

*OLD ROME WAS I NOW NEW ROME SHALL BE PRAISED:
CHRISTIANITY AND CLASSICAL CULTURE IN THE ROMAN GUIDEBOOK TRADITION*

by

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Christianity and Classical Culture in the Roman Guidebook Tradition

Thesis directed by Assistant Professor Deborah Whitehead

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*Old Rome was I, now new Rome shall be praised;
I bear my head aloft, from ruin raised.*

According to the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, a twelfth century guidebook to the city of Rome, this inscription adorned a temple located between the Pantheon and Capitoline.¹ The inscription illustrates one of Rome's most striking features, its ever-changing façade. Concretely, we see the march of history in its architectural layers: the ancient Theater of Marcellus became a fortress, noble palace, and then stately apartments; the church of San Clemente was once a Mithraic temple; and the Mausoleum of Hadrian, made into the impregnable fortress of the papacy, now houses a chic summer restaurant over the Tiber. Figuratively, the idea of "Rome" has been reinterpreted over the ages: for the author of *Revelation* and writers of Reformation treatises it was the embodiment of spiritual corruption; for princes and empires it was a symbol of power and hegemony; and for Renaissance humanists it was the ultimate source of knowledge and beauty.

Rome has been described as a palimpsest, a document consciously overwritten through time. The metaphor of Rome as palimpsest does not imply that Rome's sites were literally erased and rebuilt, but that each new construction exhibited a new understanding of Rome's sites. To build over the remains of a site, tear down, or reuse materials is not a literal erasure of "old Rome," but a re-construction or de-construction of Rome's meaning in the present. The ways that "new Rome" has been constructed from the remains of "old Rome" demonstrates not only

¹ *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, Trans. Francis Morgan Nichols (New York: Ithaca Press, 1986).

human ingenuity, but also the values and ideals of those who build and interpret. The *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* understood classical monuments as visual reminders of the triumph of Christian history; divine providence foretold that classical Rome would become Christian. Guidebooks are time-specific projections of the identity of a place, and contain information about the author's understandings and objectives. They are therefore valuable historical documents, palimpsests themselves that demonstrate shifts in perceptions and understandings; just as Rome is a 'document' rewritten over time, so are these texts.

This thesis examines the relationship between classical culture and Christianity in Rome through the lens of medieval, Renaissance, and Counter Reformation guidebooks. I propose that guidebooks allowed authors and patrons to project a carefully constructed image of Rome, a construction influenced by the Church's desire to authenticate its place in Europe by defining itself in relation to classical culture. Rome's classical past was manipulated on Rome's physical landscape and in literary representations according to the ideals and objectives of Christians in the present.

Guidebooks to the city of Rome reflected shifts in how Christians in the medieval, Renaissance, and Counter Reformation present saw themselves in relation to Rome's classical past. The medieval *Mirabilia* tradition viewed classical monuments as objects that proved the ultimate triumph of Christianity. Christianity had prophetically replaced antiquity, a fact which legitimized the study of Rome's "marvels." During the Renaissance, humanists in papal Rome understood classical culture as a model for the imperial and universal Church. Rome's topography was altered as ancient sites were praised and restored, and objects recovered and displayed. Guidebooks reflect not only this esteem for the classical past, but show that classical culture gave the papacy and Rome's wealthy patrons ways to display status. Christians absorbed

classical culture into their own culture, proclaiming classical culture to be the source of their exceptionalism. In late sixteenth century guidebooks, Rome's Christian monuments legitimize and distinguish Roman Catholic faith and piety, and they take center stage in representations of the city. Guidebooks maintain interest in the religious and cultural tradition of the classical past, but this past is ultimately defined as distant from the Christian present.

Rome's Topography and the Guidebook Tradition

From the fourth century onwards, Christians in Rome had to reconcile Rome's classical origins with its new role as the capital of Christendom. A major component of the long process of assimilation of Greco Roman religious traditions into Christian ones was the alteration of Rome's topography. Temples were converted into Christian churches or torn down, and Christian churches marked new holy sites. The sacred topography of Rome became decisively Christian as basilicas extended from the city center to its periphery. With the movement of the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople, citizens abandoned the Forum, Colosseum, Campo Marzio, and Circo Massimo, areas that had once embodied the vibrant civic life of the city and empire. Rome's aqueducts, walls, and gates succumbed to the devastation of natural disasters, wars, and time.

Classical Rome, however, did not disappear completely. It was economically opportune to reuse materials from Roman buildings, or to convert a temple, amphitheatre, or palace rather than tear down and rebuild. Ideologically, the conversion of a temple into a Christian church was often a stronger and more lasting symbol of Christian triumph over paganism than its destruction. Finally, Rome's classical origins were never seen as completely antagonistic to Christianity. Becoming Christian did not mean that Romans necessarily became less Roman, and

the Church drew parallels between the Roman Empire and power of the Church by focusing on sites that represented Rome's military, political, and economic might.

Rome's classical roots gave the Church a means to proclaim its authority and authenticity in the face of powerful foreign kings and emperors who challenged the papacy. As early as the eighth century, the papacy used the Donation of Constantine, which stated that the emperor Constantine had given the papacy dominion over the Holy Roman Empire, to assert its authority in the Christian West. The Church declared that not only was the pope the rightful successor of Peter, the holder of Christ's keys who had died in Rome, but he was also the successor of Constantine, the last emperor who had ruled from Rome. Lacking secular power, the Roman Church relied on its spiritual importance in addition to symbolic appeals to the temporal power of ancient Rome to maintain its precarious position.

A revived interest in classical history and culture accompanied Church reforms and centralization during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This revival led to an exploration of the origins, names, and purposes of Rome's ancient monuments which evolved into a guidebook intended for visitors to the city of Rome, the *Mirabilia urbis Romae*. An instant best seller, the *Mirabilia* was reproduced often over the next few centuries. It described ancient monuments rather than Christian churches, and demonstrated a sincere (if not always accurate) desire to precisely locate temples or label statues.

In the fifteenth century, Rome was again positioned at the crossroads of cultural and political revival. Humanists in Florence, Venice, and other important city states looked to the classical past in order to refashion philosophy, art, architecture, education, and politics in what would become known as the Renaissance. In Rome, the Avignon papacy and the Papal Schism (1309—1417) challenged the pontificate and Rome's centrality to Christendom. A series of

popes determined to establish the supremacy of the papacy in Rome transformed the city into a center of the Renaissance. They restored ancient temples, Roman structures, and Christian churches. Popes and noblemen built grand palaces and decorated them with the most prized possessions of the times, ancient statues discovered during excavations.

Much like the twelfth century revival, the rebuilding of Renaissance Rome (1447—1527) was accompanied by research into ancient Rome's monuments and history. This research produced a myriad of guidebooks that differed significantly from the *Mirabilia* for their desire to explain classical monuments based not on legend, but on actual classical sources. Humanists such as Poggio Bracciolini, Pomponio Leto, Flavio Biondo, Francesco Albertini, and Mariano da Firenze, wrote guidebooks using new methods of scientific inquiry that allowed them to share Rome with visitors in a unique way. Albertini's *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae* and da Firenze's *Itinerarium urbis Romae* were especially important for their explanation not just of ancient Rome, but new Rome as well.

Curiosity about Rome's antiquities and monuments did not fade in the face of Counter Reformation policy, and printers continued to publish guidebooks to ancient Rome through the seventeenth century. The reaffirmation of Christian faith and piety during the Counter Reformation, however, led to increased interest in Rome's Christian sites, and guidebooks describing the relics, indulgences, or traditions associated with Rome's churches proliferated. Andrea Palladio's *Le chiese di Roma (The Churches of Rome)*, published in 1554 with an attached appendix devoted to Rome's antiquities, became the foundation for guidebooks published into the seventeenth century under the names of *Le cose meravigliose dell'alma città di Roma* and *Trattato nuovo delle cose meravigliose dell'alma città di Roma*. Although the majority of Counter Reformation guides follow this model (a detailed description of Rome's

churches in the main body of the book with an attached itinerary of Rome's antiquities), Bernardo Gamucci's *Le antichità della città di Roma* (1565) provides an interesting contrast. His work describes Roman traditions, customs, and history in a detailed itinerary through the city that simultaneously brings ancient Rome to life and designates a "religion" and traditions foreign to the Christian present.

Christianity and Culture in the Guidebook Tradition

Although guidebooks are mentioned in numerous works describing early modern Rome, no one has examined them as subjective texts and powerful cultural and political tools that projected a certain identity of Rome to the visitor. Rather, they are usually mentioned to illustrate how humanist techniques applied to the topography of Rome revealed new knowledge about the classical past. Ingrid Rowland in *The Culture of the High Renaissance*, and Eugene Howe in his translation of Palladio's *Churches of Rome* focus on the differences between the medieval *Mirabilia* and guidebooks published from the mid fifteenth century on.²³ The classical past was central to humanist knowledge, and the city of Rome was a laboratory and showcase of that knowledge. As these authors do, I show that the techniques of humanists, and their desire to objectively write about the classical past, influenced the nature of medieval, Renaissance, and Counter Reformation guidebooks. The content of these guidebooks varied in large part because of different techniques applied to classical sources and the material culture of Rome.

I am, however, more interested in how humanist culture itself was projected in texts. Kathryn Tanner in *Theories of Culture* emphasizes the unsettled and dynamic nature of culture.

² Ingrid Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance: Ancients and Moderns in Sixteenth Century Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and Eugene Howe, *Andrea Palladio: The Churches of Rome* (Binghamton, New York: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991).

³ Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

Culture is not a coherent set of meanings informing social practices, but rather a system of processes: “What is important for cultural identity is the novel way cultural elements from elsewhere are now put to work, by means of such complex and ad hoc relational processes as resistance, appropriation, subversion, and compromise.”⁴ Humanists applied the classical past to their understanding of the present, and gave it meaning according to their needs and goals. The material culture, or classical monuments, statues, inscriptions, and coins they discovered and studied in Rome were “put to work” in a variety of ways, reflecting both the agency of humanists and the structures they worked within.

In her analysis of early modern museums, Paula Findlen describes the relationship between collectors and objects, and the importance of three types of knowledge, *imitatio*, *exempla*, and *inventio*, in humanist culture.⁵ Through objects, humanists were able to imitate the past, a flexible entity that could be narrated in countless ways, and then invent from what they knew.⁶ Guidebooks illustrate the creative ways that humanists understood the classical past and interpreted it in the present.

Humanists, however, performed this creative work within structures that determined their behavior and attitudes towards classical culture. First was their religious orientation. Their study of classical culture was conditioned by their Christian cultural context, meaning that guidebooks express religious ideals and sentiments. Rome was a major pilgrimage center, and while I do not concentrate on the *Indulgentiarum*, or works that described Rome’s churches, indulgences, and relics, I do emphasize that guidebooks to Rome’s antiquities were Christian texts. Medieval, Renaissance, and Counter Reformation texts hold in common their acknowledgment that Rome,

⁴ Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 58.

⁵ Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994).

⁶ *Ibid*, 296.

as the home of apostles, martyrs, saints, and the papacy, was the center of the Christian world. While they differ in how they understand Christian Rome in relation to classical Rome, the objectives and understandings of the Christian present always inform their interpretations of Rome's classical monuments and past.

Second, humanists were conditioned by the power structures of their times. Questions of papal primacy, authority, and legitimacy plagued the papacy, and these concerns are reflected in guidebooks. Rome's classical and Christian origins gave the papacy ways to communicate its power and the importance of the Roman Church. My analysis of Renaissance guidebooks is much indebted to Charles Stinger. In his work *The Renaissance in Rome*, he shows how Christian imperialism inspired by interpretations of the Roman Empire and biblical prophecy was the force behind the cultural revival of Rome.⁷ His work, much as John D'Amico's *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome* does, focuses on humanists under the direction of the papacy as the protagonists of Rome's transformation from a medieval backwater largely abandoned in the fourteenth century to a dominant cultural center of sixteenth century Europe.⁸ Renaissance Rome, according to Stinger, was a flowering of humanist intellectual prowess and artistic accomplishment aimed at establishing Rome as the center of the *res publica christiana*. In this thesis, I show that papal concerns of primacy and legitimacy, and the ways that humanist culture answered to those concerns, were not unique to the Renaissance in Rome.

Guidebooks therefore provide a window into the relationship between classical culture and Christianity. In contrast to humanists' readings of classical texts, their journeys through Rome, old and new, unearthed a city with multiple identities. They gave Rome's material artifacts, its Christian and classical structures and objects, diverse meanings over time. In

⁷ Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

⁸ John D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983).

Material Christianity Colleen McDannell explores four types of material culture—artifacts, landscapes, architecture, and art—to show how the sacred and profane do not represent a dichotomy, but are rather intimately associated.⁹ She states that what Christians *do* with artifacts blurs the distinction between the sacred and profane, meaning that it is necessary to study the relationship between people and objects to understand both the material representation and the ideology behind such representations.¹⁰ People activate or enliven objects, and use them to reflect and secure beliefs. I do not concentrate on the “sacred” nature of Christian monuments as opposed to the “profane” nature of classical monuments, but examine how each allowed humanists and patrons to employ meanings that would serve needs and goals. In order to assure their heritage and ideals, people make cultural artifacts a mirror of themselves, and in so doing legitimize their place in the world and their ideals. Rome’s classical and Christian artifacts acquired new meanings according to diverse religious, political, and cultural sensibilities.

These varied understandings of classical and Christian Rome are recorded in guidebooks, a fact which gives these sources fascinating potential to reveal humanist understandings of space and time, faith and knowledge. The relationship between the Christian culture of Rome, humanists, popes, and pilgrims, and the classical culture of Rome, humanists, and curious travelers is the subject of this thesis. I use guidebooks as the lens for this study with the conviction that these texts should be examined as products of their socio cultural and religious environment that in turn disseminated ideas about place and time. In his discussion of the preservation of Rome’s sites, David Karmon reminds the reader that claims to power and

⁹ Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 15.

legitimacy underlie all inventions of historical structures.¹¹ “Old Rome,” or Rome in the past, was constantly reinvented according to the present objectives and ideas of the people who built or renewed its monuments or buildings; wrote about its past in the present; and walked through its streets.

¹¹ David Karmon, “Printing and Protecting Ancient Remains in the Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae,” in *The Virtual Tourist in Renaissance Rome*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 39.

CHAPTER 2

CHRISTIAN SUPERCESSIONISM IN MEDIEVAL ROME

The Colosseum was the temple of the sun... After some time the Blessed Silvester ordered the temple destroyed and likewise other palaces so that the orators who came to Rome would not wander through profane buildings but instead pass with devotion through the churches.¹²

Mirabilia urbis Romae

Dating from the mid to late twelfth century, the *Mirabilia urbis Romae* (*Marvels of Rome*) was composed amidst religious, political, and intellectual changes the swept across Europe from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. Beginning in the early tenth century, the monastic reforms of the Cluniacs changed the face of Western Europe as monasteries became important centers of Christian learning and piety.¹³ These institutions answered to the pope, allowing for the centralized Church to exercise a greater influence over the Christian West. As the pope became more powerful, he came into conflict with secular rulers. In response to disputes with Henry IV over who had the power to elect clergymen Gregory VII (1073—1085) instituted a series of reforms that gave the papacy superiority over secular rulers and regulated the clergy. The papacies of Urban II (1088—1099), Paschal II (1099—1118), and Innocent II (1130—1143) further centralized control of the church under the Roman pontiff.

At the same time, Western Christianity experienced a renewal of religious life. The early Christian apostles, martyrs, and saints acquired a newfound importance as intermediaries who carried special healing and miraculous powers. Pilgrims, aided by merchant networks carrying goods throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, traveled to holy sites that housed the relics of

¹² *Mirabilia*, 29.

¹³ The Cluniac Order was founded in 910.

saints. Seeing as Rome was the home of the apostles Peter and Paul, and site where countless martyrs had been killed, it was a major pilgrimage center.

This religious revival was accompanied by a revival in learning. From the late eleventh century onwards, Universities were founded throughout Europe where scholars studied science, medicine, philosophy, and law. Scholars analyzed and translated newly available classical texts containing new systems of logic and philosophy in addition to the history of the ancient Greeks and Romans. This knowledge about classical history and philosophy also sparked an interest in the remnants of classical culture that could be found in Rome.

The *Mirabilia urbis Romae* was a product of these changes in Western European society. Scholastic exploration of ancient Rome generated curiosity about Rome's ancient monuments and history. Christian pilgrimage led to a proliferation of travel guides and literature. Although the *Mirabilia* does not focus on Christian churches or relics, this chapter will show that it nonetheless encourages Christian piety. Finally, the *Mirabilia* reflected the papacy's efforts to communicate its own authority. The earliest copies from the end of the twelfth century were found in the Vatican amongst copies of other official Curia documents, implying the official status of the text.¹⁴ The temporal power of the Roman Empire was based in Rome, and showcasing Rome's ancient traditions, monuments, and topography rooted the papacy's sacred power in the ancient empire.

The *Mirabilia* Tradition

The *Mirabilia urbis Romae* is composed of three sections. In the first, the author divides Rome's wonders into categories (walls, gates, arches, palaces, theaters, bridges, pillars, cemeteries, and places of martyrdom), and lists the corresponding monuments. The second

¹⁴ *Mirabilia*, xvii.

section recounts known legends about Rome's most famous monuments. In the final section, the author provides an itinerary that begins at the Vatican and takes the visitor through the city.

Rome emerges in distinctly different ways in each section: the first showcases just how many ancient monuments Rome held; the second relates the history of individual monuments or sites; and the third takes the traveler from Christian Rome through classical Rome.

In all three sections of the *Mirabilia*, however, two things become apparent. First, Rome should and will amaze travelers because of its glorious past as the capital of the Roman Empire, and because it still houses the ancient remnants of that past. Second, these monuments are explained and legitimized through their relationship to Christianity.

At the height of the Roman Empire, Rome was wealthy, powerful, and beautiful. The Empire's wealth and power shaped Rome into a beautiful city deserving of praise:

In Rome there were twenty-two great horses of gilded brass, eighty horses of gold, eighty four public privies, fifty great sewers; bulls, griffins, peacocks and a multitude of other images, the costliness of which seemed to go beyond measure that people who came to the city had good reason to marvel at Rome's beauty.¹⁵

Rome's buildings and statues were decorated in gold, silver, brass, ivory, and precious stones. Emperors built arches and pillars to commemorate their victories over enemies. Roman baths and palaces allowed emperors to live in luxury. Temples to the Roman gods abounded. The Capitoline, the "head of the world," was not only well fortified, but exquisitely decorated: "Within the fortress was a palace completely adorned with marvelous works in gold, silver, brass, and costly stones, to be a mirror to all nations. It was said to be worth one third of the world."¹⁶ When possible, the *Mirabilia* describes sumptuous decorations, giving travelers good reason to marvel at what the city must have looked like in the past.

¹⁵ *Mirabilia*, 11.

¹⁶ *Mirabilia*, 38.

While the *Mirabilia* does give many reasons that travelers should admire ancient Rome, the text reveals a strong need to explain Rome's classical origins in relation to the Christian present. In order to legitimize Rome's antiquities, and the study of them, the text relates antiquities to Christianity. The *Mirabilia* accomplishes this in three ways. First, it presents ancient monuments as an allegory for Christianity. Second, it shows how ancient history in Rome actually prophesied the triumph of Christianity. Finally, it recounts how ancient monuments, history, and festivals were assimilated into Christian ones. In the process, it shows how Christian history superceded classical history.

The *dioscuri*, two magnificent statues of naked men with horses, were a conspicuous attraction in medieval Rome. A woman encompassed with serpents sat in front of them with a shell before her. Although the *Mirabilia* lays out the origins of the statues (an emperor memorialized two philosophers by sculpting them alongside their horses) it concentrates on what the statues mean. The horses represent sacred power in opposition to secular power: "...the naked horses, which trample on the earth, that is on the mighty princes of the world that rule over the men of this world."¹⁷ The men's nudity represents openness to knowledge, the woman encompassed with serpents the Church, and the shell a baptismal font: "whoever goes to her [the Church] may not unless first washed in that shell, that is, unless baptized." This allegorical description of the statues is significant because it advocated Church authority. The horses remind secular rulers that their power is secondary to that of God, and by corollary God's representative the pope. It also calls for Christian piety. Onlookers should interpret nakedness as openness to knowledge, meaning that nakedness is a condition of the mind and not the body. The woman, or the Church, cannot be accessed unless the believer is baptized, a point which recalls the efforts of Church reforms to unite believers in their understanding of the sacraments.

¹⁷ *Mirabilia*, 19.

The technique of allegory is also significant because of what it does to classical monuments. Transforming something into a Christian allegory gives an otherwise profane object meaning. The woman sitting behind the shell is transformed from a secular figure to a sacred one. This statue has a new, edifying effect: viewers who understand its allegorical meaning are called to stand pure and clean as a baptized child before the Church. At the same time that allegory gives an object meaning, however, it also strips it of its original meaning. Whatever the horses, men, woman, and shell meant in their original context is unimportant. It is possible that they represented historical figures, had their own symbolic meaning, or were simply decorative. These possibilities are overwritten by the “actual” meaning allegory promises, meaning that the Christian significance of objects becomes their only meaning.

In addition to understanding classical monuments as Christian allegory, the *Mirabilia* also sees them as prophesy for the fulfillment of Christian history. One of the most well known legends about classical Rome was the vision of Octavian. According to this legend, Octavian addressed the Roman sibyl because the people wanted to worship him as a god. She told him that a king would come from heaven who would judge the world, and as Octavian listened he had a vision of a virgin holding a man-child, and heard a voice say “This is the virgin who shall conceive the savior of the world.” According to the *Mirabilia*, this vision occurred in the place where the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli stood. The legend relates the tradition in Roman culture whereby men could be elevated to gods, in addition to the importance of the sibyl. Octavian’s vision of the Virgin and Christ, however, convinces him that he is not a god, and the sibyl serves as a conduit of Christian prophesy. The Roman emperor himself recognizes that a figure will come to save the world, and that his authority is therefore temporal, not eternal.

Romulus, the founder of Rome, also prophesied the triumph of Christianity according to the *Mirabilia*. While describing Rome's palaces, the *Mirabilia* mentions the palace of Romulus:

[At] the Palace of Romulus...there are the two Temples of Piety and Concord, where Romulus set his golden image saying: "It shall not fall until a Virgin bears a child." And as soon as the Virgin bore a son, the image fell down.¹⁸

Rather than describe the palace itself, the author relates Romulus' prophetic statement, and its realization upon Jesus' birth. According to this legend, the founder of Rome predicted the advent of Christianity, and recognized himself that he would be supplanted by Christ. Prophetic statements or events in the *Mirabilia* serve to establish continuity between classical and Christian culture. They link the past to the present by showing that the classical past predicted the Christian present. Christian history, therefore, fulfills the classical past by providing it with sacred authority.

As mentioned in the introduction, when Christianity became the religion of the empire characteristics of classical religion, culture, and society were Christianized. Christian churches, festivals, and holy figures replaced classical ones. The *Mirabilia* emphasizes this process of assimilation throughout the text. The legend of the Pantheon said that the Roman goddess Cybele, "mother of the gods," promised a Roman prefect that he would win a battle if he dedicated a temple to her. He won the battle, and built and dedicated the Pantheon in her honor. According to the *Mirabilia*, many years later Pope Boniface dedicated the temple to the Virgin Mary, "mother of all the saints" because Christians were "often stricken by devils" if they stood before Cybele's temple.¹⁹ In honor of the consecration, on the calends of November every year a mass would be held there to commemorate the saints, Mary, Christ, and the souls of the dead. The focus of this passage is not the classical Pantheon but rather the Christian Pantheon.

¹⁸ *Mirabilia*, 9.

¹⁹ *Mirabilia*, 22.

The same is true in the founding story of San Pietro in Vincoli. The *Mirabilia* relates that Romans celebrated Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra for many generations in a great festival. In a story reminiscent of Constantine's mother Helena, the pious empress Eudoxia (the wife of Theodosius' son Arcadius) went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem where she obtained the chains that had bound Peter in prison. On her return to Rome, she asked the pope and senators to replace the festival honoring Octavian with celebrations in honor of Peter: "Just as Octavian delivered us from Egyptian bondage, so did the heavenly Emperor deliver us from the bondage of demons."²⁰

This story illustrates how the author of the *Mirabilia* understood traditions associated with sites in Rome. For the author of the *Mirabilia* explaining how Roman culture was absorbed into Christianity encourages Christian piety. Moreover, by describing the process of assimilation in Rome, the *Mirabilia* reinforces a Christian mindset of assimilation. The text communicates to its readers that classical culture was naturally and providentially absorbed into Christian culture.

These three techniques—allegory, prophesy, and assimilation—in the *Mirabilia* legitimize the study of classical antiquity by rooting the analysis of classical culture in the Christian tradition. Travelers to Rome can and should visit antiquities because classical culture encourages Christian faith and reminds travelers of the power of the Church. Classical Rome is therefore closely associated with Christian Rome, but only because the former is understood from the privileged perspective of the latter. This text therefore gives classical objects value at the same time that it takes value away from them. It examines them as marvels deserving of admiration, but also supplants whatever meaning they may have had with a Christian meaning.

Why is this so? The quote at the beginning of this chapter contains a clue. According to the *Mirabilia* the Colosseum was adorned with a statue of the god of the sun who held an orb

²⁰ Ibid, 27.

signifying Rome's temporal power. Silvester, pope at the time of Constantine, supposedly had the statue dismantled because of its offensiveness to pious travelers, and moved some pieces to the newly built Lateran Church. This act transposed a classical object to a Christian holy site, symbolizing the triumph of Christianity over the classical past. The statue was not destroyed because it served a purpose. By relocating it to a Church, it showed that the Church now held the power of the Roman Empire.

In a similar way, the study of Rome's antiquities in the twelfth century was useful to the Church. The stories contained within a guidebook such as the *Mirabilia* reminded travelers that the Christian Church had supplanted the power of the Roman Empire. The story of the *dioscuri* and the allegory of the horses attested to the triumph of the Church's sacred power over the temporal power of princes. At the same time, these stories reaffirmed Christian faith and piety. They did this not by describing Rome's churches, but by describing Rome's classical monuments with a Christian veil. They therefore re-Christianized classical culture at the same time that they brought classical culture to the attention of those who had forgotten it. Rome's antiquities became *marvels*, spectacles viewers could observe from a privileged distance.

CHAPTER 3

A CLASSICAL MODEL FOR THE CHRISTIAN PRESENT IN RENAISSANCE ROME

The amphitheater of Titus and Vespasian is in our day called the Colosseum after the colossus of Nero which was at the portico of the Domus Aurea. Nearby there was the aforementioned amphitheater.²¹

Francesco Albertini, *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae*

Despite efforts to strengthen and centralize the Roman Church, from the beginning of the fourteenth century the authority of the papacy waned in the face of strong European secular powers. The Avignon papacy (1309—1376) and the Papal Schism (1378—1417) were products not only of the influence of secular powers over the papacy, but of the fading importance of Rome in Western Christendom. Papal claims to authority over the Christian world were no longer based on the fact that the pope resided in Rome, the final resting place of Peter to whom Christ had given the keys of the Church. In addition, the legitimacy and primacy of the papacy itself suffered. In this period, secular rulers deposed popes, multiple popes were elected simultaneously, and Church councils were called to challenge the position of the papacy. Although the papacy had faced all of these challenges in various periods of its history, the fourteenth century presented a particular crisis. Moreover, Lorenzo Valla in 1439 proved the Donation of Constantine to be a forgery, a fact which refuted the papacy's claims to dominion over the Roman Empire.

Rome itself suffered during this period as well. It was largely abandoned as the plague and famine killed a large percentage of the population and forced others to flee. The 1526 census

²¹ Amphitheatrum Titi et Vespasiani nostro tempore Collosseum vocatur, a Neronis colosso, qui stabat in porticu domus aureae, et iuxta praedictum amphitheatrum fuit. Francesco Albertini, *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae* in *Codice Tografico della citta' di Roma*, ed Roberto Valentini and Giuseppe Zucchetti (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1953), 474.

estimated Rome's population at 54,000 inhabitants, and we can imagine that the population was much lower in the previous century.²² Compared to the wealthy and vibrant Italian city states of the fifteenth century, Rome's economy was stagnant and the city rural. Within the Aurelian Walls, large stretches of land were used as pasture or farmland. The Roman Forum, called *Campo Vaccino*, was a cow pasture. The streets of the *abitato*, the region bordering the Tiber in the city center, were narrow, crowded, and filthy. Rome's baronial families ruled the city in the absence of the papacy, and consolidated their wealth and influence.²³

A Roman noble, Oddone Colonna, returned the papacy to Rome in 1420. The conciliar movement during the papacy of his successor, however, meant that only in 1443 with Eugenius IV did the papacy acquire permanent residence in Rome. The centralization of the Church, expansion of papal institutions, and wealth of the papacy in the last half of the fifteenth century attracted clerics, humanists, banking families, and foreign aristocrats from Italy and Europe who moved to Rome with the hope of career advancement. The most desired positions were the papacy itself or within the pope's College of Cardinals, and upon obtaining such a position the individual could move his entire residence to Rome. Foreign families established enduring residence in the city, a process aided by Sixtus IV's decree in 1474 allowing clerics in the Curia to bequeath property to their relatives.²⁴ The presence of foreign noble families in Rome changed the social fabric of the city as Rome became more cosmopolitan and its traditional baronial families were marginalized.²⁵

Rome also experienced a cultural transformation as Renaissance ideas and ideology took hold in the city. This intellectual and cultural movement based on the rediscovery of classical

²² Stinger, 24.

²³ While some such as the Altieri and Caffarelli became wealthy from trade, others such as the Porcari and della Valle who owned vast tracts of land engaged in agriculture and raising of livestock. See Laurie Nussdorfer, *Civic Politics in the Rome of Urban VIII* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 7.

²⁴ Peter Partner, *Renaissance Rome: 1500-1559* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 17.

²⁵ These include the Carafa, Chigi, Maffei, Riario, della Rovere, Medici, and Farnese.

antiquity had flourished long before in Florence and Venice. With the return of the papacy to Rome, and interest of the early humanist popes Nicholas V, Pius II, and Sixtus IV in the Renaissance, Rome became a center of the Renaissance. From the middle of the fifteenth century through the beginning of the sixteenth century a series of popes sponsored building projects, commissioned artwork, collected antiquities, founded libraries, and filled the Curia with educated humanists.²⁶

Rome had long held esteem for humanists. Petrarch, Poggio Bracciolini, and Pomponio Leto had romanticized its ruins by describing how their sublime memory could transport the viewer to ancient times.²⁷ The rebuilding of Rome finally gave humanists the means to come to Rome to explore its classical monuments. The papacy employed many of them in the Curia where their skills in language and logic made them not only excellent administrative agents, but also eloquent and convincing voices of papal supremacy. Humanists explored the sites of ancient Rome and used historical works to uncover the origins of temples, palaces, and other abandoned buildings. They excavated areas such as the Forum and found statues, coins, and objects that they carefully preserved.

The return of the papacy to Rome also had important consequences for Christian pilgrims. From 1450 on, popes proclaimed Jubilee Years every twenty five years.²⁸ Although it is difficult to determine how many pilgrims came to Rome, Jean Delumeau has estimated that

²⁶ John D'Amico, Charles Stinger, and Ingrid Rowland have described papal patronage of Renaissance projects in rich detail, and examine the peculiarities of the Renaissance in Rome. D'Amico's work combated the notion of humanism as a secular movement by discussing how humanists expressed their Christian faith in the papal Curia. Stinger and Rowland have examined the various ways the papacy expressed papal hegemony by drawing parallels between Christianity and classicism in artistic and architectural projects.

²⁷ Poggio Bracciolini's *De varietate fortunae* and Pomponio Leto's guided walks of the city described monuments as a process of both research and self discovery. In Petrarch's letters to Giovanni Colonna, he described wandering through Rome and recounts ancient Roman virtue.

²⁸ Nicholas proclaimed a Jubilee Year by which pilgrims who traveled to the city would receive remission of their sins. Despite the fact that the biblical tradition set Jubilee Years at fifty year intervals, Paul II and Clement VII proclaimed 1475 and 1525 Jubilee Years.

Jubilee Years attracted more than 100,000.²⁹ Rome's relics and indulgences were catalogued in the *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum Urbis*, a work republished a number of times in Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, and Flemish.³⁰ In the 1470's Sixtus IV oversaw a series of urban renewal projects aimed at making Rome more accessible to pilgrims. He built an alternate bridge to the Vatican, the Ponte Sisto, and straight, wide roads that led to the Vatican.

The rebuilding of Rome included the restoration of many of Rome's oldest churches. The most famous building project, of course, was St. Peter's Basilica. Pope Julius II began the reconstruction of the fourth century church in 1506, and it was not completed until 1626. A series of popes expanded the Vatican in an effort to make the Leonine city (named after Pope Leo IV who built the walls surrounding it) a more suitable center of the Christian world. The most pronounced characteristic of Renaissance Rome, however, was the use of classical architecture, statuary, and imagery in both sacred and secular buildings. Images of Roman gods adorned papal chambers and noble palaces, the Vatican's statue garden was filled with ancient statues, and the papacy restored ancient monuments.

Renaissance Guidebooks

What I call the Renaissance guidebook genre emerged out of this period of political, social, cultural, and religious change in Rome. The humanists who wrote these guidebooks were Christians whose curiosity about and esteem for the classical past brought them to Rome to study antiquities. Their works were intended to guide other Christian humanists like them through the

²⁹ Jean Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVI siècle* (BEFAR, 184. Paris: E. de Boccard, 1957), 169-74.

³⁰ Stinger, 34.

city of Rome and educate them about Rome's antiquities.³¹ Their works are not guidebooks to Rome's relics and indulgences, but rather focus on Roman antiquities, naming important Christian churches along the way. Christian pilgrims, however, were still important to them, and Mariano da Firenze's *Itinerarium urbis Romae* names Christian pilgrims in the prologue as expected readers of the work.

Renaissance guidebooks self-consciously broke from the *Mirabilia* tradition by discarding its legends about Rome's sites, and basing their works off classical sources and first hand observation of Rome's monuments. Flavio Biondo's work *Roma instaurata* (1446) was the first topographical guide of Rome based on a return to classical sources and investigation of epigraphs and structures of ruins.³² His scientific investigation of Rome's ancient ruins extended to Rome's churches as well, and his work delineates the origins and history of both. Pomponio Leto's *Exerpta*, a guided walk through Rome written in the 1480's, and Bernardo Rucellai's *De urbe Roma* written in the 1490's emphasize topographical knowledge through direct observation.

These early guidebooks maintained that Rome was entering into a new phase in its history whereby the papacy was rebuilding Rome according to the model of classical antiquity. Bernardo Rucellai in *De urbe Roma* said that in order to rebuild a city, it was necessary to use ancient Rome as a "pattern and exemplar."³³ Flavio Biondo emphasized the pope's role as the supreme dictator of the Christian world:

Now the princes of the world adore and honor the universal dictator, not the Caesars but the supreme pontiff, successor of Peter the fisherman, and foretold ruler. The world venerates the cardinals of the church, the foretold senate of Rome, after the pontiff.³⁴

³¹ Their publication in Latin meant that only educated clerics, nobles, ambassadors, or courtiers could have read or used them. This language choice, however, also made them accessible to educated visitors from all over Europe.

³² Flavio Biondo, *Roma instaurata in Codice Tografico della citta' di Roma*, ed. Roberto Valentini and Giuseppe Zucchetti (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1953).

³³ Stinger, 70.

³⁴ *Dictatorem nunc perpetuum non Gaii Caesariis sed piscatoris Petri successorum et imperatoris praedicti vicarium pontificem summum principiis orbis adorant et colunt. Senatum praesentis Romae, cardinalis ecclesiae, post pontificem orbis venerant.* Biondo, 318

Biondo's argument in support of papal supremacy is not unique, but his incorporation of papal power into the scientific exploration of Rome's topography is because he establishes the pope, specifically his patron Eugenius IV, as the guardian of classical and Christian culture.

The methods of analysis and emphasis on papal rebuilding of Rome according to the model of classical antiquity in these early guidebooks provided a model for two early sixteenth century guidebooks, Francesco Albertini's *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae et veteris urbis Romae*, published in 1510, and Mariano da Firenze's *Itinerarium Urbis Romae*, composed in 1518.³⁵ Albertini, a humanist working in the papal Curia, dedicated the *Opusculum* to Pope Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere), and his work was a major source for da Firenze, a Franciscan who moved to Rome in 1517.³⁶ I have chosen to focus on these guidebooks for two reasons. First, written during Rome's High Renaissance, these guidebooks reflect the height of Renaissance humanist knowledge about Rome's antiquities and topography.³⁷ Second, because of their later dating they describe the activities that had transformed Rome over the last sixty years. For this reason, they are an excellent source of information both about how new Rome had been constructed, and how contemporaries understood Christian Rome, new and old, in relation to classical Rome.

I maintain that the *Opusculum* and the *Itinerarium* reflect a shift in the relationship between Christianity and classical culture in Renaissance Rome based first on the cultural importance of antiquities to humanists. The ancient Forum became an important center of the

³⁵ Mariano da Firenze, *Itinerarium Urbis Romae*, ed. Enrico Bulletti (Roma: Pontificio istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1931).

³⁶ The *Opusculum* was issued five times between 1510 and 1523 (In 1510 and 1515 in Rome, 1519 in Basil, 1520, and 1523 in Rome). There are 40 known existing copies of the 1510 edition, 23 of the 1515 edition, and 31 of the 1523 edition. The *Itinerarium* was never reissued. I was unable to find how many copies of either work were originally published, but the number of reissues, and number of existing copies, and multiple publishers of the *Opusculum* indicate that it reached a fairly wide audience. The *Itinerarium* most likely did not.

³⁷ The Renaissance in Rome lasted from 1447 to 1527. The "High Renaissance" refers to the period from the last decade of the fifteenth century to the Sack of Rome when great artists and architects such as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Bramante enjoyed papal patronage.

city in addition to St. Peter's. In addition, rather than show how Christianity transcended and superseded classical culture, these guidebooks allowed classical monuments to exist on their own terms, and are given a special importance within the city that would change how visitors experienced Rome's topography. Second, these guidebooks show that patronage of classical culture was one way for Rome's elite and the papacy to communicate status, authority, and legitimacy. The classical past was used in the Christian present to legitimize papal Rome, and this message contained in guidebooks sent a powerful message of Christian support of classical culture in Rome.

Rome's New Topography

In Renaissance guidebooks, the classical center of Rome—the Forum and the Capitoline—became a new center of the city. As the center of ancient Rome, they were of fundamental importance to Renaissance humanists, but the guidebook tradition made them foundational to the visitor's experience of Rome as a whole.

Da Firenze's *Itinerarium* is organized into itineraries that are not unidirectional but rather loops, each of which departs from the Forum. The itineraries guide travelers to a Christian church and then back to the Forum.³⁸ Although Christian churches were the final destination, the point of departure and return was the Forum, implying that this site was an important center of Rome.³⁹ Albertini's guide is not organized into itineraries but rather into two sections, "Old Rome" and "New Rome." In the first section, he lists the walls, aqueducts, gates, baths, and palaces of ancient Rome. The vast majority of these monuments were in the environs of the

³⁸ The churches were St. Peter's, St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. Sebastian, the Lateran, Santa Croce, St. Lawrence, St. Agnes, and Santa Maria del Popolo.

³⁹ This shift of perspective is significant when we consider that the *Mirabilia urbis Romae* suggested visitors proceed from the Vatican over Ponte Sant'Angelo to the Capitoline and Forum, and then to Trastevere. The primary itinerary of the *Itinerarium* takes almost the opposite route, from the Forum to Campo dei Fiori, across Ponte Sant'Angelo to St. Peter's, then back to the Forum via Trastevere.

Forum, implying that in order to see ancient Rome travelers had to explore the previously abandoned area.

Regardless of whether the visitor came for pilgrimage, business, or pleasure, Albertini and da Firenze suggest that instead of arriving at St. Peter's from Porta del Popolo (the traditional pilgrimage entrance), visitors should depart from the Forum. This reorientation of Rome does not reduce the importance of Christian churches and sites such as St. Peter's, but rather interprets them as destinations reached after having experienced the ancient center of the city. Traveling from the heart of the Roman Empire to the heart of the Christian empire communicated a sense that the source of power for the latter came from the former. In *Roma Instaurata*, Flavio Biondo had suggested that the papacy should remodel Christian Rome after Roman society, an idea set into practice in the papal *possesso* of the city. In this procession from St. Peter's through the Capitoline, Forum, Arch of Constantine, Colosseum, and finally to the Lateran, the pope and his entourage ritually acted his spiritual and political possession of the city. The pope's inclusion of Rome's ancient center implied that his authority came from his role not only as the successor of Peter, but as the successor of the Caesars. Movement from the classical Rome to Christian Rome shows how the classical past provided legitimization for the present in the *Itinerarium* and *Opusculum* as well.

The *Itinerarium* and *Opusculum* highlight the ubiquity of classical and Christian monuments in Rome. Countless churches had been built on the foundations of temples, and classical monuments were present throughout the city. Because their works mention churches in addition to ancient monuments, it would have been natural for the authors to explain the relationship between the monuments as the *Mirabilia* had. Instead, they relate the names of

temples and churches, and what objects they contained or contain. For example, in da Firenze's discussion of the Church of Saint Blaise and the temple of Neptune he says:

Between Via Triumphalis and Via dei Banchi and the bank of the Tiber is the church of Saint Blaise, near which stands the temple of Neptune on the bank of the Tiber where, as Volaterranus says, there are great stones from the ruins restored by Hadrian. Indeed, there are many relics and indulgences in that church.⁴⁰

Da Firenze highlights both the temple's value as a source for humanist knowledge, and the church as a source of spiritual power. In contrast with the *Mirabilia*, where and what each monument *is* rather than what each monument *means* is important to Albertini and da Firenze. This method of presenting Rome to the traveler communicates that any given place in the city is infused with classical and Christian history. New Rome does not necessarily replace old Rome, rather old and new Rome exist side by side.

Moreover, Albertini and da Firenze reference what the reader sees in the present as a way to describe and oftentimes privilege the past. For example, da Firenze describes the base of the Capitoline hill:

Not much further, going to the left, is the small hospital of St. Mary in Portico which overlooks the church of St. Salvatore on the slope under the Campidoglio where the temple of Saturn used to be.⁴¹

He goes on to describe the mechanisms and functions of the great Roman treasury, located in the Temple of Saturn. Here, scribes kept records of the empire's revenue and expenses, and the great wealth of the treasury funded wars. In this passage, the Christian church of St. Mary in Portico is merely a marker: it serves as a contemporary site where the great institutions of classical Rome can be remembered. At other locations on the way to St. Peter's, da Firenze likewise celebrates Tarquinius' sewer:

⁴⁰Inter viam Triumphalem seu Bancos et ripam Tiberis ecclesia est sancti Blasii de planeta, ubi prope, templum Neptuni in ripa Tiberis, quod, ut Volaterranus dicit, ingentes lapides his annis proximis exinde effossi demonstrant ab Hadriano restitutum. In ea quidem ecclesia plurimae reliquiae et indulgentiae sunt. Da Firenze, 68.

⁴¹ Non multum post, in sinistra euntis, hospitale sanctae Mariae in Porticu est cui imminent parva ecclesia sancti Salvatoris diruta in clivo sub Capitolio ubi templum Saturni erat. Da Firenze, 56.

On the bank of the Tiber the great sewer made by Tarquinius can be seen, about which Livius said: “Tarquinius attended to making Forums in the Circus and the sewer where the greatest receptacle of the waste of the city was set up underground...”⁴²

Albertini similarly describes the great architectural feats of the Romans. Rome’s aqueducts, public baths, and theaters were spacious and ornately decorated. Similarly to da Firenze, Albertini always mentions which church is nearby a particular structure. Both assume that readers are more familiar with Christian churches, and focus on classical monuments, using the Christian church as an indicator of where a particular monument is.

Albertini and da Firenze also memorialize Roman emperors in their analysis of Rome’s topography. In one section of the *Itinerarium*, da Firenze describes the history of the Theater of Pompey, the statue that used to adorn it, and Caesar’s death:

When Pompey dedicated a temple to the Victory whose foundation was the same as that of the theater, he inscribed his name and honors. Here, Claudius Caesar built the Colossus of Jove which was 300 cubits tall and was known as Pompey for its proximity to the theater. In this same place, on the ides of March, Caesar was killed at the age of 56. In the same Campo dei Fiori, Saint Sebastian was also pierced with arrows and on memory of his mortal spoils a church was dedicated to him in Parione.⁴³

Da Firenze follows this description of Caesar’s death with one of Saint Sebastian’s death at Campo dei Fiori. He seems to draw a parallel between the violent deaths of the men, both of which occurred in the same area. Thus, this space becomes a holy ground of sorts where the traveler could recall two men of great cultural importance.

Objects could also render a Christian church more prestigious according to the *Itinerarium*. In Santa Maria in Aracoeli, there were:

⁴² ...in ripa Tiberis Cloaca Maxima visitor, teste Livio, a Tarquinio Prisco facta, qui ita ait: “Tarquinius Foros in Circo faciendos curavit et cloacam quae maxima receptaculum omnium purgamentorum urbis sub terram adendam...” Da Firenze, 60.

⁴³ Cum Pompeius aedem Victoriae didicatorum foret cuius gradus vice theatri essent, nomenque eius et honores inscriberet. Caludius Caesar in eo colossum Iovis dicavit cuius altitude triginta cubitorum erat, qui et pompeianus vocabatur a vicinate iam dicti theatri. In quo Caesar sexton et quinquagesimo aetatis suae anno, idibus Martias, interfectus fuit. In ipso Campo Flore sagittis confossus fuit sanctus Sebastianus ac pro mortuo relicto corpore, ubi nunc est ecclesia ipsius in Parione... Da Firenze, 62.

...many sepulchers of ancient pagans worthy of mention with various sculpted histories, and there [were] bodies of the saints...and other relics and many indulgences.⁴⁴

Santa Maria in Aracoeli, the church of the Franciscan order, could also be of interest to pilgrims because it housed sepulchers of the Romans. We see a similar appraisal of both Christian and classical relics in da Firenze's description of San Nicola in Carcere:

On the left... is San Nicola in Carcere, a title church of the cardinals, in which at the main alter there are the bodies of the martyr-saint brothers Marcus and Marcellus, and of the saints Faustus and Beatrice and the worthy saint Nicholas, and there are other relics such as the rib of Saint Matthew the Apostle and the arm of Saint Alexis the Roman. It is also possible to see two sepulchers of the ancients of no small reputation with sculpted statues.⁴⁵

While the bodies or relics of Christian saints and martyrs are no doubt more important to da Firenze, the fact that he points out and praises objects in churches from pre-Christian times is significant. He gives them special importance within Christian holy spaces, and suggests that readers of his guide do the same.

Albertini and da Firenze establish sites in the present where the greatness of past deeds could be remembered, changing how readers experienced the present state of Rome. Ancient spaces visible in the present were transformed from ruined pieces of stone and marble into objects with a profound and laudable history. For example, after crossing Ponte Sant'Angelo, the traveler faced Castel Sant'Angelo, once Hadrian's mausoleum and described thus:

For it was on this massive structure that a double order of columns was placed, the columns which the emperor Constantine ordered to be transferred to the churches of the apostles Peter and Paul. There was a roof constructed with forty two marble columns, with the structure constructed with beams, brass roofing, and wonderful adornment. In this massive structure Hadrian himself was buried with inscriptions that are read thus...⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Plurima antiquorum sepulcra paganorum memoratu digna variis histories sculpta atque sanctorum...reliquiae et multae indulgentiae sunt. Da Firenze, 61.

⁴⁵ In ea sinistra...sancti Antistitis Nicolai in carcere est titulusque cardinalis, in cuius maiori altare corpora sanctorum martyrum Marci et Marcelliani fratrum, sanctorumque Faustini et Beatricis ac dignitus sancti Nicolai, costa quoque sancti Matthaei Apostoli et brachium sancti Alexii romani aliaeve reliquiae sunt...Visuntur quoque duo sepulcra antiquorum in ea non parvae existimationis cum stauis sculptis. Da Firenze, 58

⁴⁶ Erat enim in ipsa mole duplex ordo columnarum super positas, quas columnas postea Constantinus imperator ad ecclesias apostolorum Petri et Pauli transferri iussit. Erat etiam illic tectum columnis excitatum quadraginta duobus marmoreis opere trabibus fabricato, tectura aenea, ornatu mirifico. Da Firenze, 70.

The ease with which Albertini and da Firenze describe the coexistence of classical and Christian objects and monuments in a given space communicates to the reader a Christian tolerance of and esteem for the ancients. They describe the great saints and martyrs memorialized in Rome's churches in addition to the great men of the classical past who built Rome's finest ancient monuments. Rome was the sum of the classical and Christian worlds, not just one or the other, and the traveler or pilgrim should see both. The importance attributed to classical figures, objects, and monuments in addition to Christian ones engendered a change in the topography of the city, communicating a sense that the Christian present could and should include the classical past.

Rome's New Patronage

More than establishing physical markers in the present to commemorate the past, Albertini and da Firenze also imply that classical objects actually enhance the status of Rome's newest buildings, and therefore the patrons who built or decorated them. For example, da Firenze mentions classical statues in the palace of Giuliano Cesarini:

Along Via Papale is located Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini's Palace, adorned with a beautiful gate. It was built by Giuliano, uncle of the cardinal, and it has statues of the Romans. Indeed, on the gate can be seen the Rovere insignia with the following golden writing: "Julius, vigorous like an oak, will give peace and order."⁴⁷

The collection of Roman antiquities and patronage of the arts in Renaissance Rome was an important sign of social status, and Albertini and da Firenze mention throughout their guidebooks whether palaces contained antiquities, paintings, or frescoes. In *Empire Without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome*, Kathleen Wren Christian discusses the gradual

⁴⁷ Per viam Papalem palatium Iuliani de Cesarinis cardinalis cum spetiosa porta exornatum invenitur; quod palatium "Iulianus eiusdem domus diaconus cardinalis patruus fundavit, in quo sunt statuæ romanorum. Super portam vero visuntur insignia roveria cum his carminibus aureis: Iulius aurata virenti in robore glandes, -- Pollicitus pacem iuraque remque dabit." Da Firenze, 67.

aura of social utility that antique objects acquired in Renaissance Rome.⁴⁸ Popes, cardinals, and Rome's elite competed for antiquities, and displayed them in their residences. Early sixteenth century guidebooks, by listing who owned antiquities, reflect the prestige contemporaries gave to these objects.

Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini's home boasted a statue of the three graces, Cardinal Fazio Santori's a statue of the rape of the Sabine women, and Giovanni De' Medici's unspecified statues in addition to a "most beautiful" library.⁴⁹ Albertini mentions a Roman inscription at the home of Giovanni Ciampolini, one of the most noted antiquarians of the sixteenth century. Da Firenze lists homes in the Parione neighborhood that contained statues:

Proceeding on that road, you will find the region they call Parione where many writers, authors, officials, citizens, and prelates live, in the homes of which there are the most beautiful marble statues and porphyric stone sculptures, where there are the home of the Saxol, della Valle, Manilius, Santa Croce, Maffei, Mellini, Branca, Massimo, Buzi, and many others.⁵⁰

Albertini describes the collection of the De' Rossi, a wealthy merchant family who welcomed visitors into their sculpture garden: "In the courtyard in the home of the De' Rossi there are statues and inscriptions everywhere; in the front three statues with a rooster can be seen."⁵¹

Another Roman family, the Savelli, possessed a prized sarcophagus of Hercules' labors:

The home of the most venerable Cardinal Savelli [is] not far from the church of Saint Nicholas in Carcere, in which there are two marble sepulchers with sculpted statues, and in the same place you can see the labors of Hercules.⁵²

Albertini and da Firenze do not merely point out the homes of prominent families. Rather, they say that these families owned Roman statues. This meant that in Renaissance Rome, it was not

⁴⁸ Kathleen Wren Christian, *Empire Without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, 1350-1527* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 35.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 511-519.

⁵⁰ Progreiens per viam istam, regionem quam Parionem vocant invenies ubi scriptores multi, auditors, offitiales, cives et praelati habitant, in quorum domibus statue pulcherrimae marmoreae et porphiretico lapide sculptae, columnae marmoreae et porphireae pretiosae, ut sunt domus de Saxolis, de Valle, de Manilius, da sancta Cruce, de Maphaeis, de Mellinis, de Branca, de Maximis, de Butiis aliisque multis. da Firenze, 67.

⁵¹ ...ut apparet in marmore quadrato in domo Roscia, cum statuis et signis undique inciso; in parte anteriore tres statucae cum gallo visuntur. Albertini, 478.

⁵² Domus reverendissimi Cardinalis Sabelli Romani, non longe ab ecclesia Sancti Nicolai in Carcere, in qua sunt duo sepulchra marmoreae cum statuis sculpta, et Herculis aerumnae ibidem visuntur. Albertini, 522.

enough for Rome's elites to build palaces. Rather, they had to decorate them with classical statues and design them in the classical style. Albertini and da Firenze praise the new homes built by Rome's most prominent families, one of the most famous being the Cancelleria, or papal chancellery. Da Firenze describes it thus:

A great palace erected from the foundations by Raphael Riario, nephew of Sixtus IV and cardinal of Saint George, out of Tiburtine stone, adorned with statues, paintings, columns, and many marble ornaments.⁵³

Another well known building constructed in the early sixteenth century was the Palazzo Farnese (today it houses the French embassy). Cardinal Alessandro Farnese acquired the palace near Campo dei Fiori in 1495, and in 1517 when da Firenze wrote his guidebook construction was in progress:

Nearby there is the palace which belongs to Alexander Farnese, cardinal of Sant'Eustacchio. He began to sumptuously rebuild the palace this year from the foundations, with marbles and beautiful columns rendering it ornate.⁵⁴

Alessandro Farnese would become pope in 1534, a fact which illustrates another important point about building in Renaissance Rome. Cardinals and papal families built the majority of palaces in Renaissance Rome, and adorned their homes with ancient sculptures, classical libraries, and frescoes depicting classical subjects. For the most part, Rome's elites had important (and lucrative) positions within the Church, and the conspicuous consumption and display of classical culture was a way for them to communicate their status. Albertini and da Firenze's emphasis on patronage of classical culture in Rome shows first that such patronage allowed families to assert their affluence, influence, and beneficence, and second that they believed tourists should know about such patronage.

⁵³ Magnum palatium [visitor] ex tiburtino lapide a Raphaele Riario nepote Xysti IV, sancti Georgii cardinal, a fundamentis erectum et usque ad finem perductum, statuīs ac picturis, columnis et multis marmoribus ornatum. da Firenze, 16.

⁵⁴ Apud quas palatium visitur Alexandri Farnese diaconi cardinalis sancti Eustachii. Quod palatium hoc anno a fundamentis ipse sumptuosissime reparare incepit, marmoreis et pulcris columnis illud ornatum reddens...da Firenze, 64.

By far, however, the greatest patron of classical culture in Renaissance Rome was the pope. Patronage of classical culture allowed the papacy to draw parallels between the Roman Empire and Christian empire, between the power of Rome's emperors and that of the pope, and between Rome as the capital of the Roman Empire and the capital of the Christian world. Classical Rome became in many ways a model for Christian Rome. This allowed the papacy not only to communicate its claims to temporal and spiritual authority, but to represent itself as the patron of the cultural revival of Rome. This included restoring and preserving classical monuments and objects, and rebuilding, constructing, and embellishing Christian churches and buildings.

Both classical and Christian Rome were a priority of the papacy, and Albertini and da Firenze's guidebooks praise the popes who built new Rome. Albertini no doubt praised Julius II because he dedicated his work to the pope, but his praise provides an important window into how the papacy used both guidebooks and patronage to communicate status and legitimacy. An analysis of the theme of papal patronage in both guidebooks also illustrates not only how new Rome was being constructed according to the objectives of its patrons, but that these very objectives could transfer to the readers of guidebooks and become part of the public memory of Rome.

The rebuilding of Rome, according to Albertini, began with the papacy of Julius II's uncle Francesco della Rovere, Pope Sixtus IV (1471—84).⁵⁵ The representation of Sixtus IV in

⁵⁵ Francesco della Rovere was born into a poor family near Savona, entered the Franciscan order, and studied philosophy and theology at the University of Padua. Sent to Rome by the Franciscan order, he was made cardinal of the church of San Pietro in Vincoli in 1467. When Pope Paul II died in 1471 della Rovere managed to persuade Cardinals from the Orsini, Borgia, and Gonzaga families to elect him to the papacy. Della Rovere's rise to power is significant considering his humble origins, and it is unsurprising that he established a permanent place for his family in Rome. Six of his nephews became cardinals, and he established marriage alliances between other members of his family and prominent European families. His story is an example of the immediate elevation of status that occurred when elected pope, and the humble origins of the della Rovere family help explain their efforts to communicate status through works such as the *Opusculum*.

texts such as the *Opusculum* and *Itinerarium* would lend to a collective memory of Sixtus IV as the progenitor of Renaissance Rome. Although Albertini credits prior popes with public works, their contribution to the present state of Rome pales in comparison to that of Sixtus and Julius:

Sixtus IV, Pontifex max, began the restoration of the city. First he demolished obscure porticos, broadened city streets, paved roads with brick, and destroyed many churches and raised them from [their] foundations in pristine form. His successors have tried to imitate him. Most recently, your Holiness has surpassed the same Sixtus within a short space of time: for the effort clearly demonstrates the truth of the matter, that due to [your] service a new city can be proclaimed.⁵⁶

According to Albertini, Sixtus' contribution to the urban transformation of Rome marked a new era. Sixtus is present throughout the *Opusculum* as the founder of public works, and his legacy carries over into da Firenze's *Itinerarium*.

In Albertini's text, Sixtus put his mark on both classical and Christian Rome. Much as Roman emperors had done, Sixtus had his name inscribed on marble slabs and placed under classical monuments. Albertini records one under aqueducts near the Lateran, under a statue of Hercules in the Palace of the Conservators, and another under the equestrian statues Sixtus "restored" at the Lateran.⁵⁷ Sixtus' patronage of classical culture extended to learning, and Albertini praises Sixtus for having founded the Vatican Library which housed collections of Virgil in a room filled with Greek texts.

Sixtus made his major mark, however, on Christian Rome according to Albertini who lists the Sistine Chapel and the Hospital Santo Spirito among many other contributions. Sixtus restored the campanile of the Lateran, Santa Maria del Popolo, Santa Maria della Pace, and a number of other churches. Ponte Sisto, Sixtus' bridge that connected pilgrims in the *abitato* to the Vatican, is referenced frequently as a major artery in the city.

⁵⁶ Sixtus Quartus, summus et maximus Pontifex, coecit Urbem instaurare. Primus enim obscuras porticus destruxit, ac vias et plateas Urbis dilatavit et lateritio opere stravit, ecclesiasque multas dirutas a fundamentis in pristinam formam redegit. Successores vero ipsum imitari conati sunt. Postremo sanctitas tua et Sixtum ipsum ceterosque brevi temporis spatio superavit: opera enim ipsa dilucide veritatem rei demonstrant, ut nova urbs merito appellari possit. Albertini, 499.

⁵⁷ Sixtus IX pont max equum hunc aeneum vetustate quasatum callabentem cum assessore restitvit. Albertini, 492.

While Sixtus IV laid the groundwork for the present state of Rome, it was Julius II who perfected it according to early sixteenth century guidebooks: “Indeed the city was renewed by Sixtus and your Holiness at the right time and rendered into its new form, and adorned daily in different sites and in the grandest buildings.”⁵⁸ According to Albertini, the papacy is responsible for building projects that aid the public and make the city beautiful:

There are many buildings in different sites of the city constructed by Sixtus and your Holiness, which are conducive to the public good and beautification of the city...⁵⁹

Similarly to Sixtus, Julius’ work in Rome encompassed a wide array of activities. Julius II widened the important streets Via Papalis and Via Giulia. Julius was also the patron of a number of palaces. Oddone Colonna (Martin V) began the palace of Santi Apostoli, but Julius II restored it from its foundations and decorated it with frescoes and statues. Boniface IX, Martin V, and Sixtus IV sponsored the reconstruction of the Palace of the Conservators, but Julius adorned it with beautiful frescoes. Nicholas V began work on the palace of Santa Maria Maggiore, but Julius II decorated it with doors, windows, and other “necessary” things.

One of Julius’ greatest projects was the Belvedere, a statue garden designed by Bramante in the Vatican. Albertini describes the statues Julius moved to the Belvedere:

I shall mention the most beautiful statue of Apollo that seems alive, transported by your Holiness to the Vatican: nearby there is the statue of Venus with a young winged Cupid sculpted in the same marble...I should not forget the most beautiful statue of the Laocoön, the discovery of which I beheld with my own eyes, placed in the Belvedere by your Holiness.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Quae quidem Urbs Syxti et tuae sanctitatus tempore instaurata et in novam formam redacta est, et quotidie diversis in locis aedificiis amplissimis exornatur. Ibid, 500.

⁵⁹ Sunt et alia multa aedificia diversis in locis Urbis a Syxto et tua Sanctitate constructa, quae ad utilitatem publicam et ornatum Urbis pertinent, ut alias, Deo dante, copiosus scribam. Ibid, 516

⁶⁰Quid dicam de pulcherrima statua Apollonis, quae viva (ut sic dicam) apparet, quam tua Beatitudo in Vaticanum transtulit: apud quam est Veneris statua cum alato Cupidine parvulo in eodem marmore sculpto...Non tacebo Laocoontis statuam pulcherrimam, quam propriis oculis aspexi inventam, anno .III. tuae Sanctitatis in loco Belvedere collocatam. Ibid, 491.

The statues of Apollo, Venus, and the Laocoön were rare classical prizes, and Julius' possession of them showed that he was Rome's greatest patron of classical culture.⁶¹ Albertini and da Firenze praise Julius' additions to the Vatican, and the rare classical texts that he acquired for the library.⁶²

Julius II is also praised, much as Sixtus IV was, for having renovated numerous churches. He continued the work Sixtus began on Santa Maria del Popolo, adorning the chapel with ornate decorations. He restored Santi Apostoli, raised San Biagio della Pagnotta from its foundations, and decorated San Pietro in Vincoli with statues.⁶³ Most importantly, both Albertini and da Firenze describe the renovations of St. Peter's. Da Firenze dedicated a chapter of the *Itinerarium* to St. Peter's, inaugurated in April 1506 in a pompous ceremony.⁶⁴

According to early sixteenth century guides, Julius II was a true Renaissance pope who rebuilt and renewed Rome. In Albertini's guide this is communicated by naming him in sections describing both old and new Rome. Da Firenze's itineraries give the perambulating visitor constant reminders of Julius' patronage, conveying a sense of his omnipresence in Rome. Both establish links between Julius' patronage and his temporal authority. According to Albertini, Julius is a "second Caesar" who reigns supreme in Rome as its ultimate benefactor: "Tamen tua Beatitudo, ut alter Caesar in ampliando imperio, exornandaque Urbe gloriari potest."⁶⁵ When he quotes an inscription on the Capitoline, "Nil esse difficilium quam bene imperare" (Nothing is as

⁶¹ Julius acquired the Laocoön after its exciting discovery in a vineyard near the Domus Aurea.

⁶² Nicholas III, Eugenius IV, and Nicholas IV began construction of the Vatican, Pius II, Paul II, and Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII and Alexander VI expanded it, and Julius II was enlarging and restoring it. Ibid, 512.

⁶³ ...est et alia capella parva sed pulchra in ecclesia Sancti Petri ad Vincula cum ferreis cathenis beati Petri apostolic, quam tua beatitudo aeneis intrinsecus et extrinsecus sculptis exornavit tabernaculis. Ibid, 509.

⁶⁴ Novissime vero hanc toto orbi venerandam ecclesiam Iulius II dirui fecit ipsamque ab omni parte ampliare iubens. Quod opus inceptum est anno quingentesimo septimo supra millesimum, die 15 mensis Apriles, in fundamento cuius aureis nummis solemniter posuit manu propria, praesentibus triginta quinque cardinalibus et tota curia et populo romano, cun hymnis et canticis...da Firenze, 79.

⁶⁵ Albertini, 497.

difficult as ruling well), one cannot help but think of the pope rather than secular rulers. Julius' legacy as a "second Caesar" came from his patronage of both classical and Christian Rome.

This was a Rome re-centered in its classical foundations where the deeds and works of the ancients were celebrated. At the same time, Rome was home to the martyrs, saints, and popes, a place where sins could be purged and souls released from purgatory. Travelers here could both participate in humanist exploration of the past and cleanse their souls. Monuments, both Christian and pagan, deserved visitation and praise. In the new Rome of the Renaissance guidebook genre, the topography of the city was drastically altered as Christians assimilated humanist techniques and ideology into their vision of Rome.

The *Opusculum* and *Itinerarium* contain valuable clues not only about the value of classical culture in Christian Rome, but about the present state of Rome and the values of the patrons who were transforming the papal city. In the socio-cultural and political context of Rome, patronage of classical and Christian culture was a sign of status. Rome's elites displayed status through patronage of building projects, restoration of Roman temples and Christian churches, and collection of antiquities. These guidebooks also express the papacy's efforts to reestablish its power in the Christian world by drawing parallels between Roman emperors and Renaissance popes. The power of the pope, and importance of Rome to Christendom, came not just from St. Peter, but from the Roman Empire. Guidebooks allowed papal families to share their patronage of classical and Christian culture in Rome in their efforts to emphasize the temporal and spiritual importance of the Roman Church.

CHAPTER 4

CLASSICAL RELIGION AND CHRISTIAN PIETY IN COUNTER REFORMATION ROME

The great God destined the Colosseum for the true Temple and regiment of our most holy Christian faith. It is said that from San Silvestro on... [the ancient monuments] generated such a scandal that the [priests] wanted to ruin them, and reduce them from false idolatry to the true sacrifices of our catholic faith. But this Amphitheater was found undeserving of justifiable ruin, and has been conserved until our times as the present form shows.⁶⁶

Bernardo Gamucci, *Le antichità della città di Roma*

When Martin Luther came to Rome in 1510, he hoped to find spiritual comfort in the final resting place of the great apostles, martyrs, and saints. He attended masses and climbed the steps of the Santa Scala along with flocks of other pilgrims. He left Rome, however, with the impression that the city crawled with corrupt and blasphemous priests unconcerned with saving souls. The massive building projects and the luxurious lifestyle of popes and cardinals contrasted with their calling to be humble servants of the people of Christ. In Luther's words, "if there is a Hell, then Rome is built on it."⁶⁷

This was the time of the papacies of Julius II and Leo X (Luther was excommunicated by Julius' successor Leo X), the "High Renaissance" in Rome when Raphael, Michelangelo, and Bramante were remaking the city, and humanists like Albertini and da Firenze were praising the greatness of Rome, both new and old. Not all humanists, however, praised Roman humanism, and how it had been appropriated by the Church. Erasmus' parody *Julius exclusus* (1517)

⁶⁶ ...ma havendola destinata il grande Iddio per il vero Tempio e reggimento della santissima nostra fede christiana, si dice che cominciando da Santo Silvestro, quei santissimi huomini per levar la grandezza di cosi fatti edifici dinanzi a gli occhi a quelle semplici pecorelle, che venendo a Roma mosse da Santo affetto, con stupore le ammiravano, e talvolta generavano scandolo in loro volsero parte ruinarle, e il restante ridurre dalla falsa idolotria a' veri sacrificii della nostra catolica fede: ma questo Anfiteatro (Coliseo) fu giudicato da loro indegno della lor giusta ruina, e pero' s'e' conservato fino a tempi nostri, si come nel presente disegno si dimostra." Gamucci, 47.

⁶⁷ Heiko Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 147.

depicted Peter denying Julius II and his fellow churchmen access to heaven because of their sins and corruption. In *Ciceronianus* Erasmus said that Roman humanism, in its esteem for classical culture, had substituted Christian symbols for “monuments of heathenism.”⁶⁸ Likewise, Luther and other reformers denounced the Roman Church for its perceived paganism. The use of classical culture as a model for Christian Rome, according to these men, had gone too far. They depicted the place and idea of Rome as the embodiment of corruption, and the cry of the Reformation called faithful Christians to deny the religious traditions of the Roman Church, Rome’s centrality to the institution of the papacy, and the importance of the city of Rome itself.

In addition to the critiques of Protestant reformers, Rome was also the locus of secular conflict, this time in the fight between the Hapsburgs and Valois for dominance in Italy. In 1527 Charles V’s army sacked the city for a week, pillaging its palaces and churches. Noblemen, humanists, and churchmen fled the city, and those remaining were either killed or ransomed their freedom. Relics were stolen, artwork destroyed or seized, churches desecrated, libraries burned, and holy objects mocked.⁶⁹ The symbolic effect of the sack was great. Some explained or rationalized the sack as God’s punishment of the depraved city. For others it was a cruel reminder that Rome’s spiritual authority meant little when confronted with the secular power of Imperial Spain.⁷⁰

This crisis, in addition to the fact that by the 1530’s much of Europe had denied the authority and validity of the Roman Church, ended humanist and papal confidence that Renaissance ideas could reflect and communicate the needs of Christian Rome. Christian humanists in the Curia began to replace their emphasis on philosophy, reason, and free will with

⁶⁸ D’Amico, 140.

⁶⁹ Stinger, 322.

⁷⁰ See Thomas Dandeleet, *Spanish Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

an emphasis on theology, faith, and divine grace.⁷¹ Sacred and secular art and building assumed a new character in what would be called Baroque Rome. Buildings and artwork emphasized the magnificence of God as opposed to the dignity of man, and aimed to inspire Christian emotion and piety. They were also didactic, proposing to teach Christian believers about the lives and spiritual meaning of the apostles, saints, and martyrs, and the traditions of the Church.

The critiques from outside the church, the crisis presented by the Reformation, and voices within the Roman Church itself pushed the Church into a new phase.⁷² Groups such as the *spirituali* and the Jesuits (established in 1540) examined questions of salvation, personal religious experience, God's word in the gospels, human sinfulness and the need for atonement. The Roman Inquisition, established in 1542, promised to eradicate heresies, and created an atmosphere of suspicion in Rome and the Italian peninsula.

After various attempts to convene a council to resolve theological disputes, the Council of Trent was called in 1545. It met in three sessions, from 1545 to 1547, from 1551 to 1552, and from 1562 to 1563. The Council consolidated the Church's position on the sacraments, Eucharist, justification, veneration of saints, and the importance of tradition in addition to scripture. A major issue was papal primacy, and the Council reaffirmed the pope's role as the successor of Peter.

Church policies did not hinder humanist exploration of Roman antiquities and history. Humanists continued to excavate and explore Rome's topography and their work unearthed, as it had done a century earlier, statues and objects that Rome's elites and foreign collectors greedily

⁷¹ Stinger, 325.

⁷² Notwithstanding the problems associated with the term "Counter Reformation," for the purpose of this paper I will refer to Counter Reformation Rome. Many voices for reform did come from within the Roman Church (for this reason many prefer the term "Catholic Reformation"), but the call for centralized Church institutions to redefine Christian piety and educate Christians was in many ways a reaction to the fragmentation of Christendom and assault on the papacy and traditions. In addition, scholars of the "Catholic Reformation" look for aspects of reform within the Catholic Church that predate the Reformation. I am more interested in the point at which the Church began to make questions of reform manifest in the city of Rome.

bought up. Travelers, whether Catholic or Protestant, came to Rome to explore its antiquities.⁷³

Interest in classical culture, therefore, did not cease in Counter Reformation Rome. Rather, knowledge about Rome's topography and history increased.

There was, however, a change in emphasis. Catholic tradition and piety, and the countless sites of Rome that attested to the Truth of the Catholic faith, took precedence. The religious climate of Rome revived humanist interest in the traditional practices of the Catholic Church, concerns which manifest in mid to late sixteenth century guidebooks to the city. The Jubilee year of 1550 turned the public's attention to literary descriptions of the city, and new guidebooks focusing on Rome's churches were published to answer the needs of Christian pilgrims and the aims of papal Rome.⁷⁴ By the Jubilee year of 1600, in which probably more than one-half million pilgrims came to Rome, more than one hundred editions of guidebooks to Christian and classical Rome had been published.⁷⁵

Counter Reformation Guidebooks

This chapter explores two types of guidebooks that were published prolifically from the mid sixteenth century through the eighteenth century. The first is the tradition of Palladio's *Le chiese di Roma*, printed in 1554 with a short companion guide to Roman antiquities, *L'antichità di Roma*.⁷⁶ Andrea Palladio was a humanist from Venice famous for his studies of Roman architecture, and possibly for this reason *Le chiese di Roma* was never reprinted under his name.⁷⁷ An almost exact copy of his text, *Le cose meravigliose dell'alma città di Roma*, was

⁷³ A trip to Rome was, for example, considered an essential part of the education of late sixteenth and seventeenth century English noblemen. See Peck.

⁷⁴ Howe, 24.

⁷⁵ Stinger, 330.

⁷⁶ Eunice Howe, *Andrea Palladio: The Churches of Rome* (Binghamton New York: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991) and Andrea Palladio, *L'Antichità di Roma* (Venice: Gieronimo Francino, 1554).

⁷⁷ Only six original copies of the first edition have been found.

issued more than thirty times by 1600, and reissued repeatedly through the next century.⁷⁸ This popular guidebook, attributed to an anonymous author, appeared with a short and colorful itinerary of ancient Rome composed by an Englishman named Schakerlay.⁷⁹

Palladio's *Le chiese* and the anonymous *Le cose meravigliose* were intended for Christian pilgrims, and were designed to make their visit to Rome's countless churches more fruitful. Rather than listing churches with their subsequent relics and indulgences as the *Indulgentiarum* tradition had done, *Le chiese* and *Le cose meravigliose* carried pilgrims through the city on a series of itineraries after a lengthy description of the seven major churches of Rome. Another characteristic which distinguished these works from their *Indulgentiarum* precedents were the companion guides describing Rome's antiquities. The primary focus of the works was Rome's churches, but they also suggested that a visit to Rome was not complete without a tour of classical Rome. In Shakerlay's introduction to *La guida romana* he said that visitors came anxious to see "her things," but they usually saw not even a third of what Rome had to offer.⁸⁰ He promised to satisfy the curiosity of visitors by taking them through ancient Rome in three rigorous itineraries.

Palladio in *L'antichità di Roma* likewise promised to satisfy the curiosity of visitors to Rome not by escorting them through Rome (his work, like Albertini's, divides Roman antiquities into categories), but by basing his work on ancient Roman sources and first-hand knowledge of the city's topography. Seeing as *L'antichità di Roma* was reprinted independently of *Le chiese* with numerous editions between 1554 and 1711, I will treat it as representative of another type of

⁷⁸ Gieronimo Francini, *Le Cose Meravigliose dell'Alma Città' di Roma* (Venice, 1588).

Palladio's edition of *Le chiese* was printed without illustrations, but subsequent editions of *Le cose meravigliose* did have illustrations.

⁷⁹ Shakerlay was most likely a permanent resident of Rome. Howe, 119.

⁸⁰ Howe, 125.

Roman guidebook that was intensely popular through the seventeenth century.⁸¹ This second type of guidebook focused more on Rome's antiquities than churches, and showcases the extent of humanist knowledge about Roman topography and civilization by the mid to late sixteenth century. Bernardo Gamucci's *Le antichità della città di Roma*, published for the first time in 1565, is exemplary.⁸² It is a four hundred page description of Rome's monuments that also describes Roman religion, festivals, rites, and culture. Although Palladio's work reached a wider audience and was republished many more times (Gamucci's work was published four times, in 1565, 1569, 1580, and 1588), Gamucci's work contains far more detail.

Both types of guidebooks—the description of Rome's churches with the appendix guide to antiquities, and Palladio and Gamucci's descriptions of Roman antiquities—reflect important changes in the guidebook tradition in Counter Reformation Rome. The former is a devotional guide for traditional Catholics that also encourages visitors to see Rome's antiquities. The latter concentrates on classical Rome, divulging information about Rome's monuments but focusing on Roman civilization, and especially what the authors name for the first time in the guidebook tradition as Roman “religion.” At the same time, this type of guidebook affirms Christian piety by drawing a line between past and present. Roman religion was in the past, Christianity is in the present. It is acceptable to study Roman civilization as long as travelers acknowledge that while Roman civilization was great, the religion was “superstitious,” “licentious,” and “idolatrous.”

Both types of guidebooks, therefore, reflected how Christians understood Rome's antiquities in Counter Reformation Rome. Each, in its own way, separated Christian Rome from

⁸¹ It was published twenty times by 1600 (in 1554, 1555, 1558, 1563, 1565, 1570, 1571, 1573, 1575, 1576, 1580, 1585, 1587, 1589, 1591, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1599, and 1600) and with a gradually decreasing frequency through 1750. In the majority of these years, it was printed numerous times. It was published in Italian, French, and Spanish.

⁸² It was published in 1565, 1569, 1580, and 1588. There are 41 existing copies of the 1565 manuscript, 31 of the 1569 manuscript, 28 of the 1580 manuscript, and 37 of the 1588 manuscript. Bernardo Gamucci, *Le Antichità della Città di Roma* (Venice, 1569).

classical Rome, and therefore sacred Rome from secular Rome. Like their Renaissance precedents, they upheld the line of continuity between classical Rome and Christian Rome, but showed that Christian piety was the point of separation between the two. Both reflected how humanists continued to rigorously study antiquities despite Counter Reformation emphasis on Christian piety. For these humanists, it was important to study the greatness of Roman civilization, but to recognize that it was centered around a religious tradition that had been replaced by the one, true Catholic faith.

The *Le chiese* guidebooks

Palladio's *Le Chiese* and the anonymous *Le cose meravigliose* promised an updated account of the relics and indulgences of Rome that would spread traditional Catholic views and practices. Palladio was only interested in existing churches, and although he says that there used to be thousands of churches in Rome, he only describes the churches pilgrims would actually see.⁸³ In his preface Palladio promises to apply humanist techniques to his study of churches in order to more accurately describe their history:

And all this I have taken from the bulls which in many of these churches can be read at the choir or are elsewhere displayed, from sacred histories and from ancient tablets.⁸⁴

The *Le chiese* guidebooks exclude the myths of the *Mirabilia*, but include the miraculous stories about the power of a particular church's relics. When describing Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Palladio leaves out the story of Octavian's vision, but states that the church contains a stone with the footsteps of an angel that appeared at the time of the church's consecration by Pope Gregory. While humanist methods of analysis are fundamental to the *Le chiese* guidebooks, they are Christian documents that reflect a belief in miracle and the divine power of objects.

⁸³ The 1588 edition of *Le cose meravigliose* republished his information about these churches, and added new information about churches built in the last thirty years.

⁸⁴ Howe, 72

Le chiese and *Le cose meravigliose* aimed to educate pilgrims, reinforce Catholic tradition, and spread Christian piety. They describe Rome's seven principal churches (St. John Lateran, St. Peter's, San Paolo, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Maggiore, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, San Sebastiano) first, establishing the importance of these sites. These churches were Rome's oldest, (all except Santa Maria Maggiore and San Sebastiano were founded by Constantine), they contained the most important relics, and therefore had the power to expiate sins. They were central to Rome's liturgical calendar, and were the sites of miracles that attested to the truth of Catholic faith.

The *Le chiese* guidebooks describe the founding stories of Rome's principal churches as miraculous events. Constantine built, endowed, and decorated San Paolo on the spot where the head of St. Paul the Apostle was miraculously discovered. During the consecration of St. John Lateran an image of Jesus appeared which never burned although the church caught fire twice. The churches contained countless relics, among them some of the most important in Christendom. St. John Lateran contained the heads of Peter and Paul; St. Peter's the Veronica and the heads of various saints; San Paolo the chains that bound Saint Paul; Santa Maria Maggiore the body of Saint Mark and Christ's manger; San Lorenzo the bodies of Saint Lawrence and Stephen; San Sebastiano the body of Saint Sebastian, and the stone where Christ left his footprint when he appeared to Peter who was fleeing Rome; and Santa Croce in Gerusalemme the blood of Christ, thorns from his crown, and wood from the cross. Pilgrims who visited these churches or viewed these relics were promised years of indulgences. At St. Peter's there were 6048 years of indulgence every day which were doubled on the feast of St. Peter's, and multiplied for pilgrims who come from distant lands.⁸⁵ *Le chiese* and *Le cose meravigliose* also listed the numerous feast

⁸⁵ Ibid, 79.

days associated with certain churches, meaning that each church acquired special importance in the celebration of saints and holy days.

This richness of detail is not limited to Rome's principal churches, and these guidebooks describe miraculous stories, relics, indulgences, and feasts associated with Rome's churches. As pilgrims moved through Rome, they were reminded of the miraculous power of the Christian faith and the myriad ways that God intervened on earth. They were told, for example, that at the site of Santa Maria in Trastevere a river of oil sprang forth from the ground and flowed all the way to the Tiber when Christ was born. The *Le chiese* guidebooks described the relics contained in Rome's churches, and the power these relics had to expiate pilgrims' sins. Rome's importance as a pilgrimage destination was reinforced by focusing on relics and promising a reward to pilgrims who traveled from afar to visit Rome. The countless relics meant that the liturgical calendar could be celebrated in full at Rome through actual contact with the bodies of Christ, saints, apostles, and martyrs. Popular piety as understood by Catholic reformers was therefore affirmed and disseminated through the *Le chiese* guidebooks.

By attaching a description of ancient Rome to that of its churches, these guidebooks also showed travelers that their visit to Christian Rome was not complete without a tour of classical Rome. Schakerlay began his itinerary of ancient Rome with an exhortation to see as much as Rome as possible:

Whosoever wants to see the ancient and marvelous things of Rome should begin in an orderly fashion. They should not do as so many do, that is, to look at this and that, and then at the end leave without even having seen half.⁸⁶

He promised that if visitors followed his itinerary, they would see all of ancient Rome in three days. His guide is brief and casual; it describes names of monuments without giving much detail and is written from the point of view of a local, not a scholar. This work was clearly not intended

⁸⁶ Howe, 80.

for a humanist audience, and the fact that publishers decided to print this work, not Palladio's original companion *L'antichità di Roma*, with *Le cose meravigliose* shows that its intended audience was regular pilgrims.

It is unsurprising, then, that Schakerlay's itinerary begins at St. Peter's (as the *Mirabilia* had done). From there, he points out monuments such as the obelisk where Julius Caesar's ashes were supposedly stored, circuses, palaces, and temples. Some descriptions, such as that of the place where Romans celebrated the games of Flora with the "dishonest" women who lived in the grottos nearby, are colorful. Other than occasional moments such as these, Schakerlay does not elaborate or explain, but rather points out. His conciseness is almost disappointing when, for example, he describes the Pantheon as an "old church built by Marco Agrippa." Despite his brevity, his objective rhetoric is similar to Albertini and da Firenze's, and his work demonstrates a genuine interest in Rome's antiquities and desire for the everyday tourist to see them.

At the same time that the *Le chiese* guidebooks affirmed the importance of classical Rome, they also showed that they were something separate and distinct from Christian Rome. The focus of the guidebooks was Christian Rome, where the miraculous and salvific was conserved, remembered, and acted out. Rome's antiquities were an appendix. They were interesting to see and important for one's secular education, but not foundational to salvation. In this way, these guidebooks distinguish between the history of ancient monuments and religious practice.

The *Le chiese* guidebooks do, however, maintain a line of continuity between classical Rome and Christian Rome. In their descriptions of Rome's churches, they state which ones used to be temples. In the 1588 edition of *Le cose meravigliose* the author describes the obelisks Sixtus V (pope from 1585 to 1590) placed in front of Roman churches. When transposed before

a church, these ancient symbols of power and virility attested to the strength of the Church. Despite the recognition of Rome's classical past, and the use of that past to convey power, the sense that classical culture provides a model for Christian Rome has disappeared, however. Lost is the sense that patronage of classical culture was just as important as patronage of Christian culture in Rome, and that antiquities are status symbols for Rome's Christian populace. Even though classical Rome is worthy of admiration, it is Rome's highly pious Christian character that legitimizes it today:

Therefore, you will find that whereas Rome once was feared and esteemed by the whole world for the great things brought about by the ancients, that it is now even worthier of admiration on account of so many and such sacred things which are still hers, and for which she has become the head and real seat of the true Christian religion.⁸⁷

The *L'Antichità* guidebooks

Seeing as the *Le chiese* guidebooks described primarily the churches of Rome, it is natural that they emphasized and privileged Christian over classical Rome. In addition to these guidebooks, in order to understand how contemporaries understood Christian Rome in relation to classical Rome in the mid to late sixteenth century it is also necessary to analyze guidebooks that concentrated on classical Rome. Andrea Palladio's *L'antichità di Roma* and Bernardo Gamucci's *Le antichità della città di Roma* illustrate this second type of guidebook.

Palladio and Gamucci wrote their works for humanists visiting the city of Rome, and their works demonstrate an impressive leap in knowledge about Roman topography, history, and civilization. Both aim to correct the discrepancies among modern writers by basing their analysis on ancient sources. They use rational analysis to decide that a particular monument had been used for a purpose different than that proposed by other writers. They lament the difficulty of their task: Rome had been ravaged by time, conquest, fires, and consumption and destruction of

⁸⁷ Howe, 72.

ancient materials, meaning that the task of the antiquarian was difficult and frustrating.⁸⁸ They are, however, optimistic. Gamucci relates that every day more and more sites were being discovered, meaning that every new writer would have more material to add to the topography of Rome.⁸⁹

As their antiquarian predecessors had done, Palladio and Gamucci praise classical Rome. Palladio repeats the popular saying that Augustus found the city in bricks, and left it in marble. Roman buildings in the city were the eternal reminders of their value, and examples for their posteriors. Ancient Rome was the product of the industrious, rich, and generous spirit of the Romans. After describing one monument, Gamucci says that he will describe other things

...so that the reader might for himself know how great the strength of the Romans was, and the generosity of their spirit, which in war and in peace always spread to things worthy of immortal fame.⁹⁰

The authors praise the great Roman emperors for their patronage of urban works and classical culture. Gamucci praises Caio Cesare's virtue for supporting the arts and the "noble" sciences, and Nerva for his clemency, beneficence, and sound governance. Palladio describes a marble triumph that the Roman people sculpted in honor of Julius Cesar, the "father" of the Roman Empire. Both describe the magnificent sculptures that once adorned Rome's monuments, the luxury of palaces, the exotic animals kept by emperors, and the wealth and power of ancient Rome. Similarly to Albertini and da Firenze's works, their vivid descriptions allowed ancient Rome to come alive for readers, and they communicated that the city of Rome had been the visual product of the greatness of the Roman Empire.

Palladio and Gamucci do more than describe Rome's monuments, and are interested in what purpose they served in Roman culture and society. They devote a substantial portion of

⁸⁸ ...e esempio a i posteriori che non si veggono chiaramente in piedi, concio sia che le guerre, incendii, e ruine, che per tanti sono stati in essa citta', habbiamo guasto, arso, e sepolto buona parte di tale memoria. Palladio, 106.

⁸⁹ Gamucci, 168.

⁹⁰ Accioche possa il lettore per se stesso consocere quanto fossero grandi le forze de' Romani, e il generoso animo, il quale e in guerra e in pace sempre applicando a cose degne di immortal fama. Gamucci, 113.

their texts to describing Roman traditions and society, something their Renaissance counterparts had not done. In addition to naming where young men practiced combat, they describe the importance of victory for Romans. According to Gamucci, victorious young men acquired merit from the gods and their homeland, honor and glory along with their countrymen, victory against their enemies, and honor for their name through their successors.⁹¹ The authors also describe traditions associated with Roman women. They detail what women wore when they wed, the Roman custom of giving a sound upbringing to children, and in what circumstances Romans could end a wedding. Palladio says that the “Lattaria” (“Suckling”) column was so called because women left illegitimate newborns there.

In addition to these traditions, Palladio and Gamucci are especially interested in the gods associated with particular temples and what they signified for Romans. According to them, Roman emperors or Roman citizens built temples out of respect for the Gods according to given needs. Gamucci describes the rebuilding of the Capitoline, and the emperors who restored it: “Vespasian, moved by religion and piety towards his homeland, renovated it.”⁹² Numa Pompilia wanted to fill the city with “religion and ceremony,” and built numerous temples. Regular citizens founded other temples, and Palladio describes one the women of Rome built in honor of Carmenta. Gamucci tells the legend of the Temple of Romulus built in the place where Romulus appeared in front of Iulio Proculo and revealed the promises of the gods to him. The function of particular gods was especially important to Gamucci. According to him, Roman religion held that Mars defended the city, meaning that emperors went to the temple of Mars to ask for victory in war. The people made sacrifices on behalf of the city at the underground altar of Pluto. They

⁹¹ Gamucci, 173

⁹² Vespasiano mosso dalla religione e pietà verso la patria, lo rinovò. Gamucci, 11.

celebrated Saturnalia festivals at the temple of Saturn: “as they say, under the auspicious Empire of Saturn Rome experienced its Golden Age, celebrated by the ancient poets.”⁹³

The authors are particularly interested in how Roman rites were carried out, and what Roman festivals were like. Palladio gives an impressive list of the days the Romans celebrated certain festivals in honor of gods.⁹⁴ He dedicates three sections of his work to elaborating on priests, vestal virgins (he describes in detail the ritual killing of one for breaking her vow of chastity), and vestments and instruments used for sacrifices. Although Palladio describes some traditions, it is Gamucci who recounts Roman rites in detail and demonstrates deep interest in the inner workings of Roman religion. The chastity of the Vestal virgins was important because their pure state confirmed the “validity of their offerings.” Romans “believed” that men could become gods. A festival every August in honor of Venere Vecordia was celebrated with great pomp and celebration, especially by women who wanted to guarantee their honesty to Venus. During sacrifices to Mercury, the Romans:

...washed themselves and wet their foreheads, calling his name in continuation. In so doing, they thought that he would erase all their sins.⁹⁵

In honor of Neptune, Romans “moved by their religion” celebrated games and offered animal sacrifices.⁹⁶ On the day that the moon was opposite the sun, the Romans celebrated the gods by throwing images of the Greeks into the Tiber. Romans, according to Gamucci, were pious people who performed rituals and sacrifices with the hopes that their gods would respond favorably.

Palladio and Gamucci’s texts reveal intimate knowledge of classical sources, a precise understanding of Roman topography, and a genuine fascination with Roman civilization never

⁹³ Gamucci, 25.

⁹⁴ Palladio, 110.

⁹⁵ “...bagnarsi e lavarsi fronte, chiamando sempre il nome suo, e facendo cosi pensando che si cancellassero tutti i lor peccati” Gamucci, 85.

⁹⁶ “I quali havevano Nettuno per loro principale dio, mossi da religione celebravano con gran solenita’ in suo honore certi giuochi, e sacrificii, offerendo animali” Gamucci goes onto say that mariners went there who had escaped dangers of the seas, and painted their adventures on the walls. Gamucci, 171.

seen before in the guidebook genre. Their interest in Roman “religion” can be understood as a reaction to the fragmentation of Christianity during the Reformation. Christians were forced to recognize the plurality of Christianity, and therefore began to consider and define beliefs and practices different from their own as distinct religions rather than “paganism,” “heresy,” and “law” in the case of Judaism and Islam.⁹⁷

Writing about the religious traditions of classical Rome, however, posed potential problems for Counter Reformation humanists. It had become commonplace for antiquarians in Rome to write about Roman civilization and its great monuments objectively as sources of knowledge about an ancient civilization that could be reconciled with or related to conceptions of legitimacy dear to the Church. This was more difficult when it came to Roman religion, as the precepts of Counter Reformation piety reaffirmed and carefully monitored Christian faith and practice. Although the Church was worried about Protestant, not “pagan,” inclinations amongst Christian believers, it nonetheless monitored behavior and belief, meaning that being too interested in ancient Roman religion could be suspect.

The problem for humanists in this time, then, was how was one to write about Roman religion without sounding sympathetic. Palladio and Gamucci accomplished this in different ways. Palladio followed the example of his predecessors by giving just as much information as he needed to. His book, after all, had been written as a short companion guide to *Le chiese* even though it was printed independently for the next century. Like Albertini and da Firenze, he indicated where temples were and which gods they had been dedicated to. He elaborated on their works by recounting the vestments and behaviors of priests in addition to dates of important festivals, but stopped there.

⁹⁷ Christians had always encountered distinct religious beliefs and traditions outside and inside their tradition. These beliefs and traditions had been defined, however, as “paganism,” “heresy,” and “law” (Judaism and Islam), not as distinct “religions.”

Gamucci took his analysis one step further. As mentioned above, he was interested in the details of the Roman religious experience. In *Le antichità della città di Roma*, his analysis of Roman religion vacillates between fascination and abhorrence, a fact which indicates how he was able to both write about and understand for himself this aspect of Roman civilization. He was able to reconcile his humanist fascination with classical culture with his Christian condemnation of Roman religion by exploring Roman religion in detail but judging it as false.

The present day church of San Biagio was built over the temple of Neptune, “much celebrated in the false religion of the gentiles.”⁹⁸ The “vain” religion of the Roman people caused them to hold festivals and games in which they attempted to mitigate the ire of the gods.⁹⁹ He describes the festival of Lupercalia in honor of Romulus thus:

The festivals of this God were celebrated by nude shepherds covered with the furs of animals killed during sacrifices. And [dressed] in this way they sang certain verses composed according to the habits of those times in honor of that God, moving their whole body with marvelous dexterity, and making unusual noises with the furs they held in their hands. With [these furs] they even struck with licentious ceremony all the women they encountered in the city.¹⁰⁰

Roman ceremonies are “licentious,” Roman religion is “superstitious,” gods are “idols,” and women hungry to satisfy their “libido.” In two passages, he relates how the “avaricious” priests of “this religion,” seeing the faith of the people, convinced them to offer ten percent of their riches to the temple.¹⁰¹ He criticizes the Roman priesthood for becoming rich by taking advantage of the fervent faith of the Roman people at the same time that he labels Roman religion as idolatrous and superstitious.

⁹⁸ “Il tempio di Nettuno già molto celebrato nella falsa religione de Gentili.” Gamucci, 166.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 66.

¹⁰⁰ Le feste di questo Dio erano celebrate da’ pastori nudi, lequali erano ricoperte da quelle pelli d’animali, che essi havevan morto ne’ sacrificii: e a questa foggia andavan cantando certi versi fatti, secondo le consuetudine di quei tempi, in lode di quello Dio, atteggiando con meravigliosa destrezza con tutto il corpo, e facendo con le pelli che havenano in mano certi insoliti rumori, con lequali anche percotevano con licentiosa cerimonia tutte le donne, che rincontravano per la città’. Gamucci, 64.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 75.

Gamucci and Palladio also deal with the problem of Roman religion by expressing ardent faith and belief in the superiority of the Christian religion. They refer repeatedly to “our Christian religion,” “our savior Jesus Christ,” and “our most holy faith.” When describing Roman funeral ceremonies they express disgust at how Romans either burned or buried the dead. Palladio describes “putrifying” bodies piled on top of each other. Gamucci said that the Romans burned their dead until the Christian religion’s “most holy ceremonies began, and they forbade the habit of burning bodies as a sign of greater piety.”¹⁰² They describe how three fountains sprang up from the three places Saint Paul’s head hit when Nero decapitated him, now the site of the Church of San Paolo. Gamucci says the catacombs contain Christian saints who, “inflamed with ardent zeal, prayed devotedly to the true God,” and were killed by “the enemy.”¹⁰³ Stefano, through his heated orations miraculously made a temple devoted to Mars fall when he was being forced to sacrifice to it. In the introduction to *L’antichità* Palladio relates a mythical story of Constantine whereby Roman priests wanted to cure him of leprosy by having him bathe in the “pure blood of innocent children.” He was instead cured by the prayers of Saint Silvester, and had a baptismal bath of “pure water” built in honor of the event.

In both works, the authors convey the sense that although the Roman Empire was great, it fell and was replaced by the Christian Empire. In the 1588 edition of *L’Antichità* Palladio says,

And in this way Rome, ruler of the world, was preyed on and scorned by the Barbarians. And even though she was taken and destroyed many times, she still stands, seeing as the seat of the most holy vicar resides here, over which Sixtus V now sits.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² la religion Christiana comincio’ a usare e prima originare le sue santissime cerimonie, e revocano l’uso di abbruciare I corpi morti, in segno di maggio pieta. Gamucci, 108.

¹⁰³ ...accesi d’ardente zelo, far devote oratione al vero Dio, e salvator nostro, rimossi dal nimico consortio de’ Gentili. Ibid, 84.

¹⁰⁴ ...et a’ questo modo Roma dominatrice del mondo fu predate, e schernita da Barbari. Et benche sia stata tante volte presa, e guasta; nondimeno e’ ancora in piedi, essendo in essa la sedia del santissimo Vicario del Signor nostro Giesu Christo, sopra la qual meritamente siede Sisto V. Palladio, 126.

The Roman Empire was once the center of the world, and is now the center of the Christian world. The line of continuity between them is maintained, but these texts emphasize that it is the Christian nature of Rome that separates the two. According to Gamucci, the Vatican was named after the Vates, or Roman priests at the important temple dedicated to the god Vatican. Now it is the home of the vicar Christ and the principal “Temple of the World.”¹⁰⁵ The “wasted and spoiled” gods were replaced by the Christian God.¹⁰⁶ Speaking about the end of the Roman Empire, Gamucci says:

But in our times the extent to which the false promises of those lying Idols should have been believed has been demonstrated to the world; seeing as we have observed the end of that stability which, according many promises should have been eternal.¹⁰⁷

Once the empire of the world, Rome has maintained its position of power because it holds the “head of the holy Christian religion, which has free jurisdiction over all other reigns and foreign nations.”¹⁰⁸

Palladio and Gamucci’s studies of antiquities, like the *Le chiese* guidebooks, fell in line with the image of Rome and Christendom put forth by church leaders during the Counter Reformation. Rome was the home of the apostles, martyrs, saints, and head of Christendom, or “vicar of Christ.” The fact that Rome had been the head of the Roman Empire helped church leaders put forth their claims to authority, but the line of continuity between classical and Christian Rome was less clear than it had been for Renaissance leaders. The Counter Reformation focused on the Christian character of Rome, and it was the question of religion that separated classical from Christian Rome. The past was therefore used by the writers of these

¹⁰⁵ Gamucci, 184.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 15.

¹⁰⁷ Ma ne’ tempi nostri si e’ dimostrato benissimo al mondo, quanto si dovesse creder alle false promesse di quei bugiardi Idoli; havendo noi veduto la fine di quella stabilita, che si doveva con tante promesse confermare eternale. Ibid, 14.

¹⁰⁸ Et nei tempi nostri similmente si puo dire, che essendo in Roma il capo della santa religione Christiana, ella habbia ancora sopra gli altrui Regni, e altre straniere nationi libera giurisdittione. Ibid, 168.

guides to emphasize and highlight Christian piety and tradition in the present. The fall of the Roman Empire—caused externally by the Barbarians, and internally by the false religion of the Romans themselves—was a lesson for all Christians. The Protestant attacks on Christian Rome, and the impiety of Catholics themselves threatened all of Christendom, and its center Rome.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

*Old Rome was I, now new Rome shall be praised;
I bear my head aloft, from ruin raised.*

Returning to the inscription that began this journey through Rome, guidebooks to the city of Rome illustrate yet another way that new Rome was “raised” from old Rome. These guidebooks recorded socio cultural and political changes occurring in the papal city at the same time that they projected a calculated image of medieval, Renaissance, and Counter Reformation Rome by relating Rome’s classical and Christian past to the present. They reflect the humanist tradition of interest in and knowledge about ancient Rome, religious sensibilities, and papal concerns of legitimacy and authenticity.

Rome, the home of the papacy, faced specific challenges in each period. Papal primacy, the location of the Holy See in Rome, the pope’s relationship to secular authorities, and, finally, whether the pope was the true representative of Christian faith were questions that plagued the papacy throughout its history. Questions of authority and legitimacy are therefore paramount to representations of the city of Rome, and classical culture in the guidebook tradition grounds the papacy’s sacred authority in the Roman Empire.

At the same time, religious and intellectual movements arose in each period that looked to Rome in different ways. At their most simplified core, they all valued both the idea and place of Rome. Rome was the spiritual center of Christendom, and its topography recorded the sanctity of holy figures and origins of the Christian faith. For intellectuals Rome had been the center of the Roman Empire, and the city’s ruins attested to the greatness of that civilization. These

movements differed, however, in their interpretations of how Christian Rome related to classical Rome. Medieval Christians understood classical monuments as objects that mythically proved the triumph of Christianity. Renaissance Christians looked at classical monuments as objects with their own intrinsic value that provided a model for the present. They are given a special importance within the city, and allowed Rome's elite and the papacy to communicate status, authority, and legitimacy. Finally, Counter Reformation Christians saw Rome's classical culture as a fascinating object of study that contained, however, a religious tradition that separated classical Rome from the present. The foremost concern of Counter Reformation guidebooks was to encourage Christian piety, reinforce traditions, and educate Christian pilgrims.

The guidebook tradition found itself at the nexus of religious and intellectual movements, and the desire of the papacy to assert its authority as based in Rome. In many ways, the guidebook tradition was an organic movement spurred by intellectual curiosity and religious zeal, meaning that it would be inaccurate to portray guidebooks simply as papal propaganda. The papacy, however, responded to the dominant cultural trends of its times in order to assert authority. Guidebooks were published and printed during times in which the papacy was centralizing and communicating Rome's importance to the Christian West.

Papal strategies of asserting power, however, would not have been possible without the religious and intellectual trends of the times, meaning that the Church and culture were in constant dialogue. This paper has showed that the very nature of guidebooks changed in different periods. These texts therefore demonstrate not only new strategies of asserting authority, but new systems of knowledge and conceptions of piety. The ways that contemporaries understood Rome's classical culture in relation to its Christian culture changed according to the objectives and values of writers and patrons.

The relationship between classical and Christian culture in these texts, therefore, tell us about the importance of the actual city of Rome for pilgrims, humanists, and the papacy in addition to what “Rome” meant to contemporaries. Guidebooks provide a window into time-specific images of Rome, and which set of ideas contemporaries desired to communicate and disseminate. In as much, they record various levels of how “New Rome,” or Rome in the present, was rewritten according to interpretations of its classical and Christian past.

First, guidebooks recorded actual changes in the city: patrons placed obelisks before churches; adorned churches and palaces with ancient columns, statues, and inscriptions; restored aqueducts; and rebuilt and adorned old churches. The physical denouement of new ideologies—monuments were torn down and rebuilt, churches adorned, antiquities displayed, and grand palaces constructed—forged the “new Rome” glowingly recounted in guidebooks.

Second, through their guidebooks, these authors also shared their cultural values as well as the objectives of patrons with readers. Rome attracted travelers who had come for spiritual, intellectual, political, and financial ends, and guidebooks showed them Rome in a way never seen before. Rome boasted a wealth of classical and Christian monuments, history, and culture, as well as energetic patrons who were constantly reworking the city. The ways that writers of guidebooks presented Rome’s past in the present, its classical culture in relation to its Christian culture, engendered a new public memory of Rome.

Guidebooks also allowed for personal interpretation of Rome, meaning that each traveler would fashion a unique, private “new Rome” for him or herself. Guidebooks conveyed to the reader not only a sense of the viability of Rome, but also the value of discovering Rome just as they were—personally and directly. Readers became participant-observers in a process in which their bodies and senses were asked to imagine what Rome must have looked like in the past.

Guides asked readers to read the inscriptions over buildings and locate classical ruins, churches, palaces, and other monuments. Once they observed Rome for themselves, travelers would rewrite Rome according to diverse agendas and interpretations. Just as writers of guidebooks reinvented the past, building upon the imaginations of their patrons and predecessors, so did readers.

Classical and Christian Rome, therefore, was refashioned in multiple layers. The papacy and other patrons built, commissioned, and restored according to their own objectives and ideologies, literally changing the face of Rome. Humanists wrote about the city, adding an interpretive layer to Rome that would lend to a collective memory of the city. Finally, individuals moving through the city would observe these interpretations and refashion Rome according to their own personal or cultural context. Rome was constantly rewritten according to the identity of its authors, and would be revised and reedited through the next tumultuous centuries. Place, a palimpsest defined by the identity of those who reshape it, in turn provides an interpretive structure for definition of self, community, and institution.

Space and time used in this matter, however, present a paradox, as objects from the past used to shape and communicate identity are recovered at the same time that they are lost for all time. As noted by Andrea Palladio himself:

Roman monuments have been subject to many and diverse misfortunes: this is the reason for which in our times it is difficult to note true sites in the city of Rome; many because of their old age have been totally lost, and others ruined and in part rebuilt according to the advantage and importance of whoever rebuilt; so much so that in different times because of these men valleys were filled, hills lowered, streets turned around, and other renovations of sites and names of this kind according to their fancy...there is so much confusion and obscurity in our times that amongst writers it is difficult to find the truth, seeing as sites have been almost completely transformed.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Molti e diversi accidenti, che sono accaduti ne gli edifici Romani; sono proprio cagione, che ne' tempi nostri si puo dare difficilmente notizia del vero sito della citta' di Roma; con cio sia che di quelli molti per l'antichita' al tutto perduto, e altri ruinati in parte sieno stati rifatti secondo che si giudicava convenirsi all' importanza di esse fabbriche; talmente che essendosi in diversi tempi per cagion di essi ripiene le valli, e abbassati I monti, e rivoltate le strade, e altre rinnovate d'ordine, di siti, e di nome, second che e' piaciuto a coloro, che di tempo in tempo ne hanno havuto la cura; ne e' nata tanta confusion e oscurita ne' tempi nostri fra gli scrittori, che difficilmente se ne puo ritrovare il vero, essendo quasi trasfigurato il sito. Palladio, 59-60.

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