flow of blood. O error of sad deception that they desire to honor her who is pleased by the death of men. Offerings of the rural people are given to her through the groves and woods for hunting fashion a triple goddess with false imagination, presenting them as the moon in the sky, Diana in the woods, and Proserpina below the earth. Perhaps they have only recklessly considered her to be the mistress of Erebus, because deceived by such lies they have wandered into the darkest depths of Erebus with their errors. The Athenians first brought this

cruel game, this bloody pleasure, this impious religion, this human practice, I say, next to animal ferocity, into the culture of our city so that our spectacles will be a source of derision, calling it divine justice, because they were discovered in the worship of a false religion. The power of the emperor Titus conceived to make this building with a great torrent of wealth from which Rome would be revealed as the capital of the world. And as it's correctly established that the theater which is called a *hemispherium* in Greek, is named an amphitheater since it's two stages joined into one. The arena defines its form so that there can be enough space given to those running about and so that those watching can see more easily since this kind of ellipse gathers everything together. For this reason we all rush towards such things that should make humanity flee. First, trusting in the fragile branch, man rushes towards the mouths of beasts and it seems that he seeks with great enthusiasm the thing which he desires to escape. Both the predator and the prey rush into an equal course and he cannot protect himself unless he rushes at the one he should want to avoid. Then as the body is lifted into the air in a leap the limbs of the body are thrown backwards as if they were the lightest cloth and the bodily arc is suspended above beasts while he tries to stop his descent, more beasts move below him. Thus it happens that the animal that is made fun of seems less cruel. Another trusting in his faculty to not fall in corners arranged in the distribution of four parts of the world flees but he falls without avoiding the one who chases him. He pursues the one chasing him, bringing him near so that he can avoid the mouths of bears. This man, suspended in a slender noose invites the deadly animal. Unless he endangers himself, there is no way he can hope to live. Another man, closes himself in a portable wall of reeds against the savage animal, taking the example of a hedgehog who fleeing suddenly backwards is hidden into itself, and since he never leaves it he doesn't seem so small. For as with someone coming against him, he has turned himself into a sphere and defended himself with natural points, this man, clad by a subtle device, is rendered safer by the fragility of the reeds. Others with three doors presume to provoke prepared savageness against themselves, hiding themselves in an open area with perforated partitions, now showing their face now showing their backs so that it would be miraculous that those you see fly through the teeth and tongues of lions. Another is offered to the beasts on a rolling wheel. Another is strung up on the same wheel so that he is removed from danger. Thus this machine nourishes them with hope in the quality of their faithless world, and pains the others with fear, and laughs at all nevertheless so that it's able to ensare them. It is a long task to wander through so many kinds of danger, but what Mantuanus said about the world below is appropriate to add here: "Who is able to understand the forms, who is able to go through the names of all the punishments?" But you, for whom it is necessary to exhibit such things to the people, pour money with generous hands so that you can give their misery its desired prize."

10. Mittebantur captivi ad pugnandum cum feris amphitheatri:

11. Ludi gladiatorii origo:

12. Gaius Caesar lege minuit numerum gladiatorum:
13. Naumachia in amphitheatro edita:
14. Harena ad quid:
15. Expensae heranae fiebant a patritiis collatis in capita nummis:
16. De circis:
17. De cico Neronis:
18. De Circo Maximo:
19. Quid fori erant:
20. Ad quid circus fuit institutus:
21. Unde dictus est circus:
22. De carcere loco et parte circi:
23. De ludis circi:
24. De ludo troiano:
25. In circo carceres aureati patribus constituti
26. Quid sit nunc circus Maximus:
27. Quid fuit prope circum Maximum:
28. De columna in quam ituri ad bella mittebant tela:
29. Templum Herculis quod nec muscae nec canes intrabant:
30. De circo Flaminio:
31. De pratis Flaminii:
32. De aede Apollinis:
33. De Ecuria:
34. Ab Augusti Mausoleo currebant in nunc Agonem:
35. Ecclesia sanctae mariae in Ecuria:
36. Origo vocabuli viae Flaminiae:
37. Flaminiae provinciae origo vocabuli:
38. De mutatione nominis circi Flaminii in nunc Agonem:
39. Agonis ludi ab Apollinaribus traducti:
40. Sancti Apollinaris ecclesia:
41. De minutioribus et dispersis in genere:
42. De Neronis Domo:
43. Aedes Fortunae ex lapide translucente:
44. Domus Neronis locus quis fuit:
45. Titus in stagnis Neronis amphitheatrum:
46. De colosso a quo nunc Colosseus:
47. Caput aeneum quod nunc est ad Lateranum:
48. De foro Traiani:

49. De equo Traiani aeneo:
50. De colide columna Traiani:
51. Ecclesia Sancti Basili:
52. Tres tures in quibus Militiarum:
53. De foro Nervae quod Transitorium fuit dictum:
54. Ecclesia Sancti Hadriani in tribus foris:
55. Ecclesia Sanctae Martinellae:
56. Mars fori statua appellata quid:
57. De Septizonio:
58. Sancta Lucia in septa solis:
59. Arcus triumphalis Severi:
60. De arcu Constantini:
61. De domo Gaii Caesaris:
62. De Pantheo:
63. Panthei mutatio in Sanctae Mariae Rotundae ecclesiam:
64. Eugenius quartus Pantheum instauravit et chartis plumbeis cooperuit:
65. Idem columnas Panthei detexit:
66. Idem lapide stravit aream Panthei:
67. Vicus Iugarius ubi fuit:
68. Aequimelum quid ubi fuerit:
69. Salinae ubi fuerit:
70. De carceris vi verbi:
71. Latumias fuisse ubi nunc ecclesia Sancti Nicolai in carcere Tulliano:
72. Atrium regium ubi domus Sabellorum:
73. Ubi fuit summa Velia
74. Quid fuerit Testaceus mons
75. De figulis et plasticis:
76. De ludis tauriis:
77. De locis quorum certa non habentur testimonia:
78. De ecclesia Marci:
79. De basilica duodecim apostolorum:
80. De ecclesia Sancti Marcelli:
81. Tituli Gnaei Pompei in delubro Minervae:

82. Praefatio triumphi Gnei Pompei: This was the proclamation that preceded his triumph: “When he freed the maritime seas from pirates and restored the rule of the seas to the Roman people, he conquered, in Asia, Pontus, Armenia, Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, Licaonia, the Scythians, the Jews, the Albanians, Iberia, the island of Crete, the Basternae, and besides this the kingdoms of Mithradates and Tigrane.”

83. Querela ignorationis multorum locorum sacrorum: There are many other beautiful things in Rome, but they are ignored because of an similar ignorance of their history. I leave these things to be described by those who will perhaps care to describe contemporary Rome, which is too little admired in Europe and some parts of Asia, even if it seems entirely different than it was at its most powerful. Although I am so affected by the Roman name that I care for nothing, except religion, with greater reverence, I not have allowed myself to be lead by passion so far away from true evidence that I cannot determine the distance that separates the Rome of our own time from the time when it was empowered by the majesty of the empire

84. Comparatio qualis vetustae et praesentis Romae: But on the other hand, I am not one of those whom I see doing nothing other than spurning the present state of Rome, thinking it worthless, as if the memory of Rome had entirely died with all the legions, consuls, the Senate and the ornaments of the Capitoline and Palatine. It lives, though, it lives even now and although it has been spread over a smaller space of the world, the glory of the city of Rome certainly rests on a more solid foundation.

85. Habet praesens Roma aliquod in gentes imperium: Rome still possesses a certain authority when it comes to kingdoms and peoples for the protection and extension of which there is no need for legions, cohorts, towers and garrisons, not soldiers on horse or foot. Now there is no draft to pick soldiers who either freely give their names or are compelled to serve, no troops from rome or Italy to be lead against the enemy, or protect the limits of the empire.

86. Non armis et sanguine coacti sed religione adducti subiciuntur populi: No blood is spilt in serving our present fatherland. No slaughters are committed. But through the foundation of eternal religion, our God and our Master Jesus Christ the highest emperor, the citadel and the house established in Rome and the triumphs of the martyrs held here one thousand four hundred years later, through the relics of the saints in every temple, altar, and shrine in great, glorious, Rome, a great part of the world protects the name of our city, which they once only trembled at, with pleasure rather than by force.

87. Dictator perpetuus est pontifex: Now the princes of the world adore and serve an emperor for all time, the successor not of Gaius Caesar, but of Peter the fisherman and the viceroy of the coming Lord: the highest Pope.

88. Senatores sunt cardinales: The senate of present day Rome, the council of cardinals, is honored after the Pope.

99. Asiam, Africam, Europam Romana Curia habebit subjectam si sancte et religiose vivetur: And no-one with any thought of how all this greatness is attributed to the merits of the sacred blessings that come from our lord will doubt that, if for those paying tribute to our republic and sitting near the rudder of Peter's fishing skiff, their course is shifted onto the one religion, onto the holy path, then they will subjugate Asia and Africa under the Roman rule of the Christians in the same way that they hold the kingdoms and peoples of Europe under their sway.

90. Tributa pendet omnis paene Europa: And what about the fact that now, when each state accepts blessings from the Roman Pope almost all of Europe sends greater, or certainly equal tribute to from their incomes than they ever did of old. However, there will always be someone who contends that the reverence held out to the Pope and the cardinals by the world, the great sums of money sent by the people should confer dignity and success on a city other than Rome, who recalls that Avignon, Bologna, Florence, Ferrara, at one time were decorated with the same glory.

91. Quae sint solida praesentis status fundamenta: And I cannot refuse to admit [that Avignon, Bologna, and Florence could be papal cities]. But the city of Rome has certain things all its own, so famous, so high, and so worth admiring that they cannot be found in another part of the world, and cannot ever be moved.

92. Qui Romam non adierit nihil vidit: Firstly, the man who has not seen Rome, the head and mistress, cannot admire anything properly anywhere.

93. Limina Apostolorum: This city has the doors to the Apostles and earth stained purple with the blood of the Marytrs.

94. De Veronica:

95. Domine, quo vadis?:

96. Coemeterium Callisti:

97. Sancta Sanctorum:

98. Capita apostolorum:

99. Incunabula et circumcisio Salvatoris:

100. Lactis virginei vasculum:

101. Primum altare quod habuit religio christiana:

102. Catenae Beati Petri:

103. Johannis Baptistae caput:

104. Anulus sponsilitiorum Beatae Agnetis:

105. Craticula Sancti Laurentii:

106. Stephani prothomartiris et Laurentii sepulcra:

107. Fontes ad effusum beati Pauli sanguinem:

108. Sanctae Mariae Maioris ecclesia:

109. Sancti Hieronimi corpus:

110. Sancta Maria in transtiberina regione unde fons olei erupit:

111. Conciliati ab Eugenio IV occidentali ecclesiae Asiani Romam veniunt: Not only do the people of Europe honor Rome and her holiness, but your work, Father Eugenius, with as much care as expense made it so that even people from Asia and the most remote parts of Europe and Africa do as well, since I saw Greeks, Armenians, Bosnians, the Nestorians from Europe and the Georgians from Asia minor, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Cilicia and Syria, the Scythians, the Albanians, Ireland and even Ethiopians from Africa united with the western Church and reconciled to Catholic trust and Roman service.

112. Nulla orbis civitas pluribus quam Roma gentibus frequentatur: Because of this Rome is visited by the most peoples and nations of any city and the world.

113. Quot milia singulis annis Romeam adeunt: The number of people flowing together into Rome is not small and not easily ignored, because at the time of Lent, four, five, even more thousands from the many provinces which we named above flock to Rome. At Rome They surround the basilicas, temples, chapels and single shrines. When traversing the haughty palaces of the old Roman princes, the highest buildings built for showing spectacles, the tall gates of the baths and the unimaginable work of the aqueducts, not a single one of them is so stupid or dull of spirit not to ask what they are and what they're for, to delight in the things before their eyes and want to know them.

114. Viget adhuc Romanae maiestatis gloria: This is how the glory of Roman majesty lives even now, fixed in on a more solid foundation. A great part of the world submits its neck to Rome out of sweet reverence, freely and without the clatter of weapons. But I have wandered far from my original premise. I, who, from discussing with renewed memory the buildings and the places have been delayed a long time in theories of culture and living reverence, would return to the remaining buildings of the city, if I were able to give a more certain account of the buildings I have missed than what I have described or indicated through all the locations in the city.