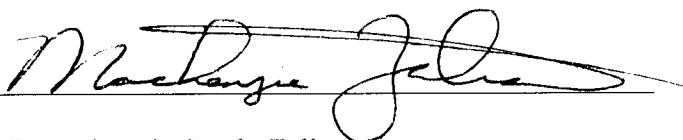


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Monuments of Rome in the Films of Federico Fellini:  
An Ancient Perspective

Mackenzie Steele Zalin

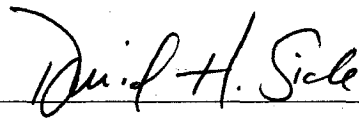
Department of Greek and Roman Studies  
Rhodes College  
Memphis, Tennessee

2009

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
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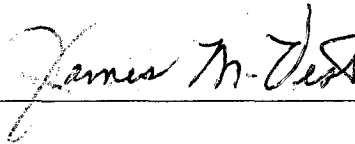
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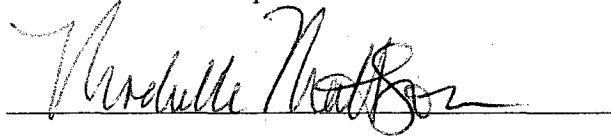
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Dr. James M. Vest  
Second Reader



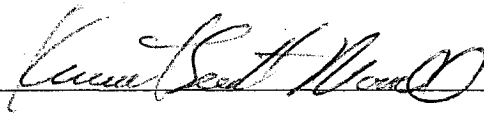
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Extra-Departmental Reader



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Dr. Kenneth S. Morrell  
Department Chair



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## Acknowledgments

In keeping with the interdisciplinary nature of classical studies as the traditional hallmark of a liberal arts education, I have relied upon sources as vast and varied as the monuments of Rome in writing this thesis.

I first wish to extend my most sincere appreciation to the faculty and staff of the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome during the spring session of 2008, without whose instruction and inspiration the idea for this study never would have germinated.

Among the many scholars who have indelibly influenced my own study, I am particularly indebted to the writings of Catherine Edwards and Mary Jaeger, whose groundbreaking work on Roman topography and monuments in *Writing Rome: Textual approaches to the city* and *Livy's Written Rome* motivated me to apply their theories to a modern context. In order to establish the feasibility and pertinence of comparing Rome's antiquity to its modernity by examining their prolific juxtapositions in cinema as a case study, I have also relied a great deal upon the works of renowned Italian film scholar, Peter Bondanella, in bridging the ages.

Among my countless mentors and advocates at Rhodes College, I would first like to acknowledge the assistance of my project adviser, Dr. David H. Sick, whose unwavering support of this project and my scholastic endeavors in general have contributed immeasurably to my success at home and abroad. To Dr. Kenneth Scott Morrell and the entire department of Greek and Roman Studies I offer my most profound thanks for allowing me to embark upon an unorthodox project, which has represented the culmination of my varied interests in classical studies, cinema, and history. My outside readers, Dr. James M. Vest and Dr. Michelle M. Mattson of Modern Languages and Literatures and Film Studies, are to be especially commended for their scrutiny in carefully and continuously reviewing my progress and providing valuable comments and suggestions during the editing phase of this project.

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*To those who teach...*

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## ABSTRACT

Monuments of Rome in the Films of Federico Fellini: An Ancient Perspective

by

Mackenzie Steele Zalin

The films of Italian director Federico Fellini that take place in modern Rome rely upon monuments in order to define the city as a unique microcosm of humanity. This setting is so enormous and diverse that it frequently overwhelms the onlooker with its antiquity and grandeur. Because Rome's monuments constitute a palimpsest of Western civilization, Fellini calls upon a selection of these mnemonic markers in order to summarize specific aspects of the city's layered past according to first-hand experiences. In order to make sense of Rome's voluminous history and ultimately make the city his own, Fellini follows in the footsteps of his ancient literary progenitors by appropriating monuments on a personal level and employing them towards the creation of a chronologically and thematically synoptic Rome. By juxtaposing a selection of Fellini's films with works from the Augustan age by authors such as Horace, Livy, Virgil, and Ovid, this

comparative study demonstrates that Rome is able to transcend time and space by means of its monuments and thereby become part of the imagination for all to invent and experience uniquely.



- **Introduction and Statement of Methodology**

In a self-reflective scene near the end of Federico Fellini's *Roma* (1972), the quintessential Roman filmmaker calls upon American historian Gore Vidal to summarize an overarching concern of the Italian director's oeuvre. Tucked away in a timeless *trattoria* in Trastevere, Vidal equates the modern city of Rome with historical, cultural, and topographical promiscuity, where an ancient yet palpable present signals the City's<sup>1</sup> eternity amidst an illusory modernity:

Rome is the city of illusions. Not only by chance you have here the church, the government, the cinema. They each produce illusions, like you and I do. We're getting closer and closer to the end of the world because of too many people...too many cars, poisons. And what better city than Rome, which has been reborn so often?

It is with this estimation of Rome that I will examine the meaning of the "ancient" in the films of Federico Fellini that are set in and around the modern metropolis. By studying the way the ancient Romans viewed their capital according to monuments, I will demonstrate the similarities between the writer-director's evolution of the multifaceted portrayal of the Italian capital following the end of Second World War and the manner in which the same monuments and locations mirror attitudes towards the City in antiquity, particularly in the Augustan age. Through this interdisciplinary comparison, I will show that regardless of the era, Rome is often examined and reconstructed according to the personal needs of the individual; the City's physical landscape is inextricably bound to its past glory, even if that particular past is just as mutable and illusory as the history and mythology that seek to ennoble it.

Although I have spent only a few months living and studying classics and modern Italian culture in Italy, including a semester at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical

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<sup>1</sup> I will often refer to Rome as "the City" in this study in accordance with the Latin orthographical convention (i.e., *Urbs*), a distinction which proves Rome's importance as microcosm.

Studies in Rome (ICCS) in the spring of 2008, I feel (in a small way) that I am in a position to address the critical role of ancient Roman topography in defining symbols of the physical manifestations of antiquity and their subsequent juxtapositions. Like Aeneas, Virgil, Goethe, Gibbon, and practically every other extant ancient Roman author save Julius Caesar and Augustus, I was neither born nor raised in Rome, but I felt as if I already knew the City intimately as a student of history and classical civilization long before I arrived. Like Petrarch, who on his walks throughout Rome would physically point out such standard sites and sights of *mythic* Roman glory as the palace of Evander and the cave of Cacus,<sup>2</sup> I too once assigned temporally specific and grandiose roles to contextually disparate monuments. “This is where Cicero must have declaimed,” I excitedly thought when looking at the meager remains of the *comitium* beside the querulous postcard vendors on the modern steps of the Capitoline.

However, once we at the ICCS began to survey the same sites over the next four months with the support of archaeological and literary sources, both ancient and modern, my scholarly conceptions of Rome came to be formed in layers like the archaeological remains we saw, or at least studied, since they were often no longer visible. On the other hand, in the same way that Sigmund Freud describes Rome in *Civilization and its Discontents* as a microcosmic palimpsest, I came to see the City as an overwhelmingly “psychisches Wesen” or “psychical entity,” comparable to the human mind in its imagining of time and space:

Nun machen wir die phantastische Annahme, Rom sei nicht eine menschliche Wohnstätte, sondern ein psychisches Wesen von ähnlich langer und reichhaltiger Vergangenheit, in dem also nichts, was einmal zustande gekommen war, untergegangen ist, in dem neben der letzten Entwicklungsphase auch alle früheren noch fortbestehen. Das würde für Rom also bedeuten, daß auf dem Palatin die Kaiserpaläste und das

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<sup>2</sup> Edwards 9-10.

Septizonium des Septimius Severus sich noch zur alten Höhe erheben, daß die Engelsburg noch auf ihren Zinnen die schönen Statuen trägt, mit denen sie bis zur Gotenbelagerung geschmückt war, usw. Aber noch mehr: an der Stelle des Palazzo Caffarelli stünde wieder, ohne daß man dieses Gebäude abzutragen brauchte, der Tempel des Kapitolinischen Jupiter, und zwar dieser nicht nur in seiner letzten Gestalt, wie, ihn die Römer der Kaiserzeit sahen, sondern auch in seiner frühesten, als er noch etruskische Formen zeigte und mit tönernen Antifixen geziert war. Wo jetzt das Coliseo steht, könnten wir auch die verschwundene Domus aurea des Nero bewundern; auf dem Pantheonplatze fänden wir nicht nur das heitge Pantheon, wie es uns von Hadrian hinterlassen wurde, sondern auf demselben Grund auch den ursprünglichen Bau des M. Agrippa; ja, derselbe Boden trüge die Kirche Maria sopra Minerva und den alten Tempel, über dem sie gebaut ist. Und dabei brauchte es vielleicht nur eine Änderung der Blichrichtung oder des Standpunktes von seiten des Beobachters, um den einen oder den anderen Anblick hervorzuführen (Freud (1974) 202-3).

Now let us, by a flight of the imagination, suppose that Rome is not a human habitation but a psychical entity with a similarly long and copious past—an entity, that is to say, in which nothing that has once come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Caesars and the Septizonium of Septimius Severus would still be rising to their old height on the Palatine and that the castle of Sant' Angelo would still be carrying on in its battlements the beautiful statues which graced it until the siege by the Goths, and so on. But more than this, in the place occupied by the Palazzo Caffarelli would once more stand—without the Palazzo having to be removed—the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; and this not only in its latest shape, as the Romans of the Empire saw it, but also in its earliest one, when it still showed Etruscan forms and was ornamented with terra-cotta antefixes. Where the Coliseum now stands we could at the same time admire Nero's vanished Golden House. On the Piazza of the Pantheon we should find not only the Pantheon of today, as it was bequeathed to us by Hadrian, but, on the same site, the original edifice erected by Agrippa; indeed, the same piece of ground would be supporting the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva and the ancient temple over which it was built. And the observer would perhaps only have to change the direction of his glance or his position in order to call up the one view or the other.<sup>3</sup>

Nowhere was this conflicted yet strangely harmonious dynamic more evident than at the Museum of Roman Civilization (*Museo della civiltà romana*) in the classically fascist E.U.R. district of Rome. The museum was built under Benito Mussolini in order to summarize the grandeur of ancient Rome and display critical phases of its entire history under one roof so that the Italian people might better understand the intrinsic connection

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<sup>3</sup> English translation quoted from Freud (1961) 18. See also Larmour and Spencer (14-16) for a discussion of Freud's view of Rome.

between their progenitors' legacy and the fascist Italian state of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As this was the last in our series of fieldtrips with the ancient city course, I came to understand the presentation of the museum's collections of models and reproductions of famous original products of Roman civilization as a metaphor for my understanding of Rome at large: a haphazard fabrication and aggrandizement of the City as the shining symbol of Western civilization itself. Even though this particular version of Rome was devoid of a strict chronological or thematic focus, I still found my own meaning and order amidst the labyrinth of rooms and "artifacts" by recalling the context of my own personal experiences in the City. Peering down at the massive, three dimensional model of Constantinean Rome, an architecturally canonical presentation of the City when both pagan and Christian monuments existed side by side,<sup>4</sup> I saw the miniature Pantheon and remembered the time I sampled gelato by the Renaissance fountain in front of the actual Pantheon after touring the nearby church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, or the time I gave a presentation on Domitian's Circus *in situ*, modern Piazza Navona. In the face of such overwhelming diversity, I had built an historical, cultural, and topographical anachronism to make sense of the City and to make it my own.

Just as my knowledge of Rome was formed by these perceptions and imaginings from a literary and archaeological standpoint long before I set foot in Italy, my understanding of the Eternal City was also influenced by its portrayal in movies. Among such noted Italian directors of the postwar age as Vittorio De Sica, Roberto Rossellini, and Michelangelo Antonioni, I was particularly drawn to the works of writer-director

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<sup>4</sup> Rome is frequently mapped as it might have appeared during the reign of Constantine the Great in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E., when many of the great monuments of pagan Rome (i.e. Pantheon, Colosseum) and Christian Rome (i.e. St. Peter's Basilica, the Lateran) coexisted. The E.U.R. model reference above is still so orthodox that it serves as the basis for many maps of ancient Rome today, including Google Earth's 2008 digital model of the ancient metropolis (<http://earth.google.com/rome/>>).

Federico Fellini, whose musings on the Italian capital throughout various ages of the City's vast history have practically become synonymous with Rome itself, a site that noted Italian film scholar and Rome expert, Peter Bondanella, considers, "a metaphor for the human psyche...a storehouse of ideas, images, and suggestive starting points for [Fellini's] own personal and often quite fantastic artistic creations, mythologies of his own invention that provide disconcerting confrontations between the ancient world and our own times."<sup>5</sup>

Because of Fellini's unusual juxtaposition of ancient monuments with intensely personal stories, many of which take place just minutes away from where I studied and lived in Rome, I wondered to what extent my own compendium of experiences had to do with Italian cinema after World War II when the modern City I knew was just forming. After a period of retrospection and further study of these movies upon my return to the United States, I realized that the postwar depiction of antiquity in cinema as a deceptive yet unavoidable influence coincided with the problematic separation of mythology from history and archaeology from literature that all Romans faced with respect to the figurative construction of their heritage. It is with this dynamic in mind that I will critically examine the role of the "ancient" in the films of Federico Fellini and demonstrate the interdependence of antiquity and the so-called "Felliniesque" through close readings of ancient sources.

Given the vast number of extant sources regarding the perceptions of Rome in antiquity, the focus of this study shall be limited to authors who lived during the reign of Caesar Augustus (c. 27 BCE-14 CE). There will be some discussion of Republican and early Christian attitudes towards the Eternal City in order to contextualize adequately a

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<sup>5</sup> (1987) 237.

set of themes in Augustan literature outlined below, which will serve as the foundation for the comparative aspects of this study. The crux of the first half of this investigation will be mainly concerned with the period surrounding the immediate demise of the Republic and the rise of the Empire because of the Augustan authors' interest in etiologies of the founding and construction of Rome. Consequently, the rapid and lasting changes in government and ideologies which occurred at this time are markedly similar to those of post-war Italy following the collapse of fascism.<sup>6</sup> Primary sources will include but will not be limited to the writings of Augustus, Livy, Virgil, Horace, Strabo, Ovid and other authors of the same period in order to demonstrate the similar manner in which Fellini viewed Rome as a perpetually physical and symbolic entity. Although one could feasibly describe Paris, Berlin, or Moscow in a similar vein, Rome's long-standing role as the *caput mundi* of Western civilization (to which the aforesaid European capitals have consistently claimed a cultural connection)<sup>7</sup> as evidenced by its signs of incomparable antiquity make the City a simultaneously unique and familiar case study. Even though the ways in which Romans view and utilize monuments are not necessarily exclusive to Rome alone, the correlation between both ancient and modern perspectives will corroborate the timelessness of the City across millennia as well as provide evidence for Rome's transcendence and universality as a stage of humanity far beyond its urban limits.

I will explore pertinent references in antiquity along with secondary sources according to the following five criteria:

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<sup>6</sup> The ramifications of Mussolini's classically-fascist program in fashioning Rome will be considered briefly in the introduction to the second section of this study, "Uniting the Ages: Augustus, Fascism, and Postwar Italian Cinema" (33-6). For a more detailed discussion of Rome's centrality to the philosophy Italian fascism, see Painter 1-19.

<sup>7</sup> For but one example of many that chronicle the influence of Rome over its European counterparts, consider Marina Balina's, "Ancient Rome for little comrades: the legacy of classical antiquity in Soviet children's literature" in Larmour and Spencer 323-52.

- 1) Physical monuments (*monumenta*) and places as symbols of romanity (*romanitas*)
- 2) Rome's physical landscape connoting palimpsest and microcosm
- 3) Simultaneous feelings of awe, alienation, and attraction towards Rome
- 4) The concept of an elusive, mythical past portending present and future greatness on a personal level as indicated by the City's diverse landscape
- 5) Symbolically transcendent monuments, including people, images, and ideas, representing Rome as a product of the mind and imagination.

I will rely upon Catherine Edwards's and Mary Jaeger's innovative theories in *Writing Rome: textual approaches to the City* and *Livy's Written Rome* in order to demonstrate how physical monuments pervaded the realm of the psychic according to both ancient and modern perspectives. Once having analyzed the primary ancient sources according to the theories of Edwards and Jaeger within the context of my own criteria, I will then demonstrate the pertinence of this analysis of monuments to five films to which Federico Fellini contributed as screen writer and director that are set in modern Rome: *Open City* (*Roma città aperta*, 1945), *Nights of Cabiria* (*Le notti di Cabiria*, 1957), *La dolce vita* (1960), *Block notes di un regista* (*Fellini: A Director's Notebook*, 1969), and *Roma* (1972). The first half of this study will be primarily concerned with laying the conceptual framework for the remainder of my investigation. I will not explicitly recapitulate this theoretical aspect in the second half for reasons of time and clarity. Therefore, the discussion of the ancient sources shall serve as a preface to the discussion of cinematic sources, *both* of which will mutually elevate Rome's landscape from a loose confederation of physical monuments to a product of the mind. By the end of this study, I

will have shown that Rome's physical setting is able to transcend time and space and become part of the imagination for all to invent and experience uniquely.



- **Building a *Monumentum*: the Example of Augustus' *Res Gestae***

Nearly a century after the death of Caesar Augustus in 14 C.E., the biographer Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus (c. 70-c. 130 CE) recounts the life of Rome's first emperor with characteristically synoptic interest in both his personal and private achievements. Having set forth an exhaustive chronicle of Augustus' entire life (63 BCE-14 CE) following that of his adopted father and ideological role model, Julius Caesar, Suetonius reveals how the man who put an end to decades of civil war and christened an era of *de facto* prosperity wished for his legacy to live in perpetuity:

Testamentum L. Planco C. Silio cons. III. Non. Apriles, ante annum et quattuor menses quam decederet, factum ab eo ac duobus codicibus partim ipsius partim libertorum Polybi et Hilarionis manu scriptum depositumque apud se virgines Vestales cum tribus signatis aequae voluminibus protulerunt. Quae omnia in senatu aperta atque recitata sunt...tribus voluminibus, uno mandata de funere suo complexus est, altero indicem rerum a se gestarum, quem vellet incidi in aeneis tabulis, quae ante Mausoleum statuerentur (Vita Augusti 101).

On 3 April, one year and four months before Augustus' death when Lucius Plancus and Gaius Silius were consuls, Augustus' will, written by hand on two small books in part by Augustus himself and in part by the freedmen Polybius and Hilario, was entrusted to the Vestal virgins along with three signed rolls, which were opened and read in the senate...of the three rolls, one outlined the orders for his funeral, another a record of his deeds, which he wished to be inscribed on bronze tablets and affixed to his Mausoleum.<sup>8</sup>

While the Mausoleum itself is still extant on the Campus Martius, now overlooking another Augustan monument, the newly restored Ara Pacis,<sup>9</sup> the original bronze tablets on which Augustus wished for his achievements to be inscribed and affixed to his heroically proportioned tomb are now lost to us.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the contents of these three *volumina*, in addition to a record of Augustus' *cursus honorum*, were discovered

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<sup>8</sup> N.B. All translations of primary sources in Latin and Greek in this study are my own.

<sup>9</sup> For an insightful albeit culturally presumptuous discussion of the incongruous juxtapositions of the Fascist era reconstruction of the Ara Pacis and the 2006 remodeling by American architect Richard Meier, see Ouroussoff's 2006 architectural review in the *New York Times*.

<sup>10</sup> The contents of the *Res Gestae* have since been inscribed in Latin on the side of the new shell of the Ara Pacis, a few meters from the Mausoleum.

centuries later from multiple literary and archaeological sources, most notably from the temple of Rome and Augustus in Ankara. Combined with other translations in both Latin and Greek discovered at Apollonia and Pisidia, a version of Augustus' *Res Gestae* has since been reconstructed more or less in full.<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the apparently seamless preservation of the achievements of Caesar Augustus from a textual standpoint, the fragmentary provenance of the *Res Gestae* should lead one to question the origins of this ancient document and those of Rome beyond the City's urban limits. The notion that an imperial catalog, a veritable *monumentum* of deeds composed in the first century of the Common Era could extend to Asia, be partially recovered by a Dutch scholar fifteen centuries later amidst the Roman ruins of Ankara on a temple wall, and ultimately color modern perceptions of the canonical Augustan metropolis is in keeping with what Rome has connoted since antiquity: an incomparable palimpsest of civilization, a microcosm of human existence, in which even the most meager remnants of the past do not fade, but continually signal the presence of intrinsic greatness beyond their tangible qualities alone.<sup>12</sup> The fact that the original bronze tablets on which Augustus intended his programmatic record of governance to be displayed do not survive in Rome itself is inconsequential. In the same manner that the *Res Gestae* could transcend physicality as an archaeological *monumentum* and become a literary *monumentum* through the permeation of Roman rule across Europe, Africa, and Asia, so could Rome truly transform from city to world.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Rogers xvi.

<sup>12</sup> This "queen of Latin inscriptions" is more often known as the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, a full account of Augustus' offices, honors, and achievements including a near complete version of the *Res Gestae* in 35 chapters inscribed on the walls of the temple of Rome and Augustus (ibid.).

<sup>13</sup> The similarity between *urbs* (city) and *orbis* (world) was a common pun in Latin, which further substantiates the model of Rome as microcosm (Edwards 19).

This distinction of the physical and thus the visual for the sake of self-aggrandizement and the resuscitation of Republican ideals, specifically a moribund concept of the *mos maiorum* and *pietas*, formed the tenor of every conversation at some level among concurrent literary sources concerning Augustan munificence and its symbolic ramifications. This cooptation of an ancient tradition of employing *monumenta* to broadcast conspicuous achievements in battle (i.e. in the form of the Republican “victory” temples in Largo Argentina)<sup>14</sup> distinguishes the new “visual language” of the Augustan program in the words of Paul Zanker:

In the time of Augustus, the significance of imagery was not so much as [sic] advertisement of the new monarchy. For most of the population this would have been largely unnecessary and for disaffected aristocrats totally ineffectual. Augustus’s imagery would have been useless without his legions and enormous resources. But in the long run its effect on the Roman temperament was not inconsiderable. Certain values, such as the religious revival, were first implemented in the steady stream of images created to embody them. Most importantly, through visual imagery a new mythology of Rome and, for the emperor, a new ritual of power were created. Built on relatively simple foundations, the myth perpetuated itself and transcended the realities of everyday life to project onto future generations the impression that they lived in the best of all possible worlds in the best of times (3-4).

Beyond the symbolic undertones of the haphazard reconstruction of Augustus’ own achievements, which for Zanker are consciously linked to idealized images of *romanitas*, the contents of the *Res Gestae* speak to the importance of the emperor’s public munificence from civic, religious, and even personal standpoints. Having highlighted his selfless construction of numerous holy sites (i.e. *aedes*, *templa* et al.), dedicated without specific reference to his patronage, Augustus takes pride (somewhat

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<sup>14</sup> Largo di Torre Argentina has since become one of the main public transportation hubs in modern Rome (in addition to a thriving cat sanctuary). Ironically, the original purpose of such victory temples, to demonstrate the *laus et gloria* of the victor, his munificence, and his connection to the gods, is lost without accompanying inscriptional evidence. Nevertheless, the remains of the sunken Republican-era temples have since garnered renewed significance in a manner in keeping with Fellini’s treatment of the ancient: a tangible *reminder* of the various layers of Roman history, which constitute an irrevocable whole.

ironically) in publicizing his nameless piety and munificence with respect to his most remarkable projects aimed at urbanization:

Duo et octoginta templa deum in urbe consul sextum ex auctoritate senatus refeci nullo praetermisso quod eo tempore refici debebat...in privato solo Martis Ultoris templum forumque Augustum ex manibiis feci. Theatrum ad aedem Apollinis in solo magna ex parte a privatis empto feci, quod sub nomine M. Marcelli generi mei esset. Dona ex manibiis in Capitolio et in aede divi Iuli et in aede Apollinis et in aede Vestae et in templo Martis Ultoris consecravi, quae mihi constituerunt HS circiter milliens. Auri coronari pondo triginta et quinque millia municipiis et colonis Italiae conferentibus ad triumphos meos quintum consul remisi, et postea, quotienscumque imperator appellatus sum, aurum coronarium non accepi decernentibus municipiis et colonis aequae benigne adque antea decreverant (20-21).

I restored eighty-two temples of the gods in the city during my consulship with the approval of the senate, neglecting none which was owed restoration at that time. I built the temple of Mars the Avenger and the Forum of Augustus on private ground from the proceeds of spoils. I built a theater beside the temple of Apollo purchased mostly from private owners, that it would be dedicated under the name of my son-in-law, Marcus Marcellus. I consecrated offerings from spoils in the Capitolium, the temples of Divine Julius, Apollo, Vesta, and Mars the Avenger, which cost me close to 100,000,000 sesterces. I sent back 35,000 pounds of coronary gold to the *municipia* and the colonies of Italy which contributed to my triumphs during my fifth consulship. Subsequently, as many times as I was named *imperator*, I refused the coronary gold from the *municipia* and the colonies which had offered it just as kindly as they had voted before.

While these *templa* and *aedes* are not specifically called *monumenta*, the aforesaid structures could be described as such according to the word's derivation from *moneo* (to remind) as "that which preserves the remembrance of anything, a memorial, a monument...a remembrancer, a mark, token, or a means of recognition,"<sup>15</sup> which can ultimately be traced back to *meminisse* (to remember) as postulated by the Augustan-age scholar Varro (116-27 BCE):

Meminisse a memoria, quom in id quod remansit in mente rursus movetur; quae a manendo ut Manimoria potest esse dicta. Itaque Salii quod cantant: Mamuri Veturi,

<sup>15</sup> Lewis and Short 1163. This provenance is corroborated by Ernout and Meillet 412: 'les gloses traduisent correctement *moneo* par ὑπομνήσκω, *monumentum* par μνημεῖον...monumentum (moni-) est tout ce qui rappelle le souvenir: *vos monumentis commonefaciam bublis*, écrit Plt., St. 63, et particulièrement ce qui rappelle le souvenir d'un mort.' Walde 107 concurs with this etymology: '*monumentum* [-im-, vlt. *mol-*, Schopf Fernwirk. 97], ἰ n. 'Erinnerungszeichen, Mahnmal, Grabmal; Erkennungszeichen; Urkunde.'

significant memoriam...; ab eodem Monere, quod is qui monet, proinde ac sit memoria; sic Monumenta quae in sepulcris, et ideo secundum viam, quo praetereuntis admoneant et se fuisse et illos esse mortalis. Ab eo cetera quae scripta ac facta memoriae causa Monumenta dicta (*De lingua latina* 6.49).<sup>16</sup>

*Meminisse* (to remember) comes from *memoria* (memory), since that which once remained in mind is moved again, which could be said to derive from *manere* (remain) like *Manimoria*. So when the Salii sing, “O Mamurius Vetus,” they mean memory (*memoria*)...; from that same word comes *monere* (to remind), because the one who reminds is like memory (*memoria*); thus monuments (*Monimenta*), which are in burial grounds and for that reason are situated alongside the road, where they might remind (*admoneo*) the passersby that they, like the deceased, are mortal. From that meaning, other things which are written and done for the sake of memory are called monuments (*Monimenta*).

Since *monumentum* originally referred to a funerary marker in archaic times, the *Res Gestae* could be considered the ultimate *monumentum*, whose indispensability to Augustus’ Mausoleum straddles the tenuous boundaries between time, space, and medium. In terms of architecture, the Mausoleum’s behemoth size and unique appearance harken back to Etruscan, Asiatic Greek, and Macedonian examples of tumulus-style graves<sup>17</sup> while simultaneously prompting comparison with the Mausoleum of Hadrian, built a century later on the other side of the Tiber. In addition to these outwardly synoptic features of the monument’s physicality, the accompanying inscription requires the onlooker to shift his or her temporal perspective from the past, to the present, and even towards the future. For example, the aforementioned excerpt from the *Res Gestae* (20-1) prompts the reader to consider the extent of Augustus’ past beneficence and its ostensible effect on the buildings of the onlooker’s time that were restored at the expense of hundreds of millions of sesterces. Furthermore, the heavy emphasis on piety and modesty (i.e. restoration of temples at Augustus’ own expense, his rejection of kingly gold for a crown, and the refusal of the title of *imperator*, etc) indicate the *former* exemplarity of

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<sup>16</sup> Latin text drawn from Jaeger 15.

<sup>17</sup> Claridge 183

Augustus' character. This in turn could have feasibly caused the onlooker to examine his potential to undertake *future* acts of probity, since Augustus died before the contents of the *Res Gestae* were affixed to the Mausoleum.<sup>18</sup> Thus, like the dual nature of epigraphy and the *Res Gestae*, which states an individual's legacy in writing and perpetuates it through its physical form, *monumenta* unite the onlooker, the author, and the place into an inextricable whole. As Mary Jaeger astutely theorizes:

Because a *monumentum* presupposes an audience to remind, Latin writers generally use the word for reminders that are exposed to the public view. These range from buildings to place-names; from items made for the purpose, like inscriptions and statues, to acquired marks, like scars and mutilations; and from published versions of speeches to trophies and spoils. As enduring material tokens of the past, *monumenta* exist in physical space (or as toponyms, they distinguish a place from its surroundings) and themselves produce hybrid places where natural space and time intersect with what might be called "monumental space." When a person moving through natural space encounters a *monumentum*, his or her thoughts move back through this monumental space to the person, place, or event that the *monument* commemorates, and the *monumentum* projects them forward into the future.<sup>19</sup>

Given the visibility and ubiquity of *monumenta* in the public sphere, the most successful of these memory markers would have caused the onlooker to interpret the author's deeds on a personal level. As Varro himself perceives according to the example of the traveler and the road-side sepulchral monument, the *memento mori* response triggered by this *monumentum* activates memory and effectively transforms the physical into the metaphysical. Through this transcendence of "monumental space," *monumenta* slip past palpability into an abstract realm of Freudian proportions as evidenced in Marcus Tullius Cicero's (106-43 BCE) *De oratore*:

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<sup>18</sup> *Vita Augusti* 101

<sup>19</sup> Jaeger 17. See also the first chapter of *Livy's Written Rome*, "The History as a Monument," (15-29) which prefaces Jaeger's discussion of Livy's historiography and greatly informs my own study.

Iam vero illa non longam orationem desiderant, quam ob rem existimem publica quoque iura, quae sunt propria civitatis atque imperii, tum *monumenta rerum gestarum*,<sup>20</sup> et vetustatis, exempla oratori nota esse debere (1.46.201, italics my own).

Now indeed those things do not require a long speech in order to show why I believe an orator must be familiar with public law, which is particularly concerned with civilization and empire, and the monuments of achievements including those of old.

In light of such a lofty, figurative use of *monumenta* with respect to rhetoric, developed prior to the reign of Augustus, a wider definition may now be employed to show the centrality of monuments in recounting and embodying the history of Rome as a whole at the onset of the imperial age. In the spirit of anonymous public munificence which Augustus cited as the hallmark of his reign in the *Res Gestae*, the freedom of interpretation which *monumenta* gave to subsequent generations on a sensory scale has continually informed our view of Rome as a unique landscape of time, space, and imagination for the people to refashion again and again. In turn, the purposeful preservation of Augustus' anonymity<sup>21</sup> in the case of the *Res Gestae* emphasizes the role of the onlooker over that of the author in expounding his legacy. Having thus established the connection between memory markers (*monumenta*) and a kind of annalistic history of Rome (*res gestae*) with the *Res Gestae* proper as the key model of Augustan ideology (both in terms of its physicality as epigram and its programmatic literary function), we may now apply a Ciceronian interpretation of *monumenta* to a figurative realm.

- **History and myth as *monumenta* in Livy's *Ab urbe condita***

Because of the historian Titus Livius' (59 BCE-17 CE, henceforth referred to here as Livy) interest in the earliest vestiges of Roman civilization and his close association

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<sup>20</sup> Note the uncanny relationship between achievements (i.e. *res gestae*, here in the genitive) and monuments (*monumenta*).

<sup>21</sup> E.g., the restoration of the *Capitolium* and the Theater of Pompey (among other monuments) were completed by Augustus 'sine ulla inscriptione nominis [sui] (RG 20).'

with Augustus,<sup>22</sup> the diverse collocations of *monumenta* may be further broadened through the analysis of his *Ab urbe condita* (*AUC*), a work of the highest import to the study of early Roman history. While the correlation between Livy's history and Augustus' cultural program has long been noted, the complementary distinction of the construction of space as a measure of Rome's evolution from village to empire has only recently received adequate attention:

In the decades after Actium, as Romans tried to forget a century of civil war, and as the city underwent a comprehensive program of ideologically motivated construction and reconstruction, Livy produced his own morally charged model of Roman space. Like the Augustan building program, it was massive, comprehensive, and coherent; and like the Augustan program, it reshaped Roman space in a way that aimed to guide the perception, thoughts, and movements of those who entered it (Jaeger 13-14).

With the recent publication of such excellent topographically-based studies as Zanker, Jaeger, and Edwards, it would be a moot point to summarize that which has been expounded at length about the concurrent ideologies in Augustus and Livy. Nevertheless, in order to show the feasibility of comparing cinematic representations of Rome to common perspectives of Augustan age authors such as Livy, further discussion of the diverse uses of *monumenta* as wholly *visual* reminders firmly anchored in place is necessary.

In keeping with the Varronian etiology of *monumenta* as strategically placed memory markers, which are meant to elicit an emotional and even metaphysical response from the onlooker, Livy's historiography also relies upon the visual as a means of forming "monumental space,"<sup>23</sup> whereby the abstract qualities of quintessential *romanitas* (i.e., *pietas*, *virtus* etc.) may be put forth as *exempla*, the building blocks of the

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<sup>22</sup> Tacitus claims in his *Annals* (4.34) that Augustus was tolerant of Livy's opposing political views of the Republic (i.e., the historian's elegies of Pompey), who went so far as to call him *Pompeianus*. This conflicting perspective however did not affect their friendship (*neque id amicitiae eorum offecit*).

<sup>23</sup> Jaeger 17.



City in the *Ab urbe condita*. Cicero's association of a monument of government with the people who once supported its tenets (albeit centuries before he was even born) in the *De finibus* may be viewed as a defining paradigm of the importance of symbolism in viewing

Rome's ancient places:

equidem etiam curiam nostram (Hostiliam dico, non hanc novam, quae minor esse videtur posteaquam est maior), solebam intuens Scipionem, Catonem, Laelium, nostrum vero in primis avum cogitare (5.2).

Even our Senate house (I mean the *Curia Hostilia*, not this new one, which seems to be lesser than afterwards when it was made greater) I used to consider what it was really like in our first age and reflect upon Scipio, Cato, and Laelius.

Because a literal pairing of these avatars of Republicanism is somewhat anachronistic, Cicero anchors his ideological role models to the physical senate house of yesteryear.<sup>24</sup>

In the same manner that Cicero uses this *monumentum* as a mnemonic device in order to evoke tangible, sacred symbols of the utmost personal importance, so does the exiled general Furius Camillus establish the innateness of *romanitas* in Rome's physical structures over three centuries earlier according to Livy. With a consummately crafted address,<sup>25</sup> Camillus dissuades the ruling Roman elite from relocating the capital to the nearby city of Veii during the Gallic sack of Rome in 390 BCE, primarily because of the inseparability of religious rites (*religiones*, 5.55.1) from the places in which they were meant to be performed:

Haec culti neglectique numinis tanta monumenta in rebus humanis cernentes ecquid sentitis, Quirites, quantum vixdum e naufragiis prioris culpa cladisque emergentes paremus nefas? Urbem auspicato inauguratoque conditam habemus; nullus locus in ea non religionum deorumque est plenus; sacrificiis sollempnibus non dies magis statim quam loca sunt, in quibus fiant. Hos omnes deos publicos privatosque, Quirites, deserturi estis? (5.52.1-3)

<sup>24</sup> Compare also the distinction of place with respect to rhetoric in Cicero's *De or.* 2.266-7 and Quintilian 5.10.41, as noted by Edwards 20-1.

<sup>25</sup> For a summary of rhetorical devices in Livy, of which Camillus' speech stands as a paradigm, see Walsh 191-244.

Through viewing these great monuments of human achievement, belonging to a cherished and neglected divinity, do you at all realize, Quirites, to what extent we are yielding to something which must not be done, having scarcely emerged from the shipwreck of a former cause of blame and defeat? We have a city founded according to auspice and augury. No place in it is not full of ritual and the gods. Days for sacrifice are no more fixed than the places in which they are performed. Are you, Quirites, about to abandon all of these gods, both of state and family?

Apart from the undeniably symbolic connotations of *monumenta* in 5.52.1, Camillus' distinction of place as a complimentary aspect of religion forms the impetus of his entire argument in accordance with the physical sense of place (*locus*).<sup>26</sup> This careful attention to detail is readily apparent in Camillus' developed sense of topography when he recounts Gaius Fabius' awe-inspiring descent from the Citadel (the uppermost point of the Capitoline Hill where the Romans ultimately drove back the invading Gauls) to the Quirinal Hill to perform a sacrifice while under attack (5.52.3-4). Such specificity would have understandably made the transfer of the City to Veii difficult simply from a logistical perspective. However, once combined with the special need for pontiffs and flamens to perform the sacred rites of the state, the thought of undermining the intimately connected network of clans (*gentes*) by changing the City's location could have potentially created dissent amongst Rome's already fragile social hierarchy, in addition to discarding centuries of practical tradition. Augustus demonstrated his gratitude to the gods by restoring their homes<sup>27</sup> after the comparably calamitous endangerment of 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE Republican values.<sup>28</sup> Camillus' correlation of piety with place also stands at

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<sup>26</sup> OLD 1039.

<sup>27</sup> The dual meaning of *aedes* in *Res Gestae* 19 as both "temple" and "home" is further evidence of the importance of *loca* with respect to worship.

<sup>28</sup> According to Edwards 48-9, Camillus' position relative to the foundation of Rome by Romulus (755 BCE) and Octavian's confirmation of the title of Augustus (27 BCE) falls exactly in the middle of the two events chronologically speaking. Thus, Livy's audience would have viewed Camillus as a founder of similar importance (particularly with respect to the latter), especially given his distinction of piety. Refer also to the previous discussion of the *Res Gestae* for similarities in religious beliefs.

the heart of his appeal. This strategy further connects site with participant on a spiritual and personal level. Having given examples as to how such a move could signal an unprecedented cataclysm of traditional Roman values in addition to the collapse of the City itself,<sup>29</sup> Camillus further stresses the disastrous consequences of moving away from Rome because of its ideal setting as sanctioned by the gods:

Non sine causa di hominesque hunc urbi condendae locum elegerunt, saluberrimos colles, flumen opportunum, quo ex mediterraneis locis fruges devehantur, quo maritime commeatus accipiuntur, mare vicinum ad commoditates nec expositum nimia propinquitate ad pericula classium externarum, regionem Italiae mediam, ad incrementum urbis natum unice locum. Argumento est ipsa magnitudo tam novae urbis (5.54.4-5).

Not without just cause did gods and mortals choose this place upon which to found the City, with its most healthful hills, its convenient river, where grain may be unloaded from places in the Mediterranean and supplies received from the sea, close yet protected adequately in distance from the dangers of foreign fleets—the middle region of Italy, a place specifically created for the growth of the City. This is evidenced in the very greatness of such a new city.

Rome's unique location in the middle of Italy (*regionem Italiae mediam*) and thus the middle of the world stands as an idealization with respect to geography, urban planning, and commerce because of an ancient connection between mortal and divine (*di hominesque*) providence which coaxed Rome into its fully realized form as a central world power.<sup>30</sup> For example, 'ex mediterraneis locis' not only demonstrates the importance of place for the foundation of Rome's *future* empire, but also the central nature of Rome's existence relative to the world with the adjective 'mediterraneis,' as

<sup>29</sup> The neglect of the fires of Vesta in particular was an act of proverbial impiety. See Edwards 46-7.

<sup>30</sup> Augustan-age architect Vitruvius Pollio in his *De architectura* also ascribes Rome's greatness to its centrality on a cosmic level: 'cum ergo haec ita sint ab natura rerum in mundo conlocata et omnes nationes inmoderatis mixtionibus disparatae, vero inter spatium totius orbis terrarum regionisque medio mundi populus Romanus possidet fines. namque temperatissimae ad utramque partem et corporum membris animorumque vigoribus pro fortitudine sunt in Italia gentes. quemadmodum enim Iovis stella inter Martis ferventissimam et Saturni frigidissimam media currens temperatur, eadem ratione Italia inter septentrionalem meridianamque ab utraque parte mixtionibus temperatas et invictas habet laudes. ita divina mens civitatem populi Romani egregiam temperatamque regionem conlocavit, uti orbis terrarum imperii potiretur' (6. c.10-11).

that which is in the middle (*med-*) of the earth (*terra*). From the portentous tale of Romulus' construction of Rome's first wall (1.7.1-3) to the limitless reign of Terminus (1.55.3-6), the City's path from obscurity to greatness was present in every corner of the metropolis' burgeoning physical structure. With this estimation of Rome as a collection of places with holy and incomparably ancient etiologies, the City assumes psychological prominence as a product of the mind for the first time, thanks to visual catalysts such as *monumenta*:

Et quidem—fatebor vobis, etsi minus iniuriae vestrae meminisse iuvat—cum abessem, quotienscumque patria in mentem veniret, haec omnia occurrebant, collesque campique et Tiberis et adsueta oculis regio et hoc caelum sub quo natus educatusque essem; quae vos, Quirites, nunc moveant potius caritate sua ut maneatis in sede vestra, quam postea, cum reliqueritis eam, macerent desiderio (5.54.3).

And indeed I will confess to you—even if it hurts me to recall your injustice—that when I was away, as many times as I thought of my homeland, all of these things came to my mind: hills and fields, and the Tiber, and this region familiar to my eyes, and this sky under which I was born and raised. Quirites, may these things rather move you now with love so that you may stay in your home, than later, when you leave it behind, only to waste away with longing.

When juxtaposed with the sacrifices required in times of hardship, however, Camillus concedes his idealized conception of Rome to pell-mell urban expansion as a natural outcome of war. Immediately following this speech, the Senate embraces the essence of Roman urbanism by appropriating an existing *monumentum* and adapting it for a new age:

...cum senatus post paulo de his rebus in curia Hostilia haberetur cohortesque ex praesidiis revertentes forte agmine forum transirent, centurio in comitio exclamavit: “Signifer, statue signum; hic manebimus optime.” Qua voce audita et senatus accipere se omen ex curia egressus conclamavit et plebs circumfusa adprobavit. Antiquata deinde lege promisce urbs aedificari coepta...festinatio curam exemit vicis dirigendi, dum omissis sui alienisque discrimine in vacuo aedificant (5.55.1-2,4).

Shortly thereafter, when the senate was deliberating about these matters in the Curia Hostilia, cohorts returning by chance from guard duty were crossing the forum in

formation. The centurion cried out in the Comitium, “Standard-bearer, fix your ensign. We will do well to remain here.” Having heard this, the senators came out of the Curia and accepted this as an omen to the approval of the plebs. Once the law had been rejected, the City began to be built in a random fashion...haste removed the concern for making the streets straight, while people built in empty space without any concern for themselves or their neighbors.

Whereas the *comitium* was once “the chief place of elected assembly,”<sup>31</sup> its function in this particular moment in 390 BCE as a marshalling ground for soldiers bears witness to the mutability of *monumenta* and their respective surroundings. Necessity and haste colored the gritty brick and tile surface of Republican Rome from 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the beginning of the Common Era, but the religiously and metaphysically transcendent foundations could not be fully paved over. The potentially problematic disparities that exist between the archaeological record and ancient literary accounts only serve to corroborate the critical role of multiple etiologies in making the City one’s own.<sup>32</sup> As Diana Spencer cogently summarizes in her discussion of the various stories surrounding the creation of the Lacus Curtius, a monument of critical importance to the development of the Forum in archaic times according to Livy’s *Ab urbe condita*, the lack of consensus concerning the history of place can be considered a natural outgrowth of urbanity. Only by offering varying perspectives on the use of space as a nexus of diversity can Rome

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<sup>31</sup> Claridge 72-3.

<sup>32</sup> “The contradiction between the jumbled disorder which the city of Rome presented in the first century B.C. and the logical pattern demanded by the augural lay-out traditionally ascribed to Romulus and inherent in the term Roma Quadrata as it was understood caused much perplexity. Rationally the Romans expected their city to be planned like a *templum*. Hence the legend, which L. omits, that Romulus’ *lituus* was found in the ruins (Cicero, *de Div.* I.30; Plutarch, *Camillus* 32). In fact they found chaos which they explained as the result of the haste with which the old city was rebuilt after the Gallic fire (Tacitus, *Annals* 15.43). The explanation is almost certainly false. Axial town-planning was derived not from the Etruscan *templum* but from Greek theories and was introduced into Italy no earlier than the fifth century. The disorder so evident in Rome was the result not of haste but of unplanned, piecemeal development over centuries as in any Tuscan hill-town. Much of the city was burnt and much rebuilt. So much is clear archaeologically” (Ogilvie 750-751).

gain a sense of “permanence and a holistic solidarity.”<sup>33</sup> Therefore, just as Freud equates the literal layers of Rome’s history with the construction of the human mind in *Civilization and its Discontents*, where specific features of Rome’s eternal landscape may be viewed synoptically with but a shift in the direction of [the viewer’s] glance or position,<sup>34</sup> monuments need not be confined solely to their physical contexts.

- **A Present Past**

Wandering the Mediterranean after the sack of Troy in search of the city that will one day become Rome, Aeneas, the traditional founder of the City, finally reaches the Italian peninsula with his band of exiles in the eighth book of Virgil’s (70-19 BCE) *Aeneid*. Amidst the rugged landscape of central Italy, a land rife with gods, heroes, and imminent civil war, Aeneas’ encounter with the Greek exile, Evander, on the future site of Rome marks a seminal moment in the epic.<sup>35</sup> Arriving in the middle of a sacrifice honoring Hercules where he slew the mythical Cacus ages earlier (8.185-275), Aeneas is led by Evander to the fabled cave where hero and monster once fought on the Campus Martius. After Evander further demonstrates the inextricability of mythology and place in Rome, long before the traditional founder of Rome ever set foot in Italy, the exile leads Aeneas on a personal tour of the future site of the City, already in ruins. While exploring the land that will one day become the Rome of emperors and gleaming marble-faced temples a thousand years later, Aeneas is struck by the sheer grandeur of the sites and sights of a city already built by gods and tribes of a bygone era:

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<sup>33</sup> For a detailed analysis of the exemplarity of the Lacus Curtius in Livy, see Spencer’s “Rome at a gallop: Livy, on not gazing, jumping, or toppling into the void” (61-101) in *The Sites of Rome: Time, Space, Memory* (Oxford 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Freud (1961) 18. See also iv-v in the introduction to this study.

<sup>35</sup> I owe a debt to Papaioannou’s excellent 2003 study on Evander in shaping my analysis of *Aeneid* 8.

miratur facilisque oculos fert omnia circum 310  
 Aeneas, capiturque locis et singula laetus  
 exquirisque auditque virum monumenta priorum.  
 tum rex Evandrus, Romanae conditor arcis:  
 “haec nemora indigenae Fauni Nymphaeque tenebant  
 gensque virum truncis et duro robore nata,  
 quis neque mos neque cultus erat, nec iungere tauros  
 aut componere opes norant aut parcere parto,  
 sed rami atque asper victu venatus alebat.  
 primus ab aethereo venit Saturnus Olympo,  
 arma Iovis fugiens et regnis exsul ademptis. 320  
 is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis  
 composuit legesque dedit, Latiumque vocari  
 maluit, his quoniam latuisset tutus in oris.  
 aurea quae perhibent illo sub rege fuere  
 saecula: sic placida populos in pace regebat,  
 deterior donec paulatim ac decolor aetas  
 et belli rabies et amor successit habendi.  
 tum manus Ausonia et gentes venere Sicanae,  
 saepius et nomen posuit Saturnia tellus;  
 tum reges asperque immani corpore Thybris, 330  
 a quo post Itali fluvium cognomina Thybrim  
 diximus; amisit verum vetus Albula nomen.  
 me pulsum patria pelagique extrema sequentem  
 Fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum  
 his posuere locis, matrisque egere tremenda  
 Carmentis Nymphae monita et deus auctor Apollo. (8.310-36)

Aeneas is amazed and easily brings his eyes around everything; he is captured by the places and happily seeks out and listens to the monuments of the men of yore one by one. Then King Evander, founder of the Roman citadel: “Native fauns and nymphs once held these groves along with a race born from tree trunks and tough oak, lacking morals and refinement, who did not know how to yoke oxen, gather resources, or to be sparing with what they had been given, but branches and the hunter’s rough way of life nourished them. Saturn was the first to come from heavenly Olympus, fleeing the weapons of Jove as an exile with the usurpation of his kingdom. Saturn brought together the artless people, spread throughout the high mountains, and gave them laws and preferred to call the land ‘Latium,’ since its borders had safely concealed him (*latuisset*). Golden were the ages they regarded under that king. In such a way he ruled the nations in perfect peace, until a lesser, depraved age slowly succeeded with a wild passion for war and a love of gain. Then the Ausonian band and the Sicanian peoples arrived, and the land was more often called ‘Saturnia.’ Then came kings and harsh Thybris with massive body, for whom we Italians named the river ‘Tiber.’ It lost its true ancient name ‘Albula.’ Having been driven from my homeland, following the ends of the sea, almighty Fortune and an inescapable fate set me among these places, and the fearful warnings of my mother, the nymph Carmentis, and lord Apollo the Originator, drove me here.

Like the response that monuments were meant to elicit from the passerby in Varro's and in Camillus' day, Aeneas' reaction to Rome's captivating living history resonates on an emotional level, vacillating between an auspicious mythical past and the age of Augustus when Virgil himself was on close personal terms with the Emperor.<sup>36</sup> In a manner reminiscent of Augustus' programmatic desire to reinforce the legitimacy of his reign with images steeped in tradition and obeisance to the divine and mortal founders of Rome, Virgil not only looks to the past, but also to the future in defining the way Romans perceived their god-spawned city and lineage. The patrimony of what Papaioannou calls a "proto-Rome" can be considered in the same manner in which the heavily stratified remains of the City were viewed in Aeneas' time: a complimentary amalgam<sup>37</sup> of Greek and Roman civilization, through which the monuments of the men of old (*virum monumenta priorum*, 312) chronicled the life of the City, but without specific reference to the time in which they were built. In addition to these already dilapidated yet wondrous and sacred signs of antiquity, the presence of an ancient group of Latian tribes of incomparable strength (*duro robore nata*, 315),<sup>38</sup> combined with the divine aid of the exile, Saturn, summarizes an essential paradox of *romanitas* seen throughout the extant literature of all ages: Rome was for Aeneas, Evander, and Virgil a city of autochthonous physicality and spirituality, populated by exiles and foreigners from the earliest times. For that reason, universal feelings of awe and novelty (i.e. *miratur, capitur*) assault the onlooker's sense of causality since all but the most ancient inhabitants were strangers to Rome.

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<sup>36</sup> *OCD* 1602-3.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 696-701.

<sup>38</sup> Compare *Odyssey* 19.162-3, when Penelope asks Odysseus of his lineage (Fairclough 81):  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς μοι εἰπὲ τεδὸν γένος, ὅπποθεν ἔσσι. οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ δρυὸς ἔσσι παλαιφάτου οὐδ' ἀπὸ πέτρης.



With all the necessary foundations for a city in place, such as agriculture, farming (316-8), and divinely-sanctioned laws (*leges*, 322), elements which already constitute a kind of microcosm, the golden ages (*aurea saecula*, 327) of order soon degenerate into war (*belli rabies*) and greed (*amor habendi*, 324) of Hesiodic proportions by the time Aeneas arrives. In light of the catastrophic downfall of the first age, which subsequently saw the rise of new tribes (*gentes*, 328) who in turn left their distinct mark on the City (i.e. the reign of Thybris who gave his name to the Tiber, 330-1), Evander comes to associate place (*his locis*, 335) with a sense of permanency in a changing world as well as his very rescue from exile, a refuge which Aeneas and his own band of Trojan exiles can also call home.

vix ea dicta, dehinc progressus monstrat et aram  
 et Carmentalem Romani nomine portam  
 quam memorant, Nymphae priscum Carmentis honorem,  
 vatis fatidicae, cecinit quae prima futuros 340  
 Aeneadas magnos et nobile Pallanteum.  
 hinc lucum ingentem, quem Romulus acer Asylum  
 rettulit, et gelida monstrat sub rupe Lupercal,  
 Parrhasio dictum Panos de more Lycaei.  
 nec non et sacri monstrat nemus Argileti  
 testaturque locum et letum docet hospitis Argi.  
 hinc ad Tarpeiam sedem et Capitolia ducit,  
 aurea nunc, olim silvestribus horrida dumis.  
 iam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestis  
 dira loci, iam tum silvam saxumque tremebant. 350  
 “hoc nemus, hunc,” inquit, “frondoso vertice collem,  
 quis deus incertum est, habitat deus; Arcades ipsum  
 credunt se vidisse Iovem, cum saepe nigrantem  
 Aegida concuteret dextra nimbosque cieret.  
 haec duo praeterea disiectis oppida muris,  
 reliquias veterumque vides monumenta virorum.  
 hanc Ianus pater, hanc Saturnus condidit arcem;  
 Ianiculum huic, illi fuerat Saturnia nomen.”  
 talibus inter se dictis ad tecta subibant  
 pauperis Evandri, passimque armenta videbant 360  
 Romanoque Foro et lautis mugire Carinis.  
 (8.337-61)

Moving on from here, having barely spoken, Evander shows Aeneas the altar and the Carmental Gate, as the Romans call it, an ancient tribute to the nymph Carmentis, soothsaying prophetess, who was the first to sing of Aeneas' great descendants to come and noble Pallanteum. Here he points out a huge sacred forest, which shrewd Romulus turned into a place of refuge, and the Lupercal, under a cold cliff, named after Lycaean Pan in the Arcadian tradition. Then Evander shows him the sacred grove of Argiletus and calls the place to witness and tells him of the demise of Argus his guest. From here he leads Aeneas to the Tarpeian seat and the Capitol, golden now, once overgrown with forest brush. Already in those times dread reverence of the place put fear into the frightful hearts of the natives. 'This grove here,' he said, 'this hill with leafy summit, is home to a god—which god we do know not. The Arcadians believe that they have seen Jove himself, when he used to brandish the blackening Aegis and set storm clouds in motion with his right hand. Furthermore, in these two towns with ruined walls, you see the relics and monuments of the men of old. Father Jove founded one citadel, Saturn another. The former was called the Janiculum, the latter Saturnia.'

Having conversed about these things, they went down to the dwelling of poor Evander, and they saw cattle, lowing throughout the Forum Romanum and the elegant Carinae.

Following the foundation, decline, and renewal of proto-Rome in 8.310-36, Evander calls upon place to be a witness (*testaturque locum*, 346) to the lasting signs of the ordained greatness of the City. Rome's legacy of the monuments of men of yore (*veterum monumenta virorum*, 356), even if they do not yet exist physically, is what prevails beyond war and the veritable collapse of society, guided by an inevitable fate (*ineluctabile fatum*, 334). The names of certain places may have changed (i.e. the change from the Saturnia to Janiculum, 358), but such *loca* rest firmly upon the holiest of foundations, even if their exact provenance is uncertain, as Evander explains with respect to the patronage of the sacred grove (*nemus*, 345).

In keeping with this temporally and thematically promiscuous interchange of high and low, Evander's tour distinguishes place as everlasting *per se* but dependent upon those who utilize such spaces and the times in which they lived. Centuries before the Tarpeian Seat (*Tarpeiam sedem*), the Capitol (*capitolia*, 347), and even the Forum Romanum (361) can be located in the archaeological record, Evander asserts that these

monuments were all once overgrown (*horrida*) with unsightly forest brush (*silvestribus dumis*, 348) and even livestock (*mugire*, 361)) before they were beautified in the golden age<sup>39</sup> of Augustus, just as they were during the reign of the gods. Apart from linking a monument's authorship to its symbolic connotations, the interchangeability of regality and ruin<sup>40</sup> as evidenced by their immediate juxtaposition within two lines (347-8) establishes the presence of constantly shifting perspectives. Ruins do not signal everlasting destruction, but rather past greatness and the *inevitability* of its resurgence as predicated by Rome's renewal in Aeneas' time and Augustus' renewal of Aeneas' own legacy. Times may change; Rome's monuments and their spatial contexts are forever.

Through this ebb and flow to which place bears witness, Rome comes to manifest certain fundamental truths of humanity. The age of the City's glorious foundation under the auspices of gods and indigenous deities (314-25) was born out of a period of violent upheaval with the flight of Saturn from Jove's usurpation of heaven. This age of peace and justice once again withered into a period of decline (325-335) before rising from the ashes of foreign invasion and civil war with the Augustine renaissance. Despite the cyclical nature of the moral zeitgeist of *romanitas*, the role of the gods in providing the literal building blocks of the City ensured Rome's survival as the consummation of Virgil's ineluctable fate (334).

- **'Troica Roma': Alienation and Acceptance**

Whereas the tenor of Virgil's rhetoric surrounding the reader's introduction to Rome in *Aeneid* 8 grants wonder, novelty, and divinely-sanctioned rule pride of place, this sense of admiration for Rome's mythic past is not always shared unanimously. In the

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<sup>39</sup> The shared epithet of *aurea*, modifying both the *saecula* (324) in which the gods reigned and the *Capitolia* (348) of Aeneas' and thus *Augustus'* age, illustrates the importance of time with respect to place.

<sup>40</sup> Edwards 31-2.

case of the poet Propertius' (c. 54 BCE-?) prologue to the fourth book of his *Elegies*, the author challenges the relevance of associating the City's most ancient history with the Rome of Augustus. Some seven centuries after the traditional foundation of the City, Propertius states (in what might be considered an act of brazen defiance of the Augustan program)<sup>41</sup> that the Roman of the Augustan age has nothing to do with his ancestors except Romulus, the City's traditional namesake:<sup>42</sup>

nil patrium nisi nomen habet Romanus alumnus:  
sanguinis altricem non putet esse lupam. (4.1.37-8)

The Roman of today has nothing of his forefathers except a name:  
He would not believe that a she-wolf was the nurse of his  
blood.

This feeling of alienation is supported by Propertius' introductory tour of the Forum and the surrounding hills, which may be viewed as a direct successor to the tour Aeneas takes of the same area in the eighth book of the *Aeneid*.

Hoc quodcumque vides, hospes, qua maxima Romast,  
ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit;  
atque ubi Navali stant sacra Palatia Phoebos,  
Evandri profugae procubuere boves.  
fictilibus crevere deis haec aurea templa,  
nec fuit opprobrio facta sine arte casa;  
Tarpeiusque Pater nuda de rupe tonabat,  
et Tiberis nostris advena murus erat.  
qua gradibus domus ista, Remi se sustulit olim:  
unus erat fratrum maxima regna focus. (4.1.1-10)

All that you see here, stranger, where the greatest Rome now stands, was hill and grass before the arrival of Phrygian Aeneas. And where now stands the Palatine, sacred to Apollo of the Ships, did the cattle of the exile Evander once lie. These golden temples

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<sup>41</sup> We may refer back to Zanker 3-4 for a general explanation of the importance of myth to the Emperor's revival, in particular, the Ara Pacis' accentuation of Rome's mythological past on the monument's façade (Honos, Pax and Roma on the north side of the east entrance, Tellus (or Itali) on the south, Mars, Faustulus, and the she-wolf on the north side of the west entrance, and Aeneas on the south (Platner 31)).

<sup>42</sup> With regard to the difference between Augustan Rome and mythical Rome, see also Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*:

simplicitas rudis ante fuit: nunc aurea Roma est, et domiti magnas possidet orbis opes. aspice quae nunc sunt Capitolia, quaeque fuerunt: alterius dices illa fuisse Iovis (3.113-6).

grew for gods of clay, and it was not shameful that their huts were made without skill. Tarpeian Jove once thundered from a bare rock, and the Tiber, though foreign, was our wall. Where upon a flight of steps did that house raise itself, once that of Remus, a single hearth was the greatest extent of the brothers' reign.

While Propertius attempts to refute the paradigmatic image of proto-Rome on grounds of historical pragmatism as clearly stated in 4.1.37-8, the similarities that exist between Virgil's description of Aeneas' tour of the Forum in 8.337-61 and that of Propertius invites comparison<sup>43</sup> as both poems call upon places and monuments to bear witness to the passage of time. Just as Virgil marshals an anachronistic array of sites for the sake of accentuating the future gilded age of Augustan Rome, so does Propertius look to the past, present, and future in creating the City in spite of the estrangement of centuries of mythical tradition. The temples of old may not have always been glimmering examples of classical Roman architecture, but their transformation from modest shrines for clay gods (*fictilibus deis*) to golden structures (*aurea*) demonstrates the longevity of *monumenta* as perpetual markers of Rome's voluminous history, which cannot be divorced from its mythic past.

Through Propertius' eventual (albeit reluctant) concession to the power of Rome's foundational stories in literally building the City, in which he asserts that the She-wolf of Mars made the walls of Rome grow by her milk,<sup>44</sup> the undeniable presence of a cycle of creation and destruction (as seen in Evander's tale as well (*Aen.* 8.310-36)) swiftly emerges, as exemplified in the urban face of Rome. With the hyperbolic assignment of the epithet *Troica* to Rome (54), the notion that Rome might become Troy and fall yet

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<sup>43</sup> 'This evocation of Rome then-and-now contains familiar elements—the Capitol now golden, once green; the grazing cattle of Evander; the rock already called Tarpeian before Tarpeia: Apollo: the Tuscan Tiber.' (Edwards 42) The very use of *hospes* in the first line echoes the relationship between Evander and Aeneas (*Aen.* 8.346). See also Camps 47-8.

<sup>44</sup> *optima nutricum nostris, lupa Martia, rebus qualia creverunt moenia lacte tuo!* (4.1.55-6)

again after rising from the brink of extinction signals a dichotomy that only the monuments of Rome could adequately describe.<sup>45</sup> Having thus demonstrated the far-reaching and enduring legacy of the past in actually building the City, Propertius finally equates his own verses of poetry with the walls of Rome,<sup>46</sup> a *monumentum* of such strength and prowess that it could very well slip the bonds of mortality.

▪ **‘Exegi monumentum’: Making Rome Home**

Horace’s (65-8 BCE) thirtieth *carmen*, the final ode of Book III, bookends this Augustan poet’s erudite study of rhetoric and patronage with a poem whose very survival represents the fullest transcendence of *monumentum* as a product of the mind:

Exegi monumentum aere perennius regalique situ pyramidum altius, quod non imber edax, non aquilo impotens possit diruere aut innumerabilis annorum series et fuga temporum.	5
non omnis moriar multaque pars mei vitabit Libitinam; usque ego postera crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex. dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus	10
et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium regnavit populorum, ex humili potens, princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos deduxisse modos. sume superbiam quaesitam meritis et mihi Delphica lauro cinge volens, Melpómene, comam.	15

I have finished a monument, lasting longer than bronze and the regal site of the lofty Pyramids, which neither corrosive rain nor wild wind could destroy, nor the innumerable succession of years, nor the flight of time. I shall not die altogether, but a great part of me shall avoid death. I shall even grow with renewed praise in time to come, as long as the pontiff scales the Capitol with hushed maiden. I shall be spoken of where the violent

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<sup>45</sup> We can use the surreal landscape of the Forum according to both Virgil and Propertius to illustrate this conflicted dynamic, which is at once desolate (*collis et herba* (4.1.1)), then teeming with the remnants of the earliest age (Edwards 31).

<sup>46</sup> *scandentis quisquis cernit de vallibus arces, ingenio muros aestimet ille meo!* (4.1.65-6)

Aufidus rages and the Daunus, poor in water, rules over the rustic people, as one who, emerging victorious from defeat, was the first to combine Aeolian song with Italic verses. Accept the glory sought by my merits, Melpomene, and crown my hair with Delphic laurel.

Loftier than even the pyramids of Egypt, which have outlasted the reign of the Pharaohs to this day, and impervious to the corrosion of rain and wind, to which even the best preserved *monumenta* have fallen victim,<sup>47</sup> Horace's work claims to defy the flight of time (*annorum series et fuga temporum*); his is a *monumentum* that is endowed with the same sort of autochthonous spirituality that Rome's most ancient places embodied for its inhabitants.<sup>48</sup> As was the case for both Livy and Virgil with respect to their treatment of such indispensable *monumenta* and *loca* as the Capitolium,<sup>49</sup> Horace connects (yet ultimately supersedes through the survival of his poetry) the holiest and most immutable rites of religious observance with place (8-9), in this case, the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, perhaps the most sacred site for the Romans of antiquity, which was "regarded as a prophecy of the permanence of the cult [of the god] and of Rome itself."<sup>50</sup>

As absolute as the duties of the *pontifex* once were for Horace and his Republican-age progenitors, the countless succession of years did in fact bring about a once unthinkable change in terms of the nature of this act of religious observance, but in a manner unique to Rome. While the Romans ultimately exchanged one almighty deity for another centuries later, the City's conversion to the seat of Christianity was not

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<sup>47</sup> The thought that Horace's poetry would outlast bronze is ironic in that brazen materials represent some of the scarcest remains from antiquity (i.e. the original *Res Gestae*). Furthermore, the sepulchral collocation of bronze (Page 392) is thus apt when applied to the overarching *monumenta*, which are the hardest survivors.

<sup>48</sup> For discussion on the poetic structure and style of 3.30, see Commager 312-5.

<sup>49</sup> *AUC* 5.52.7, *Aen.* 8.347.

<sup>50</sup> Platner 297. This lofty estimation of the Temple as a symbol of the City's eternity is meritorious even in modern times as Edwards points out in the case of Edward Gibbon (72-4). The 18<sup>th</sup> C. British historian bookends his mammoth *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* with *memento mori* style descriptions of the Capitoline that evidence Edwards theory that "place activates memory, calling upon earlier traces in the urban palimpsest" (73). See also Platner 297-302 for a detailed topographical survey of the site.

brought about *ex nihilo*. Thanks to Rome's uniquely synoptic view of history, in which nothing ever truly disappears from the detritus of the ages, the *monumenta* and *loca* of old were continually adapted by new generations as they are today, thereby insuring the survival of Rome through a process of *personal* discovery and reinvention. According to Fraenkel's extratextual analysis:

When Horace had been in his grave for many centuries the places around which the life of the ancient Romans had circled were being deserted one after another, and what was left of the dwindling population was left on different hills. There was still a *pontifex*,<sup>51</sup> but he would reside on the Lateran or the Quirinal or the Vatican, and would not care to sacrifice to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus. There was still a city of Rome, but filled with new gods, new rituals, and new ideas. And yet it remained true, and remains true to the present day, that *usque ego postera crescam laude recens*. Horace's boast turns out to be an enormous understatement (304).

In the same manner that Virgil and his predecessors predicated the construction of Rome upon the achievements of countless ancestors, stemming from an indeterminate point in time when no less than the gods and heroes of the Greeks fated the City's subsequent glory, Horace defies convention through his paradoxical relationship with the City and his poetic style, but ultimately arrives at many of the same conclusions set forth by his contemporaries. Having equated his poetic immortality with the *Capitol* as a symbol of characteristically Roman piety and timelessness, Horace devotes the rest of 3.30 to his provincial home (10) in southeastern Italy. By associating the region of Daunus with his award of the Delphic laurel, the greatest honor for poetic excellence one could receive in the Greek tradition, many readers have seen this distinction of Horace's homeland as problematic relative to his assignment of Rome in the first half of the poem as the seat of eternal greatness on a monumental scale. The juxtaposition of Horace's translation (*deduxisse*) of Aeolian song (*Aeolium carmen*) with Italian measures (*modos*

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<sup>51</sup> I.e. the Pope (italics my own), who is to this day known formally as the *pontifex maximus* (lit. "greatest bridge maker").



*Italos*) in the poem's remaining verses however indicates that neither Rome nor Daunus receive preferential treatment. Both places may rather function as mutually important in the construction of a Roman identity.

Like Alcaeus, Sappho, and other Greek lyric poets who contributed immeasurably to the development of a new type of poetry in Latin,<sup>52</sup> the many layers of influence which define Horace's oeuvre as a whole may also be applied to his estimation of home and the very way in which Rome was built. Just as Virgil shows the Greek Evander introducing Aeneas to Rome, a land already teeming with living history in every corner of its sacred land, Horace embraces the dichotomy of home in 3.30, teetering on the edge of the conflicted delineations of local pride and imperial fame. The fact that practically every extant author from antiquity who wrote in Latin was not from Rome—save Julius Caesar and Augustus—informs our view of Rome as *the* veritable world capital (i.e. *caput mundi*),<sup>53</sup> where even the City's founder was technically a foreigner amidst a collection of monuments of the greatest antiquity without definitive etiologies. Horace certainly would have taken pride of place in his hometown as Fraenkel rightfully notes (albeit from a decidedly Anglocentric perspective),<sup>54</sup> but his hometown would have considered him an even greater success because its native son's poetry had found fame in the big City. Much in the same way that New York City to this day predicates the *sine qua non* of the most genuine mark of success, as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, and many others who are not

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<sup>52</sup> See *Odes* 2.13.24 and 4.3.12 for specific reference to Greek lyric convention in Horace (Page 393-4).

<sup>53</sup> See Fraenkel 305 for examples of how *municipia* held their famous native sons in high esteem (i.e. Ovid, Cicero, and Martial, none of whom considered Rome their *prima et unica patria*).

<sup>54</sup> 'I am surprised that Englishmen should find it difficult to think of a man from Penzance or Carlisle who, after achieving fame in London or New York, would be proudest of what the people of Cornwall or Cumberland might say of him at their firesides' (304-5).

from the City have immortalized in song,<sup>55</sup> we can also see Rome representing possibility as an idealization according to Horace and his contemporaries in a manner in keeping with Billy Joel's 1976 song "New York State of Mind":

It comes down to reality-and its fine with me cause I've let it slide  
Don't care if its Chinatown or Riverside,  
I don't have any reasons, I've left them all behind  
I'm in a New York State of Mind.

Just as Joel associates a collection of places with the City as a single entity which transcends physicality in the last verse of the song, a stance which does not necessarily require the *laudandus* actually to be present in New York, Horace successfully straddles the boundaries between past and present, tangible and symbolic, in becoming a citizen of *duae patriae*, Rome and home, which Horace considers equally.<sup>56</sup> Standing on the shoulders of giants, Horace sees his poetry and his own conflicted identity reflected in the physicality of Rome, which comes to represent something more than just a city; it is indeed a state of mind.

- **Further fashioning Rome: a Foreigner's Perspective**

In order to demonstrate further the extent to which Rome came to represent the *caput mundi* of timeless wonder, possibility, and imagination, we may now call upon the concurrent writings of the Greek geographer Strabo (64 BCE-?), whose survey of the foundation etiologies of the surrounding region of Latium at the onset of the fifth book of his *Geography* prefaces a now familiar fashioning of the new world capital from a non-Roman vantage point. After providing a compendium of ethnographies and mythologies in 5.3.1-4, containing both canonical and apocryphal elements that closely coincide with

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<sup>55</sup> The composer of "New York, New York," John Kander, originally hailed from Kansas City (IMDB). Consider the conclusion of "New York, New York" (1979):

'If I can make it there [New York City], I'll make it anywhere, It's up to you, New York, New York.'

<sup>56</sup> Edwards 18.

the accounts of Livy and Virgil,<sup>57</sup> Strabo sets forth a sweeping description of the sister nations and cities of Rome (5.3.5-6)<sup>58</sup> before finally arriving at its seat of power (5.3.7-8). His encomiastic assessment of the region Latium as “blessed and bounteous” (εὐδαίμων καὶ παμφόρος)<sup>59</sup> in 5.3.5, an uncanny nexus of divine influence, mortal ingenuity, and the natural means by which to grow and prosper, distinguishes Rome as an epicenter of achievement, thereby corroborating the *urbs/orbis* paradigm we have previously discussed with reference to Livy. While Strabo notes that Rome (as a city) was originally built according to necessity (πρὸς ἀνάγκην),<sup>60</sup> the intrinsic nature of the land (ἡ φύσις τῆς χώρας) was what furnished the city with blessings, predicated in 5.3.7 on a union (συνδρομή) of moral excellence and hard work (τῆ δ’ ἀρετῆ καὶ τῷ πόνῳ) as well as the benefits of the region’s landscape and natural resources such as hills, lumber, and mines.

Having emphasized the importance of Rome through his broad exploration of the City’s dominance over Latium, Strabo moves to the heart of his description of Rome in 5.3.8, only to yield to all but clichéd encomia of a wondrous (θαυμαστόν) yet elusive Roman grandeur, predicated on the physical. Outlining such spectacles (ὄψεις) as Roman hydro-engineering (i.e. aqueducts, cisterns, sewers etc.), vast complexes for the arts and athletics on the Campus Martius, and the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Greek geographer

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<sup>57</sup> I.e. 5.3.1-4: compare Strabo’s depiction of such founders as Evander (5.3.3) and Romulus and Remus to the accounts of Virgil (*Aen.* 8) and Livy (*AUC* 1.4) respectively.

<sup>58</sup> I.e. coastal cities ranging from Ostia in central Latium, to Antium (modern Anzio), Tarracina, and Circaeum in the south near the Campanian border.

<sup>59</sup> παμφόρος literally means ‘all-bearing.’

<sup>60</sup> 5.3.2. *AUC* 5.55.1-5 may be viewed as a corroboration of Strabo’s observation that ἡ ἀνάγκη (in addition to *festinatio*) contributed more to Rome’s construction than τὸ καλλὸς, the opposite of a Greek city (5.3.8).

summarizes his perceptions of Rome according to the City's incomparable splendor and enormity as seen through the eyes of an awestruck onlooker:

πάλιν δ' εἴ τις εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν παρελθὼν τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἄλλην ἐξ ἄλλης ἴδοι  
 παραβεβλημένην ταύτη καὶ βασιλικὰς στοὰς καὶ ναοὺς, ἴδοι δὲ καὶ τὸ Καπιτώλιον  
 καὶ τὰ ἐνταῦθα ἔργα καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ καὶ τῷ τῆς Λιβίας περιπατῶ, ῥαδίως  
 ἐκλάθοιτ' ἂν τῶν ἕξωθεν. τοιαύτη μὲν ἡ Ῥώμη (*Geo.* 5.3.8).

And again, if someone upon passing the old forum were to see one forum stacked one after another, and basilicas, and temples, and see the Capitolium, the Palatine, and Livia's Promenade, including the works of art within, one might easily forget everything else outside. Such is Rome.

Through this ephrastic description of what could reasonably be labeled *monumenta*, which darts indiscriminately from one awe-inspiring landmark to another across a broad expanse of the City's ancient landscape,<sup>61</sup> Strabo's grandiose fashioning of Rome works almost as an extension of Virgil and Propertius' tours of Rome as well as Horace's epically transcendent definition of the City in *Ode* 3.30. Even though the geographer's status as a foreigner could potentially explain such effluence, Strabo's intimate knowledge of Roman urbanity as a scholar who sojourned there between three and five times from 29 to 27 BCE<sup>62</sup> shows a heightened sense of sophistication towards Roman monumentality as a cosmopolitan Greek. While the argument that foreigners were more susceptible to such greatness simply because they were foreigners is not totally without merit since every author hitherto analyzed in this study was technically a stranger to

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<sup>61</sup> We may also compare Pliny the Elder's laudatory digression on the major basilicas of the Forum Romanum in the *Natural History* 36.102 as well as the hypothetical gathering of all of the City's buildings into one place in the previous section of the same passage. Of particular note are the superlative labels given to buildings (i.e. *miracula*, *pulcherrima* etc) which are the symbols of Rome's conquest throughout the world: 'verum et ad urbis nostrae miracula transire conveniat DCCCque annorum dociles scrutari vires et sic quoque terrarum orbem victum ostendere. quod accidissee totiens paene, quot referentur miracula, apparebit; universitate vero acervata et in quendam unum cumulum coiecta non alia magnitudine exurget quam si mundus alius quidam in uno loco narretur.'

<sup>62</sup> Dueck 85-86. See also the chapters "Strabo and the World of Augustan Rome" (85-106) and "Greek Scholars in Augustan Rome" (130-144) from Dueck's remarkably thorough study, *Strabo of Amasia: a Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome* (2000).

Rome (save Augustus), Strabo's fascination with the City rests centrally upon Rome's unrivaled monuments. The supporting pillars of this unique world are its places.

Strabo, like his contemporaries examined in this study, likens a somewhat random collection of *fora*, basilicas, temples et al. to the City itself, thereby reinforcing the idea that Rome was a microcosm without equal.<sup>63</sup> This may be evidenced not only through the use of ἐκλάθειν, which literally causes the viewer to forget that which falls outside (τῶν ἔξωθεν) the boundaries of his or her environment (*LSJ* 511), but also through the diverse types of structures, occupying religious, civic, funerary, and aesthetic functions as crucial prerequisites for civilization to flourish.<sup>64</sup> Since Strabo's particular description of Rome only touches upon a few places and monuments, we can consider the geographer's personal construction of Rome as further evidence for the transformation of the City from an amalgam of *loca* and *monumenta* to a veritable product of the mind. With this creation of a mental map of the City, on which distance, age, and function are inconsequential relative to Rome's vast scale and antiquity, the fullest transcendence of urban physicality may now take place.

- **Wherever they may Rome**

After the celebrated Augustan-age poet Ovid (43 BCE-17 CE) was banished to the frontier town of Tomis<sup>65</sup> under mysterious pretenses, the mournful works that appear following his exile (c. 8 CE) offer a unique perspective on Rome. Standing in stark contrast to the poet's former *joie de vivre* that characterized the City in the *Ars*

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<sup>63</sup> The leap from the Campus Martius to the areas surrounding the Capitoline in the above passage, while physically jarring given the distance between said *loca*, may be seen figuratively as evidence for the manifestation of Rome as a product of the mind.

<sup>64</sup> Camillus' distinction of the Roman landscape and its inherent benefits in the conclusion of his speech in *AUC* 5.54.3 is what ultimately moves the *Quirites* not to abandon the City to the Gauls.

<sup>65</sup> On the coast of the Black Sea in modern day Romania.

*Amatoria*,<sup>66</sup> the *Sorrows* (*Tristia*) and the *Epistles from Pontus* (*Epistulae ex Ponto*)

express the same longing for Ovid's beloved adopted city,<sup>67</sup> which burns just as ardently from afar. In spite of the great distance between Rome and the Black Sea in terms of time, space, and culture, the vivid power of imagination as expressed through the written word is able to transport Ovid literally back to the City.<sup>68</sup> In a letter to his friend Severus (*Ex Ponto* 1.8), the poet juxtaposes the remoteness and savagery of the native land of the Getae surrounding the Caspian Sea with the urbane qualities of *the City*<sup>69</sup> in liberated verses without ever leaving the oppressive confines of Tomis:

nec tu credideris urbanae commoda vitae  
     quaerere Nasonem, quaerit et illa tamen.                     30  
 nam modo vos animo dulces reminiscor, amici,  
     nunc mihi cum cara coniuge nata subit:  
 aque domo rursus pulchrae loca vertor ad urbis,  
     cunctaque mens oculis pervidet usa suis.  
 nunc fora, nunc aedes, nunc marmore tecta theatra,             35  
     nunc subit aequata porticus omnis humo.  
 gramina nunc Campi pulcros spectantis in hortos,  
     et euripi Virgineusque liquor.

You would not believe that Naso<sup>70</sup> seeks the comforts of city life, but he seeks them all the same. For I am presently reminded of you, my sweet friends—now my dear wife and daughter come to me. Again I am visiting the beautiful places of the City from my house, and my mind examines everything with eyes of its own. Now the *fora*, now the temples, now the theaters covered in marble, now every portico with level ground comes to me. Now the grass of the Campus Martius looking towards the beautiful gardens, and the pools and canals and the water of the Virgo aqueduct.

<sup>66</sup> In short, the Augustan age was suited to Ovid's character according to the *Ars Amatoria*: 'gratulor—haec aetas moribus apta meis' (3.122). As far as the ribald characterization of the City goes, the poet famously exclaimed 'quot caelum stellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas' (1.59), a sentiment which could very easily have led the poet to *error* (indiscretion) that partially brought about his exile along with a *carmen* (i.e. *Ars Amatoria*) (OCD 1084).

<sup>67</sup> Ovid was originally from Sulmo, now the modern town of Sulmona in Abruzzo (OCD 1084) to the east of Latium.

<sup>68</sup> The power of poetry is vividly personified in the opening of the *Tristia* (1.1), in which Ovid's little book (*liber*) enters the city without the poet (*sine me*, 1.1.1), dressed in the cloth of the author's misfortune (*infelix habitum temporis huius habe*, 1.1.4).

<sup>69</sup> The Latin for city (*urbs*) frequently connoted Rome as *the city*. We can consider the ramifications of this distinction through the modern use of Rome to describe both empire and city in antiquity (Larmour and Spencer 2).

<sup>70</sup> Naso was Ovid's *cognomen*. His full Latin name is Publius Ovidius Naso.

Shifting rapidly from friends (*amici*) to family (*coniuge nata*), the places (*loca*) of Rome distinguish this poem with percussive bravura, flying from fora to temples to theaters on a whim thanks to the power of the mind.<sup>71</sup> Much in the same way that Strabo and Horace before him predicate the essence of the City on its tangible qualities, such ostensibly Augustan-age *monumenta* and *loca*<sup>72</sup> as referenced by Ovid are meant to inspire the beholder to utilize such physical spaces on a personal level. Ovid's selective yet ample topographical description<sup>73</sup> supports the notion that Rome evoked an intensely personal response (owing to the complexity and immensity of such a palimpsest, where a limited visible portion of the City's voluminous history required a certain degree of imagination as it does today), but its synoptic scope relies on more than just *monumenta* and *loca* alone; Rome need not be in Rome anymore. Through the City's remarkable union of history, archaeology, government, and religion with the individual, Ovid unequivocally shows the extent to which Rome would become a product of the mind outside of the City itself for generations to come.

- **Summary of Ancient Source Discussion**

In summary, we may see the use of Rome's monuments (*monumenta*) and places (*loca*) as extensions of the City itself, whose influences grew far beyond the walls of Augustan-age Rome. According to the first definitions of monuments set forth in this study with respect to Augustus and Varro, monuments such as the *Res Gestae*

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<sup>71</sup> Compare *Tristia* 4.2.57-64, which views the mind (*mens*) as the window to Rome as seen from afar: Haec ego summotus qua possum mente videbo: erepti nobis ius habet illa loci: illa per immensas spatiatur libera terras, in caelum celery pervenit illa fuga; illa meos oculos mediam deducit in urbem, immunes tanti nec sinit esse boni; invenietque animus, qua currus spectet eburnos; sic certe in patria per breve tempus ero.

<sup>72</sup> Helzle demonstrates the association of all these places to the Augustan program (217).

<sup>73</sup> Strabo's assessment of *loca* (5.3.8) implies that such singular aspects of the landscape need not necessarily conform to a particular time, place, or theme in order to describe Rome as a whole according to the perceptions of the onlooker.

transcended physicality to become timeless symbols and markers of the City's tumultuous and incomparably ancient history. Because of the ubiquity of monuments in the public sphere and their diverse (and often conflicting) etiologies (e.g. the portrayal of the Forum Romanum in Livy, Virgil, and Propertius and the Capitol in Horace), stemming from an indeterminately vast and often alienating antiquity (e.g. Propertius *Elegy 4*), these markers prompt the onlooker to utilize them on a personal level in order to solidify their provenance as topographically and socially unifying features of the Roman landscape. Through this process of personalization and symbolic transformation, monuments come to represent timeless achievements of *romanitas*, thereby demonstrating that Rome's microcosmic essence need not be confined only to Rome; it is in fact a state of mind.



- **Uniting the Ages: Augustus, Fascism, and Postwar Italian Cinema**

Although the western Roman Empire that emanated from the city of Rome ultimately collapsed some five centuries after Augustus had indelibly altered its capital, the Eternal City's role as the *caput mundi* of civilization was never fully relinquished; even after the demise of Rome's political hegemony, the City remained a center for the study of the classical past and Christianity most ostensibly because of the extant physical infrastructure. Like proto-Rome as recounted by Evander in the *Aeneid*, the City's overall significance waxed and waned following the official collapse of the Western Empire in 476 CE,<sup>74</sup> but nothing could destroy Rome's past as evidenced in its timeless monuments. Ironically, the more such *monumenta* and *loca* became obscured and ceased to reflect the purported height of the City's grandeur in antiquity under Augustus, the more students of the City's history came to equate Rome with this facet of its past, following a renewed interest in classical civilization towards the end of the Middle Ages. In the spirit of Petrarch and his colleagues of the Italian Renaissance,<sup>75</sup> who often viewed the ancient City as a microcosm of humanity because of its diversity, enormity, and resilience in the face of decay, it comes as little surprise that the rallying cry of the modern Italian state during the first Risorgimento of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century was "Rome or death!"<sup>76</sup> With the integration of Rome into the modern, unified Italian state as the country's capital in 1870, the City once again came to represent a nation and a civilization as a whole.

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<sup>74</sup> The Eastern Empire, centered in Constantinople (often known as the "second Rome"), survived until the Ottoman conquest of 1453.

<sup>75</sup> See Edwards 89-93 for a brief explanation of Rome's significance to classical scholars and admirers of the City's ancient past in Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (i.e. Petrarch and Cola Rienzo, who staged a coup in 1347 and 1354 and was crowned *Tribunus Augustus* on the Capitoline (91))

<sup>76</sup> I.e. "Roma o morte!" (Bondanella (1987) 176). This quotation is emblazoned on the Garibaldi monument on the Gianicolo.

Following this feat of idealism and *realpolitik*, an era of instability came to define the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for Italians as the nation still struggled to unite in the face of enormous cultural, social, and political differences. Italy's Pyrrhic victory in the First World War (1914-1918) against the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary) left the fledgling nation racked with inflation and beset by the deaths of half a million soldiers;<sup>77</sup> the need for strong leadership had never been more imperative. In the ensuing chaos, Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) and his fascist supporters took a page from history and marched on Rome in March of 1922 in order to liberate the City from the shackles of ineffective government, just as Caesar had when he crossed the Rubicon, thereby initiating Rome's rise to Empire.<sup>78</sup>

Beginning with this linking of Rome's modernity (and therefore that of Italy) to its *imperial* greatness as exemplified under Augustus, Mussolini accentuated this particular aspect of Rome's antiquity as one of the hallmarks of his fascist program. Brandishing the ancient *fasces* and calling himself *Il Duce*,<sup>79</sup> this Italian dictator sought to legitimize his regime by recycling and even embellishing signs of Augustus' own program, thus echoing a figure who had similarly transformed Rome following a time of political and military upheaval. The most obvious way Mussolini and his fascist supporters demonstrated this correlation was through monuments.

Since one need only peruse a modern topographical dictionary of Rome to show the extent to which Mussolini purposefully accented Augustan features of the ancient landscape to suit his fervently nationalist program, it is of greater importance to this study

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<sup>77</sup> Blinkhorn 16.

<sup>78</sup> Mussolini in fact arrived by train, but the fascist party consciously made the comparison between *Il Duce* and Julius Caesar (Bondanella (1987) 177)

<sup>79</sup> *Fasces* were comprised of a bundle of rods and symbolized authority from the archaic age (*OCD* 587-88). *Duce* is derived from the Latin for "leader" (*dux*).

to examine the governing philosophy of monumentality according to the fascist regime, which sought to legitimize the new Italy according to signs of its past greatness. As Mussolini stated in April 1922, shortly before his march on the Eternal City, the perpetuation of Rome's enduring *ancient* legacy to which its monuments bear witness would require a human foundation:

Rome is our point of departure and reference. It is our symbol or, if you wish, our myth. We dream of a Roman Italy, that is to say wise, strong, disciplined, and imperial. Much of that which was the immortal spirit of Rome rises again in Fascism: the Fasces are Roman; our organization of combat is Roman, our pride and our courage is Roman: *Civis romanus sum*. It is necessary, now, that the history of tomorrow, the history we fervently wish to create, not be a contrast or a parody of the history of yesterday. The Romans were not only warriors, but formidable builders who could challenge, as they did challenge, their time.<sup>80</sup>

In recognition of these many elements that comprised Rome as a city, a culture, and an idea, Mussolini, while distinguishing certain monuments over others (e.g. the Ara Pacis),<sup>81</sup> accepted the City's ancient status as palimpsest and predicted its elevation to a product of the mind beyond the physicality of its monuments with the help of his legions of *cives romani*:

Rome must appear marvelous to all the peoples of the world, vast, ordered, potent, as it was at the time of the early empire of Augustus. You will continue to free the trunk of the great oak of all that still encumbers it. You will make passages around the Theater of Marcellus, the Campidoglio,<sup>82</sup> the Pantheon: all that grew around them in the centuries of decadence must disappear. You will also liberate the temples of Christian Rome from profane and parasitic constructions. The ancient monuments of our history must loom in the necessary solitude. Hence, the third Rome will spread over other hills, along the banks of the sacred river as far as the beaches of the Tyrrhenian Sea.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Quoted from Painter 3.

<sup>81</sup> The Ara Pacis was relocated to the Piazza Augusto Imperatore on the West Bank of the Tiber, a complex Mussolini began in 1934 to bring together Augustus' Altar of Peace and Mausoleum in celebration of the emperor's bimillennium (Painter 73).

<sup>82</sup> I.e. the Capitoline.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted from Marcus 47-8.

Having since combined ancient and modern as well as mythological and historical perspectives in creating this seemingly whimsical third Rome (i.e. *Terza Roma*), the fascist age in fact succeeded in bringing about this synoptic presentation of the City and extending it well into the postwar age. After the government that had originally created this image had collapsed, its dilapidated monuments would garner renewed significance in the eyes of its new students and admirers: filmmakers.

### **Re-opening a City: the model significance of *Roma città aperta* (1945)**

With the surrender of the fascist state of Italy on 8 September 1943 towards the end of the Second World War, the annexation of Rome by Nazi Germany (Italy's former ally) only hours later inaugurated a period of ruthless occupation. Until the Eternal City's liberation on 4 June 1944 by Allied forces,<sup>84</sup> Rome and her citizens were indiscriminately subjected to the injustices of Nazi occupation, impending civil war between partisans, loyalists, and fascists, and the threat of an equally violent future with the demise of the formerly absolute regime. Immediately following this cataclysm of two decades of rule under the totalitarian leadership of Mussolini, director Roberto Rossellini and collaborating writer and friend Federico Fellini<sup>85</sup> sought to profile the diverse struggles of the City's many warring factions during the occupation with *Open City* (*Roma città aperta*, 1945).<sup>86</sup> While an entire thesis could be devoted solely to this film because of its

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<sup>84</sup> For an historical account of the occupation of Rome during the Second World War, see Wallace 34-47.

<sup>85</sup> Because of a longstanding tradition of interdisciplinary partnership in Italian cinema that exists to this day (i.e. Cinecittà, 'la più importante industria cinematografica europea,' proudly describes itself as the only facility in the world to offer a 'ciclo completo...dalla produzione, all'edizione fino alla realizzazione di effetti speciali (*Cinecittà Studios*)), I will argue that Fellini played a significant role in the production of *Open City* and that his views on Rome set forth in 1945 markedly influence his later films, several of which will be examined in this study. See also Bondanella (1992) 38-54 for further evidence of the complementary nature of Rossellini's and Fellini's relationship as filmmakers.

<sup>86</sup> The film is sometimes entitled *Rome: Open City* in English as a direct translation of the Italian title (IMDB).

indispensable import to the Italian neorealist movement,<sup>87</sup> my analysis will instead focus on the symbolic ramifications of monuments in *Open City* with reference to those ancient attitudes towards Rome's urban landscape set forth in the first half of this study.

Our first glimpse of the modern Italian capital in *Open City* comes in the form of a rooftop vista, looking west across the Tiber with a distant view of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, the administrative center of the Holy See and thus the *caput mundi* for Roman Catholics worldwide. Already overshadowed by the block lettering of the superimposed credits, the view of the skyline quickly moves to the left, shifting from monumentality to obscurity. Instead of an emblematic parade of Rome's many recognizable landmarks, we become disoriented by fragmented layers of rooftops and totally nondescript dwellings of indeterminate ages. As the credits fade, so do our perceptions of Rome as a characteristically ancient entity of incomparable grandeur and splendor: German troops patrol the deserted Piazza di Spagna and a mandatory curfew limits the congregation of Rome's infamous pedestrian and motor traffic. The City's vast antiquity is nowhere to be seen. In the next scene, when SS soldiers stage a raid on the purported hideout of resistance leader, Giorgio Manfredi, the Italian partisan races to the roof, where we discover the source of the view seen in the opening credits (Figure 1.1.). Frenetically scanning the Roman skyline to locate an escape route, Manfredi then descends to the world below before the Germans learn of his flight.

Through this introduction to Rome during the nadir of the Nazi occupation, we enter the City as an outsider. Regardless of the viewer's prior knowledge of Rome's voluminous past, our understanding of the City at the beginning of *Open City* cannot surpass that of an armchair historian because of the film's construction of the Italian

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<sup>87</sup> For an introduction to Italian neorealism (neorealismo), see Marcus 3-29.

capital's landscape according to the personal experiences of the protagonists. Monuments are of course present and ubiquitous in *Open City* as the first shot demonstrates, but, like Aeneas, we require the assistance of an Evander to show us the collocations of Rome's already dense typography as an ever evolving palimpsest of humanity. Even if we were to attempt to describe scientifically the Rome of Rossellini and Fellini's *Open City* solely from a topographical standpoint, we would be denying the *human* basis of monuments, which should figure first and foremost as the means to glorify human achievements and partially escape mortality, as shown previously in the analysis of the *Res Gestae*. The dangers of evaluating topography *per se* without the necessary influence of people immediately become apparent once the viewer considers the dearth of *characteristically* Roman monuments in the film, which (with the notable exception of St. Peter's Basilica) are confined almost exclusively to Piranesi-style engravings of ancient ruins, pictures and postcards taken prior to the occupation, and a smattering of already dilapidated fascist buildings. Piazza di Spagna and the Palazzo della civiltà italiana in E.U.R. are among the only immediately recognizable monuments seen first hand in *Open City*, whose striking differences in terms of architecture, location, and import to plot and symbolism further demonstrate the status of Rome as microcosm. Given the inextricability between *monumenta* and the people who use them throughout Roman history, *Open City* urges the viewer from the start to consider Rome as the extension of its diverse masses, who inhabit a veritable microcosm of the tangible and the symbolic. Only by exploring the personal can the City become truly open, "as a place, as a people, and as a historical entity."<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Marcus 46.

Following the temporary triumph of the righteous and stoically handsome partisan Manfredi over the coercive, cowardly, and clearly homosexual Gestapo commandant, Major Bergmann, the tenor of *Open City's* dichotomous rhetoric soon becomes apparent, a tone that will thematically define the rest of the film in its entirety. As Bondanella notes:

[*Open City's*] appeal derives primarily from its unconventional juxtaposition of traditional styles and moods, ranging from the use of documentary-like footage, creating a texture of journalistic immediacy, to the most blatant melodrama and spellbinding suspense, moving the audience's hearts more than raising its ideological consciousness. What emerged from *Roma: città aperta* was a hybrid style, a mixture of historical facts and pseudo-documentary aimed at a moving evocation of the German occupation of Rome through the employment of tear jerking melodrama and slap-stick comedy.<sup>89</sup>

While such purposeful disparities in terms of characterization have also been noted by other scholars,<sup>90</sup> the way in which “positive and negative are unambiguously coded”<sup>91</sup> throughout the film are also reflected in terms of the physical construction of Rome. Therefore, such contrasting viewpoints with respect to politics, religion, and even existentialism may be measured according to their overriding subservience to Rome as the very stage on which battles of diametrically opposed morality may play out. In the same way that *Open City* has been described as a pastiche given the many chronicles that comprise its diverse narrative,<sup>92</sup> the interplay between young and old, men and women, priest and layman, Italian and German, right and wrong establishes Rome as a world in and of itself, where monuments reflect the actions of their users through their physicality and in turn interpret the users' moral character according to the way in which *they* treat monuments.

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<sup>89</sup> (1992) 40.

<sup>90</sup> See also Marcus 37-42 and Bondanella (1988) 37-40 for a detailed analysis of characterization throughout *Open City*.

<sup>91</sup> Wagstaff 46.

<sup>92</sup> Marcus 36.

The scene following Manfredi's evasion of German capture emphasizes the essence of Rome's diversity and the role of the personal in making the City one's own. While Bergmann feels that he alone can measure German suppression of Roman resistance on a map, safe within the sumptuous headquarters of the Gestapo,<sup>93</sup> Manfredi's friend and brother in arms, Francesco, also has a map in his apartment, but of Italian *resistance* strongholds in the City.<sup>94</sup> Both have the same fundamental map, but there are in fact two different Romes. Whereas Bergmann succumbs to an ancient temptation to reduce Rome to lines on a map in order to divide its people, seeing only the superficial in terms of both topography and humanity, Francesco and Manfredi use the map rather to unite in recognition of the fact that the City relies upon its citizens to make it what it is. This philosophy subsequently becomes manifest through the unfolding of *Open City*'s narrative, which polarizes the two rival factions and judges the moral fiber of their respective proponents according to the nature of their immediate surroundings.

Thanks to the stratified layers of the City and a time honored tradition of ingenuity in transforming existing space to suit the needs of subsequent generations,<sup>95</sup> those Romans who oppose the occupation defy the Germans' myopic perceptions of the City's physicality by revamping existing monuments (i.e. the conversion of a baroque church into a refuge for partisans), places (i.e. apartment buildings and stores serving as hideouts and printing presses for subversive anti-fascist literature), and by literally going underground in order to aid the Resistance better. Because of the Nazi cooptation of the

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<sup>93</sup> The marriage of space to morality is fittingly displayed in the famous torture scene towards the end of the film. Bergmann is able to subject partisans to horrific torture in a dungeon-like environment in Gestapo Headquarters and then walk a few meters to the plush officers' club.

<sup>94</sup> See Marcus 46-7, from which I have drawn a great deal in the analysis of this section.

<sup>95</sup> Consider again the importance of necessity (*ἀνάγκη*) in building the City, which Strabo cites (5.3.2) as does Livy (5.55.1-5) with reference to the survival and successful resilience of Rome over the centuries.



urban core of the City from the start of the film, the movement of the Resistance and their supporters to the outskirts in turn grants them paradoxical nobility as the champions of *Open City* in part because they live on the ghettoized fringes of Rome. Whereas protagonists such as Pina (played by the iconic Roman actress Anna Magnani),<sup>96</sup> the irascible, street smart fiancée of Francesco, are forced to subsist on meager rations within a concrete jungle, miles to the southeast near the Via Casilina,<sup>97</sup> her former friend and turncoat, Marina, lives in comparative luxury with posh art deco furniture, fur coats, and narcotics, supplied to her by Bergmann’s “viperlike lesbian”<sup>98</sup> assistant. Once Marina knowingly betrays the Resistance and brings about the execution of Manfredi and his cohorts along with the brutal murder of Pina, just hours before her marriage to Francesco is to take place, her treachery condemns her to spiritual damnation along with her Nazi conspirators. Thus, her betrayal colors our perceptions of her lavish surroundings as an extension of her reprehensibility.

The most salient example of *Open City*’s union of symbolism and monuments is seen at the very end of the film, after Don Pietro, a composite of historical and fictional priests,<sup>99</sup> makes the ultimate sacrifice for the Resistance. In keeping with the film’s distinction of what Bondanella labels “Christian humanism”<sup>100</sup> over other political leanings of the protagonists (i.e. fascism and communism), the priest who supports all those “who fight for justice and peace”<sup>101</sup> assumes Christ-like status<sup>102</sup> once he is

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<sup>96</sup> Nearly thirty years later, Fellini’s concluding narrative in *Roma* (1972) considers Magnani to be *the* symbol of Rome, “as a whore and vestal virgin, aristocratic and threadbare, gloomy, and clownish—I could go on until tomorrow morning.”

<sup>97</sup> Bondanella (1988) 39.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* 38.

<sup>99</sup> Marcus 37.

<sup>100</sup> Bondanella (1988) 38.

<sup>101</sup> ‘Io sono un sacerdote cattolico—e credo che chi combatte per la giustizia e la libertà cammina nelle vie del Signore—e le vie del Signore sono infinite.’ Quoted from the soundtrack.

executed by a joint German-Italian firing squad for aiding both Italian partisans and a Wehrmacht deserter. Following this unthinkable conclusion, Pina's now orphaned son trudges back towards Rome with Romoletto (lit. "little Romulus") leading the way for him and his neighborhood friends. Amidst their despair, the sudden appearance of St. Peter's Basilica to the sound of triumphant, non-diegetic music immediately harkens back to the monumental altruism of Don Pietro in name (i.e. San Pietro is name of the Basilica in Italian)<sup>103</sup> and spirit (Figure 1.2.). No longer obscured by the detritus of war, St. Peter's Basilica symbolizes *Open City*'s cycle of hope, despair, and rekindled faith in humanity that ostensibly relies upon Rome's physicality in illustrating the City's symbolic diversity according to its role as microcosm<sup>104</sup> as Noa Steimatsky summarizes:

If Rossellini's emerges as the exemplary work of its time, it is not perhaps for its heroic representation of the Resistance and the war of liberation, nor strictly for the documentary charge of the ruins that his camera captured, but for identifying in these ruins the predicament and the precise charge of contemporary history for cinema. It is this trope that binds quotidian and monumental values, that forges a collectivity out of these arenas of encounter between altering identities, diverse pasts (49).

With little Romulus in command of the soon to be postwar generation, this rejuvenated ancient founder takes the children across the City's peripheral zone into the core of what will soon become Mussolini's fabled third Rome, where the union of ancient, Christian, and modern influences will be consummated for the first time in the new age.

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<sup>102</sup> Pina's lifeless corpse, splayed out on the pavement with arms fully extended to the side as if crucified may also be interpreted according to her role as a sort of 'Christian humanist.'

<sup>103</sup> Marcus 52.

<sup>104</sup> Consider the opening sequence of Antonioni's *L'avventura* (1960), which also uses St. Peter's Basilica as a symbolic marker. Whereas *Open City* calls upon the church to symbolize Rome's inevitable resurrection in the postwar age, *L'avventura*'s view of the Basilica, now obscured on the horizon by the construction of luxury apartments on Rome's once barren outskirts, seems to signal the dangers of the decadence of the bourgeoisie, who are oblivious to everything around them (including most notably the disappearance of one of the main characters on a tiny island while on vacationing on a yacht in the Aeolian Islands).

- ***Nights of Cabiria (Le notti di Cabiria, 1957): Nascent transition***

In the decade following the production of *Open City*, the transformations that had occurred in the life of filmmaker Federico Fellini and his country since the Nazi occupation were substantial: the Second World War ended with the victory of the Allied forces in 1945, Italy became a republic with the creation of a constitution in 1948, and a young Fellini was coming into his own as an artist. Like the Marshall Plan, which resuscitated the nations of Western Europe from the brink of economic collapse after the War, Fellini helped to revitalize Italy's once mighty movie industry, centered at the newly reopened Cinecittà Studios in Rome, originally christened under Mussolini in April of 1937.<sup>105</sup> Along with his postwar-era colleagues, Fellini came to develop his own unique style in the wake of *Open City*'s groundbreaking emergence as one of the first examples of Italian neorealism, which subsequently spawned such classics as Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946), Luchino Visconti's *La terra trema (The Earth Trembles, 1948)*, and Vittorio De Sica's *Ladri di biciclette (The Bicycle Thief or The Bicycle Thieves, 1948)*, to name but a few.<sup>106</sup> With the international success of such films as *I vitelloni (The Young and the Passionate, 1953)* and *La strada (The Road, 1954)*, for which Fellini received two Academy Award nominations for writing,<sup>107</sup> producer Dino de Laurentiis offered this Italian auteur<sup>108</sup> a five-picture deal. The first film under this contract was *Nights of Cabiria* (1957), the final installment in what Bondanella calls "the trilogy of grace or

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<sup>105</sup> Baxter (1993) 56.

<sup>106</sup> Bondanella (1988) cites in addition Rossellini's *Germania anno zero (Germany Year Zero, 1947)* and De Sica's *Sciuscià (Shoeshine, 1946)* and *Umberto D (1951)* as paradigmatic achievements of the movement (37).

<sup>107</sup> *La strada* won an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1957 (IMDB).

<sup>108</sup> According to Chandler's biography of Fellini, the term *auteur* to describe a film director was first attached to Fellini by French critic André Bazin in a review of *Nights of Cabiria* (116).

salvation,”<sup>109</sup> following *La strada* and *Il bidone* (1955) respectively. Because of *Nights of Cabiria*’s transitional nature as the successor to *Open City*’s gritty perspective on real world Rome as well as the precursor to the surreality of *La dolce vita*,<sup>110</sup> the film occupies a place of critical importance towards the understanding of Rome’s landscape as an evolving collection of monuments, places, and people who make the City what it is.

After Nino Rota’s romantic theme subsides following the opening credits, a sense of déjà vu pervades our perceptions of the Rome featured in *Nights of Cabiria*. Even though the Colosseum and the Campidoglio are nowhere to be seen in *Nights of Cabiria*, the comprehensive rendering of Rome as exemplified in *Open City* (following ancient perceptions of its complexity and often alienating countenance) demonstrates the extent to which the City has become an ever greater microcosm since the end of the Second World War and the subsequent surge in the capital’s population. As Cabiria skips merrily along the bank of the Tiber with her lover, Giorgio, cranes dot the horizon of the City’s burgeoning suburbs off in the distance, near the ancient port of Ostia. Rome is growing. A few minutes later, once Cabiria is dragged back to terra firma after nearly drowning in the river, having since been robbed of 40,000 lire<sup>111</sup> by Giorgio and left for dead, a jet plane loudly accelerates as Cabiria is suddenly brought back to life. Having been resuscitated by the shrillness of modernity as it were, Cabiria awakens once again to embark upon a journey that is just as transitional, jarring, and uncannily intertextual as the film’s depiction of this resurrected nexus of civilization.

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<sup>109</sup> 121 (1988).

<sup>110</sup> Ebert 306. See also Ebert 303-307 for a brief introduction to the film.

<sup>111</sup> Cabiria recounts the incident to her friend, Wanda, who replies that someone would have killed Cabiria for just 5,000 lire.

In accordance with the contrasting nature of the movie's first scene, a contrapuntal pattern of hope and illusion comes to dominate the entirety of *Nights of Cabiria* as a series of manic highs and lows.<sup>112</sup> Recalling the circular narratives of Fellini's earlier works,<sup>113</sup> particularly the fragmented vignettes that comprise *La strada* and *Il bidone* (in addition to ultimately vain hopes of their protagonists), *Nights of Cabiria* fashions a world in which unequivocal evil is pitted against fleeting glances at goodness. While morality is not as starkly portrayed in black and white as it typically appears in *Open City* (in part because of Cabiria's ignoble profession as a prostitute, which clashes with her endearing naïveté and infectious joy), the presence of a hierarchy of probity is prevalent and diverse, albeit skewed towards malevolent self-enterprising. Through this qualification of the film's characters, the surrounding landscape of Rome once again comes to reflect the multiformity of its inhabitants, but does not always rigidly define them as in *Open City*.

Because of the conspicuous absence of foreign oppression in *Nights of Cabiria* compared to *Open City*, the characterization of the *other* becomes more problematic. Long after the Nazis have fled Rome, however, the polarizing effects of their rule, inherited from the former fascist government's cooptation of the City's urban core, can still be sensed in *Nights of Cabiria*'s construction of Rome. Since Cabiria resides on the seediest fringes of the modern metropolis, some 14 kilometers outside the City limits,<sup>114</sup> it seems understandable that she would live among other whores, thieves, and lowlifes in general, feeling more at home on the ancient *Passeggiata archeologica* (the

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<sup>112</sup> Bondanella (1988) 138.

<sup>113</sup> For a detailed analysis of the various episodes of the film (including visual aids of the narrative structure) as an example of Fellini's open form, see Stubbs 51-55.

<sup>114</sup> Only under hypnosis does Cabiria reveal her actual residence to strangers!

“Archeological Promenade”)<sup>115</sup> than the Via Veneto, a playground for the rich and beautiful, who would become the main attractions of *La dolce vita* later in Fellini’s career.<sup>116</sup>

As Pier Paolo Pasolini, the film’s screenwriter, states, the conscious linking of character to environment may be seen throughout each of *Nights of Cabiria*’s major sequences.<sup>117</sup> The most dramatic illustration of this concept comes shortly after Cabiria’s brush with death in the film’s second episode, when her peripheral residence is contrasted with the elegance of the Via Veneto in the center of Rome. Having been snubbed by a pair of elegant, well-dressed (and much taller) prostitutes, Cabiria wanders over to the entrance of the Kit Kat Club on a whim and ends up escorting a famous actor, Alberto Lazzari (Amedeo Nazzari), who has just (temporarily) broken up with his gorgeous blonde girlfriend. Once they decide to move on to a different club, Cabiria soon appears to be woefully out of her element, but is surprisingly able to defy the expectations of her character as a prostitute and therefore the apparent demands of her immediate surroundings:

In a setting exuding luxury and ostentation, [Cabiria] is poorly dressed; amidst corruption, she is innocent; and so forth. The contrast is a moral one, implying a social judgment of Cabiria’s surroundings by Fellini, even if such judgments never constitute harsh condemnations. At the same time, the juxtaposition of such a threatening setting with the courage and persistence of the protagonist underlines Cabiria’s resilience and resolution.<sup>118</sup>

Following Cabiria’s rejection of the typical class-based constraints of the nightclub, Fellini further challenges the connotations of other aspects of Rome’s

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<sup>115</sup> I.e. the Porta Capena, near the Baths of Caracalla on the southwest slopes of the Caelian (Platner 405).

<sup>116</sup> Bondanella (1992) 136-9 cites such notable stars as Ava Gardner, Orson Welles, and Ursula Andress, who comprised the ultra exclusive “Hollywood on the Tiber” age on the Via Veneto, when many American movie productions (e.g. *Ben Hur*, 1959, and *Cleopatra*, 1963) moved to Cinecittà.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. 124 (originally quoted from “Nota su *Le notti di Cabiria*,” (152))

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. 125.

landscape. When Cabiria and Lazzari leave the club together and return to the actor's unimaginably lavish villa, located near the ancient Appian Way past the iconic Tomb of Caecilia Metella,<sup>119</sup> complete with mechanical closets and even an aviary, we soon glimpse a setting replete with even more jarring contrasts in the actor's bedroom: Solomonic columns from Bernini's *baldacchino* cover a white couch festooned in furs, a classical statue faces an Asian figurine (Figures 2.1., 2.2.), all of which are harmoniously unified by the strains of a recording of the second movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony! While such a depiction of Rome's nouveau riche is decidedly hyperbolic and gaudy in a Petronian sense, Fellini reinforces the legitimacy of this unlikely artistic union by employing a comparable blend of the fantastic and the familiar on a spiritual level. Immediately after Cabiria's unfulfilled rendezvous with Lazzari, we return to the *Passeggiata archeologica* for the second time, where the usual crowd of whores and pimps chat and smoke cigarettes by their Fiats and pace the *fornices* of a nondescript ancient structure as if imitating their streetwalking ancestors (Figure 2.3.).<sup>120</sup> While discussing an upcoming religious festival and the prayers they wish the Madonna to answer on their behalf, this motley group is surprised by the arrival of a procession of pilgrims from the order of the *Madonna del Divino Amore*, who chant Christian prayers in Latin as they walk between cars and ancient Roman ruins (Figure 2.4.). As Cabiria watches and follows in fascination, a truck driver calls out and picks her up, thus ending the segment without any discernible fulfillment or salvation.

This characteristically Roman mixture of ancient, Christian, and modern motifs could feasibly be interpreted according to Cabiria's alienating and mercilessly deceptive

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<sup>119</sup> Claridge 341-2.

<sup>120</sup> *Fornices* (arches) were notorious hangouts for prostitutes and sites of illicit sex, from which the English *fornicate* derives. See Horace's *Satire* 1.2 for a characteristically bawdy example.

search for lasting love, but the protagonist's staunch defiance of prejudice, disenchantment, and repeated heartbreak actually embraces an open interpretation of *Nights of Cabiria* on every level.<sup>121</sup> By the end of the film, once Cabiria has learned to smile in the face of the same sort of betrayal that propelled her to seek retribution at the movie's onset, a sense of optimism that pervaded the final frames of *Open City* with the towering presence of St. Peter's Basilica similarly brightens the conclusion of *Nights of Cabiria* in its equation of Rome's survival with that of humanity. Like the City's ubiquitous juxtapositions of time and place, the ending of *Nights of Cabiria* celebrates both the hardships and joys of life as mutually necessary entities. Through Rome's enduring, synoptic landscape, which becomes the personal stage of the film's anti-heroine, we see the City's timeless diversity reflected in Cabiria's being as the summation of all that is base, beautiful, and transcendent.

- ***La dolce vita (The Sweet Life, 1960):*<sup>122</sup> Building a Third Rome**

With the international success of *Nights of Cabiria*, Fellini was able to embark upon an even more ambitious undertaking with his next film, *La dolce vita*, a work of such intricacy and influence that it has come to summarize the director's corpus as a whole.<sup>123</sup> Not only has the film's "kaleidoscopic assemblage of major and minor characters, locations, and themes"<sup>124</sup> managed to describe "the hedonistic and superficial

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<sup>121</sup> Bondanella (1992) 131.

<sup>122</sup> I have obeyed the Italian orthographical convention in writing *La dolce vita* without capitalization, although it is also written as *La Dolce Vita* and *La Dolce vita*. Even though the film is known by its literal English translation (*The Sweet Life*) in some circles in the UK (IMDB), I shall refer to *La dolce vita* according to its international title in Italian.

<sup>123</sup> The film won the 1958 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Giuletta Masina's performance as Cabiria earned her the Best Actress Award from the 1957 Cannes Film Festival (IMDB). Apart from the purely cinematic contributions of *La dolce vita*, the film also introduced the word *Paparazzi* to the vernacular of tabloid journalism after the intrusive Paparazzo (Walter Santesso), a freelance photographer who works for Marcello.

<sup>124</sup> Bondanella (1992) 143.



pursuit of pleasure in reconstructed Europe,”<sup>125</sup> but also an entirely new language of cinema. Buttressed by the same sort of fragmented, episodic “narrative and non-narrative”<sup>126</sup> of *Nights of Cabiria*, *La dolce vita* is clearly fascinated by its own striking and sensuous visuals,<sup>127</sup> perhaps even more so than its uncompromising examination of its characters. At its core lies Rome, a city that is so complex, surreal, and wholly *personal* in its presentation that it defies conventional description.

Over the course of seven episodes<sup>128</sup> that comprise nearly three hours (a running time that made it the longest Italian film ever made up to that time),<sup>129</sup> we are guided by debonair gossip journalist, Marcello Rubini (Marcello Mastroianni), through a Rome that constitutes an entire world in and of itself. With sensational night clubs, ancient bath complexes, castles, modern fascist suburbs, and desolate natural landscapes, populated by waves of movie stars, outrageous intellectuals, and religious opportunists (and even the occasional morally upright individual), *La dolce vita* is nothing short of epic. Such an overwhelmingly comprehensive view of humanity marks the first instance in which a film in the director’s eclectic oeuvre was classified as “Fellinian,”<sup>130</sup> the precursor to the now more commonly employed term, “Felliniesque.” If we consider this blanket term according to Stubbs’s definition as the use of many “elements simultaneously to create an impression that is strong to the point of excess,”(61) the need for an emotional anchor to contextualize the director’s fondness for what has been described as a “Daliesque”

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid. 136

<sup>126</sup> Theodorakopoulos 353.

<sup>127</sup> *La dolce vita* was the first film Fellini photographed in widescreen (Chandler 115).

<sup>128</sup> See Bondanella (1992) 143-44 for a summary of the film’s narrative structure.

<sup>129</sup> Chandler 130.

<sup>130</sup> Bondanella (1992) 136.

amalgam of sharply contrasting and alienating visual motifs<sup>131</sup> is imperative. Fellini thus equates the advent of his visually transitional style in *La dolce vita* with the individual in making the City anew in order to overcome Rome's intimidating role as the veritable metaphor for Western culture<sup>132</sup> as exemplified in its landscape.

The film's iconic opening shot cogently summarizes Rome's existence by distinguishing its physicality as a symbol of ageless antiquity and resilience. Once the credits fade, a football field and an ancient Roman aqueduct on the fringes of the City suddenly appear side by side in the utmost harmony and tranquility, a state which is immediately threatened by the whirring of two helicopters in the distance. The lead helicopter approaches the camera and flies directly above the aqueduct towards the City, carrying a statue of Christ in tow. By framing Rome's history in the way it might have been discovered amidst the detritus of an archaeological excavation with the modern helicopter covering the older Christian and even more ancient Roman loci, Fellini unequivocally fulfills Mussolini's vision of the third Rome, which has literally grown beyond "the hills, along the banks of the sacred river as far as the beaches of the Tyrrhenian Sea."<sup>133</sup> As if blessing the aqueduct with outstretched arms, the statue of Christ rests comfortably between its predecessor and progenitor, a shot which presents an irrevocable whole (Figure 3.1.). Rome is at last unified—for a moment.

As the helicopters glide past the City's now gentrified suburbs (many of which were slums in *Open City* and *Nights of Cabiria*), Marcello asks the pilot to steer towards a group of women sunbathing beside a swimming pool. After failing to get any of their

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<sup>131</sup> Stubbs compares the Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali's *The Solar Table* (1936) to certain aspects of Fellini's style (60). Harcourt also links the frenetic works of 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian surrealist Giorgio di Chirico to the characteristic visual juxtapositions of the Italian director's own works (192-3).

<sup>132</sup> Bondanella (1988) 232.

<sup>133</sup> Quoted from Marcus 47-8. See also the previous discussion on the fascist program.

telephone numbers (even after revealing that their statue is destined for an audience with the Pope), Marcello and his fellow “journalists” grudgingly resume their course towards Vatican City, where an enormous crowd welcomes the arrival of Christ, accompanied by the sounds of the bells of St. Peter’s Basilica. After the camera focuses on the unobstructed view of Christ’s welcoming visage, the image quickly cuts to a group of masked Javanese dancers, ululating to the lukewarm delight of a posh nightclub’s aristocratic patrons. It is here at the start of the second sequence that Marcello runs into the equally vapid socialite, Maddalena (Anouk Aimée). Bored by the already hackneyed act,<sup>134</sup> Marcello takes Maddalena to the house of a common prostitute, where the two can feel some measure of excitement while pretending to be other people as they make love without feeling any love at all.

Just as the construction of this episode hinges upon a dichotomous assembly of fantasy and reality, the film’s third and arguably most famous sequence builds upon these strident aesthetic and moral contradictions in accordance with the excess of the inchoate Felliniesque style. When the buxom bombshell, Sylvia (Anita Ekberg), arrives in Rome to make a film with director Totò Scalise (Carlo di Maggio), Marcello immediately remarks upon the *confusione* of the actress’ foray into the Eternal City. As soon as she descends onto the tarmac of Ciampino airport, Sylvia braves a crowd of ravenous paparazzi, sycophantic producers, and *carabinieri* dressed in anachronistic Risorgimento-era parade uniforms. The entourage then drives back to the core of the City by way of the ancient Appian Way in the comfort of an enormous American convertible. Gliding between the Tomb of Caecilia Metella, mechanized paparazzi, and sheep (Figure 3.2.), Sylvia effectively retraces Cabiria’s journey to Lazzari’s house, but in the opposite

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<sup>134</sup> One of the patrons cannot believe that the ultra-modern club is *still* open.

direction; this is a new Rome, where juxtapositions of ancient and modern aspects are now more frequent and central, both topographically and thematically.

After giving a press conference to a bevy of international journalists and then scaling the dome of St. Peter's, Marcello escorts Sylvia to "Caracalla's," a night club presumably constructed among the ancient ruins of the Baths of Caracalla (Figure 3.3.). Once Sylvia has had her fill of dancing to rock music beside the conspicuously misplaced (and obviously manufactured) pieces of Constantine's colossal statue from the Capitoline Museums, she leads Marcello on a sprint through historic Rome. While wandering through the deserted, dimly lit alleyways of a non-descript portion of the City, she suddenly happens upon the Baroque splendor of the Trevi Fountain. Yielding to her insatiable *joie de vivre*, Sylvia jumps into the fountain and invites her escort to follow. As soon as Marcello reluctantly wades into the fountain, repeating "we're messing everything up,"<sup>135</sup> the fountain abruptly stops flowing. Like the ending of the second sequence, this vignette concludes just as suddenly and anticlimactically as the former.

In the same manner that *Open City* and *Nights of Cabiria* link people with places, *La dolce vita* continues this tradition of correlating the morality of the film's protagonists with their surroundings to some extent, thus partially denigrating the implied sanctity of Rome's history as shown in the helicopter sequence's blessed stratification and Sylvia's tour of the City. On a superficial level, such a *mélange* of history, culture, and society further reinforces the idea of Rome as microcosm, which the City's varied and monumental landscape emphasizes in these pivotal episodes. However incredible such images may seem, Fellini asserts the *possibility* of an accord between the ages as posited by the opening helicopter sequence and Sylvia's unbridled love for life wherever she

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<sup>135</sup>I.e. "Stiamo sbagliando tutto!"

goes. The inconclusiveness of both episodes when viewed apart from the overarching structure of the narrative indicate that Fellini is not yet able to extricate himself fully from the incongruous connotations of such admittedly jarring pairings of ancient and modern elements. Although Robert Richardson states that such an “aesthetic of disparity”<sup>136</sup> ultimately brings about little more than “spiritual poverty” for Marcello and his morally moribund companions,<sup>137</sup> the resulting alienation is in fact conducive to Fellini’s purposefully ambiguous portrayal of the City as a symbol of hope as well as the limitless diversity of humanity in bringing greatness and baseness together. As Virgil and his contemporaries repeatedly demonstrate, Rome cannot experience rebirth in future ages without recalling the faults of yore as an impetus for moral reform and improvement.

In the end, even though Marcello has clearly lost his way on account of the shocking suicide of his beloved role model, Steiner (Alain Cuny), his failed hopes for legitimacy as a real journalist, and the sorry state of his relationship with his fiancée, Emma (Yvonne Furneaux), Fellini never excludes the possibility of redemption, however small. With the angelic<sup>138</sup> reappearance of Paola (Valeria Ciangottini) in the final scene of *La dolce vita*, the lone example of purity and innocence in the journalist’s life, the director “offers us the faint hope of some escape from this dreary emotional, sexual, and intellectual impasse.”<sup>139</sup> Having famously asserted that *La dolce vita* is “not a trial seen by a judge but rather an accomplice,”<sup>140</sup> Fellini thus does not subject Marcello to perpetual damnation, but rather sets the struggles of the film’s protagonists within the

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<sup>136</sup> Quoted in Bondanella (1988) 233.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. 232-4.

<sup>138</sup> In his first interaction with Paola at a restaurant in Ostia, Marcello says that she reminds him of an angel painted on the wall of an Umbrian church.

<sup>139</sup> Bondanella (1992) 148.

<sup>140</sup> Quoted in Bondanella (1987) 239.

context of his own existence on a personal level. By virtue of the open nature of the film's ending and the rejection of the protagonists' need to conform to the connotations of their physical surroundings as previously demonstrated in *Nights of Cabiria*, Fellini further challenges these expectations by *rebuilding* the environment itself in order to make sense of Rome's overwhelmingly complex history and ultimately make it belong to the individual.

Just like his ancient literary predecessors, who considered monuments to be the most representative and mutable components of the Roman landscape because of their ability to mark time through the achievements and alterations of their wholly *human* creators, Fellini manipulates the urban face of Rome according to personal desires. Beginning with *La dolce vita*, the director fashioned almost exact replicas of such characteristically Roman sites as the Via Veneto, the dome of St. Peter's Basilica, and the Baths of Caracalla along with more than eighty other locations<sup>141</sup> in the malleable confines of Rome's own Cinecittà, in stark defiance of the cherished precepts of location filming that had defined the neorealist movement. Because of the chaotic nature of modern Rome, which did not always heed the specific demands of its filmmakers and their timetables,<sup>142</sup> this decision was almost certainly a matter of convenience. Beyond logistics, however, this approach allowed for the accentuation of singular aspects of the landscape in order to connote the entire City, but on a smaller scale. For example, the few fragments of Constantine's colossal statue that are strewn about "Caracalla's" immediately bring to mind ancient *romanitas*, even though the context of such remains

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<sup>141</sup> Bondanella (1992) 138-40.

<sup>142</sup> Given Rome's noise pollution, multilingual casts (many of whose members did not often speak Italian), and the need to capture the City's atmosphere, most Italian films of this period that shot on location in the City did not even bother to record dialogue. Instead, actors would almost always rerecord their lines in postproduction.

represents an archaeological impossibility. Matters of aesthetics and creativity were thus the most important reasons why Fellini decided to replicate such a wide swath of Rome in a film studio.

Reveling in the “ecstasy” of filming at Theater 5 at Cinecittà, Fellini stated that he loved shooting on this much-adored stage because it challenged him as “a space to fill up, a world to create.”<sup>143</sup> Although this unbridled freedom subsequently yielded some of the more fantastic creations in cinema history with the director’s later phantasmagoric films, including *8½* (*Otto e Mezzo*, 1963), *Juliet of the Spirits* (*Giulietta degli Spiriti*, 1965), and *Fellini Satyricon* (1969), Fellini does not abandon reality entirely in *La dolce vita*, as the director explains with reference to the seemingly *ex nihilo* creation of the Via Veneto in Cinecittà:

The Via Veneto which Gherardi<sup>144</sup> rebuilt was exact down to the smallest detail, but it had one thing peculiar to it: it was flat instead of sloping. As I worked on it I got so used to this perspective that my annoyance with the real Via Veneto grew even greater and now, I think, it will never disappear. When I pass the Café de Paris, I cannot help feeling that the real Via Veneto was on Stage 5, and that the dimensions of the rebuilt street were more accurate or at any rate more agreeable. I even feel an invisible temptation to exercise over the real street the despotic authority I had over the fake one. This is all a complicated business which I ought to talk about to someone who understands psychoanalysis.<sup>145</sup>

The act of accurately reproducing a well known and fully extant portion of Rome in a film studio a short distance from the original site points to a remarkable irony of the director’s postmodernist vision: Fellini creates a new world that looks much like the old one, a fact that proves the inextricability of Rome’s timeless past from its present and

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<sup>143</sup> Quoted in Bondanella (1992) 141

<sup>144</sup> I.e. Piero Gherardi, the film’s production designer.

<sup>145</sup> Cited in Bondanella (1992) 138-39. See also 140 for a visual of the uncannily real “fake” Via Veneto in Cinecittà.

future. As Terry Gilliam, director of such surreal films as *Brazil* (1985) and *12 Monkeys* (1995), corroborates:

Fellini, I always thought, was a fantasist, a dreamer—until I went to Rome. And now I don't know if the Rome I got to look at was a Rome that had been influenced by Fellini and had come to look and behave as if it was a Fellini movie or whether he was in fact a documentary filmmaker. I suspect he was a documentary filmmaker. It was always there to be seen.<sup>146</sup>

While Fellini in this instance distinguishes between the two Via Venetos, straddling the tenuous boundaries of fact and fiction, the indispensability of *both* to the creation of the Via Veneto featured in the film marks the transition of Rome from a physical entity to a veritable product of the mind. Just as Horace proudly asserts after finishing his poetic monument in Ode 3.30 that his work will grow beyond the City, Rome in this new age need not necessarily be in Rome anymore.

With this amalgam of “real” and “fake” elements that colors *La dolce vita*'s rich visual tapestry (which in turn comes to reflect the frenetic mix of characters, places and themes), Fellini utilizes Rome's monuments in a manner in keeping with the Augustan-age authors in service of the creation of a personal Rome. Just as Evander calls upon a selection of purposefully anachronistic monuments to inspire Aeneas to recognize the vast extent of Rome's remarkable past so that he might substantiate the City's sacred antiquity with future acts of comparable greatness, Fellini utilizes the landscape of the Eternal City in *La dolce vita* towards the fulfillment of “a life-long commitment to artifice, dream, and personal memory.”<sup>147</sup> *La dolce vita* thus looks towards the past, the present, and the future indiscriminately in fashioning this stage of humanity, which will influence Fellini's elevation of Rome to a true state of mind in later works.

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<sup>146</sup> See the short documentary, “Terry Gilliam on Fellini's *8½*,” included on the 2001 Criterion edition DVD of *8½*.

<sup>147</sup> Theodorakopoulos 359.



▪ *Block-notes di un regista (1969) & Roma (1972):*<sup>148</sup> **Fulfillment of a Dream**

Having established a kind of post-modernist paradigm with the depiction of the Roman landscape as palimpsest and microcosm in *La dolce vita*, Fellini's subsequent foray into the realm of the metacinematic with *8½*, *Juliet of the Spirits*, and *Fellini Satyricon* builds upon *La dolce vita*'s legacy of pretense, creativity, and indulgence, but on an even greater scale. While these three works do not merit detailed analysis here because of their impertinence to modern Rome and thus this examination,<sup>149</sup> their emphasis on surreal, phantasmagorical, and intensely personal methods of narration and characterization bridge the thematic divide between *La dolce vita* and *Roma (1972)*, the last feature film to be examined here. Before ultimately demonstrating the most psychical sort of correlation between ancient and modern perspectives regarding Roman monumentality that *Roma* provides, it is worth pausing to examine the exemplarity of Fellini's short television "documentary," *Block-notes di un regista (Fellini: A Director's Notebook, 1969)*. Originally produced for the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)<sup>150</sup> to show the creative process of a rising auteur during preproduction of *Fellini Satyricon*, this little-known and rarely-studied "fake" documentary<sup>151</sup> may be viewed as a direct precursor to both *Fellini Satyricon* and *Roma* because of its fondness for totally non-sequential episodes and dreamlike fantasy of an ostensibly ancient persuasion.

<sup>148</sup> *Roma* is sometimes referred to as *Fellini-Roma*. Since Fellini did not willingly authorize this title (Baxter (1993) 279), I shall refer to the film simply as *Roma* as nearly all other scholars do.

<sup>149</sup> In spite of its pertinence to the treatment of monumentality and the numerous similarities in narrative and characterization (i.e. the presence of a heavily fragmented, episodic storyline), *Fellini Satyricon* shall not be analyzed here. Because the film lacks a *modern* counterpoint with Augustan age literature and is not even set in Rome, I felt that such an examination would have distracted from the chronological progression of the films already examined *Open City* (1945), *Nights of Cabiria* (1957), *La dolce vita* (1960), and thus the crux of my thesis. For an introduction to this fascinating and influential film, see Bondanella (1992) 239-61, Baxter (1993) 237-253, Chandler 171-4, and Theodorakopoulos 353-84. See also J.P. Sullivan's chapter "The Social Ambience of Petronius' *Satyricon* and *Fellini Satyricon*" in Winkler (258-71) for a comparison between the film and the ancient source material.

<sup>150</sup> Bondanella (1992) 179.

<sup>151</sup> *Block-notes* may be found as an extra on the Criterion DVD (2001) of Fellini's *8½ (Otto e mezzo)*.

*Block-notes*'s opening scene immediately establishes the extent to which Fellini's formerly grounded consideration of existence has evolved from semi-neorealist with *Open City* into Felliniesque. While guiding the viewer through the now deserted studio of producer Dino De Laurentiis just outside Rome, the director appears as himself onscreen, thus unequivocally setting the personal tone of the documentary. Amidst a barren field at the studio, an enormous mockup of the cathedral of Cologne and the frame of a jet airliner rest quietly as if posing for a De Chirico painting. Through the power of the imagination, Fellini restores life to his stillborn film, *Mastorna*, by having the eponymous protagonist triumphantly spring forth from the derelict aircraft. After effectively giving birth to a figment of his imagination through the magic of cinema, Fellini then proceeds to analyze Rome within the context of antiquity and modernity according to past, present, and future concerns of his professional and private beings.

On a tour of the Forum Romanum following this wholly personal introduction to *Block-Notes*, Fellini moves past this iconic image of the Eternal City because it does not represent the City that he knows best, which he has rather assembled according to his particular experiences; *his* Rome, "is from the movies of [his] childhood." Thus, Fellini points to the need for subjectivity as a hallmark of the success of the most poignant documentaries. As the director himself states in *Fellini on Fellini* (1976):

The only documentary that anyone can make is a documentary on himself. 'The only true realist is the visionary,' who said that? The visionary, in fact, bears witness to happenings which are his own reality, that is, the most real thing that exists (120).

With this personal proviso, Fellini sets about recounting his relationship with Rome, forged from afar in his hometown of Rimini<sup>152</sup> while still a young boy. In keeping with

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<sup>152</sup> I.e. the provincial capital of the Province of Rimini in Emilia-Romagna, north of Rome on the Adriatic coast.

the metacinematic tendencies that have already distinguished *Block-notes* as a semi-biographical work as shown in the analysis of the introduction, one of our first glimpses of the Eternal City comes in the form of a silent film about imperial-age conspiracy, betrayal, and romance, seen from the eyes of a young Fellini (Figure 4.1.). Appropriately set within the portico of the classically fascist Museum of Roman Civilization (*Museo della civiltà romana*) in E.U.R., this sword and sandal faux epic, made after Mussolini's cultural revolution, combines 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture with historically inaccurate and outrageously lascivious depictions of ancient Rome in style, dress, and custom. Through this brief and purposefully tongue-in-cheek portrayal of antiquity,<sup>153</sup> Fellini shows the mutability of Rome's ancient past as well as the ubiquity of the disparate pairings of old and new as reflected in the City's modern successors.

Later on, while exploring Rome's burgeoning underground subway network (i.e. *metropolitana*) under the guidance of an "archaeology professor," Fellini (now an adult) and his documentary crew catch a glimpse of toga-clad Romans, traipsing about the tracks and platforms of this modern transportation hub (Figure 4.2.). Following an interview with Marcello Mastroianni, the crew subsequently witnesses the spontaneous transformation of Roman truck drivers into ancient infantrymen, who seem to take a cue from Livy and carry off some "Sabine women" once they too have transformed from modern to ancient prostitutes on the Appian Way to the accompanying roar of jet engines overhead (Figure 4.3.). In the last of these episodes, Fellini personally supervises the selection of extras for *Satyricon* in a slaughterhouse according to the workers' resemblance to their ancient ancestors as evidenced by their grizzled looks. After the

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<sup>153</sup> Bondanella (1992) 181-2 astutely notes that the film's colored tint represents an historical impossibility as nearly all films from the era were filmed in black and white with only a smattering of scenes in color, all drawn by hand.

butchers proceed to fight each other, having donned ancient garb, Fellini concludes the documentary by interviewing members of his bizarre circus-like retinue, whom the director values and needs more than they do him.<sup>154</sup> By offering such hyperbolic scenarios, the director sees millennia of history and tradition written on the faces of these *human* monuments of *romanitas*. From butchers to philosophers, whores to matrons, Fellini's look at the inextricability of antiquity from modernity (especially when contrived according to personal desires) in *Block-notes di un regista* provides a comprehensive preview of the director's promotion of Rome to a "psychical entity" of Freudian proportions in *Roma*.

While *Block-notes di un regista*'s progeny, *Roma*, is sometimes dismissed for its indulgent meanderings<sup>155</sup> as epitomized in Rome's lack of aesthetic and chronological connections, this "series of free reminiscences"<sup>156</sup> on the Eternal City does in fact have a logical foundation, stemming from the director's childhood memories of Rome while still a boy in Rimini. Although separated from this provincial setting by some 340 kilometers as indicated by an ancient Roman road-marker (Figure 5.1.), the Italian capital pervades every aspect of Fellini's young being from afar by means of the City's monuments, both physical and intangible. In one scene, while dressed in a fascist-era uniform like the rest of his classmates, Fellini crosses the "Rubicon," now a pitiful stream instead of the mighty river it presumably was when Julius Caesar himself traversed it. Fellini's elderly

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<sup>154</sup> The circus, a common motif in Fellini films, most notably *La strada* (1954) and *I clowns* (1970), is a setting which clearly manifests the director's fondness of spectacle, dream, artifice, and microcosm.

<sup>155</sup> A pretentious Columbia University professor of "TV Media and Culture" hilariously voices this sentiment in Woody Allen's *Annie Hall* (1977): "We saw the Fellini film last Tuesday. It is not one of his best. It lacks a cohesive structure. You know, you get the feeling that he's not absolutely sure what it is he wants to say... I found it incredibly...indulgent. You know, he really is. He's one of the most indulgent film makers."

<sup>156</sup> Rosenthal 16

schoolmaster, on the other hand, has no trouble picturing himself as an emperor in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

After seeing a theatrical recreation of the assassination of Julius Caesar, Fellini is later made to sit through a slideshow of Rome's pagan, Christian, and modern monuments. Racing past images of the bronze Capitoline wolf, the tomb of Caecilia Metella, Santa Maria Maggiore, the Altar of the Fatherland,<sup>157</sup> the Arch of Constantine, and of course, St. Peter's Basilica, the children are delighted to see a slide of a semi-naked woman against such venerated symbols of *romanitas*, much to the chagrin of their Catholic instructors. Later at the movies, while distracted from the same sort of farcical, melodramatic, and wholly engrossing (at least to the adults) sword and sandal epic that featured prominently in *Block notes*, Fellini catches sight of Rimini's own modern Messalina, ogling her next conquest in the audience. This literal reincarnation of the Emperor Claudius' second and most promiscuous wife is so renowned for her amorous skills that men queue well past her place of business: the backseat of a car. Contrasting sharply with this second erotic pairing of antiquity and modernity, Fellini and his classmates learn about the noble geese that saved Rome from annihilation during the Gallic siege of 390 BCE as recounted by Livy. After the lesson, the students are then able to see the geese's modern offspring, honking outside the window.<sup>158</sup> Less than fifteen minutes into *Roma*, the influence of the Eternal City over the director is practically measureless. It is therefore understandable that Fellini's subsequent relationship with his

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<sup>157</sup> I.e. a gaudy white marble monument located just to the east of the Forum Romanum, dedicated to honor the modern Italian state's first king, Vittorio Emanuele II.

<sup>158</sup> This famous story from Livy (5.47) was used to justify the fascist regime's adoption of the German goose step, which was patriotically renamed the *passo romano*, the "Roman step" (Bondanella (1987) 189)!

adopted home will center on his desire to place his indoctrinated knowledge of Rome into a more meaningful context.

Following this incredible amalgam of “ancient history, with fascism, [and] above all with dramatic and cinematic spectacle,”<sup>159</sup> the Rome of Fellini’s childhood already justifies the epithet of *caput mundi* as evidenced in *Roma*’s first shot, which defines Rimini’s existence relative to that of the capital with the view of the milestone. Given the frenetic contrasts that Fellini marshals in support of Rome’s microcosmic characterization, the director demonstrates the City’s potential both to inspire and alienate equally because of its unfathomably diverse and seemingly limitless reign throughout history. Therefore, the slideshow’s totally haphazard compilation of monuments has little meaning for Fellini or his classmates until the director can place such incongruent images into context. While the erotic image at the end of the slideshow initially seems misplaced when compared to the grandeur of the Arch of Constantine, St. Peter’s, or the Altar of the Fatherland, later scenes in the film (i.e. visits to brothels, the free love of Rome’s burgeoning hippy communes) reveal the inseparability of this sort of boyish lust from Fellini’s construction of Rome as a sexualized entity.<sup>160</sup> Only through personal, individualized “hands-on” exploration, be it the crossing of the Rubicon or the investigation of the Capitoline geese, can the City move beyond purely physical monumentality and become eternal.

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<sup>159</sup> Theodorakopoulos 359.

<sup>160</sup> For a summary of this fascinating aspect of Rome’s feminization as a sexual object, see Bondanella (1992) 196-8 and Theodorakopoulos 360.

When Fellini arrives in Rome as a young man in 1939 just before the onset of the Second World War,<sup>161</sup> the microcosmic spectacle of the City is even more overwhelming than had previously been suggested by the architectural monuments to this boy to Rimini. It is as if the entire world is standing before him in the Italian capital. While wading through the masses at Stazione Termini, Rome's main train station to this day, a parade of husbands, wives, families, clergymen, policemen, lottery ticket vendors, soldiers, and countless others march past the director, completely absorbed in their own universe. A sense of felicitous awe noticeably bombards Fellini, who, like Aeneas, is clearly enthralled by the novelty and immensity of his new home.<sup>162</sup> He soon discovers, however, that Rome's grandeur is in fact a double-edged sword. Once the protagonist (and thus the director) makes his way to a boarding house nearby, Fellini encounters an incomparable series of human monuments to the eccentric, the anachronistic, the beautiful, and the deranged. In keeping with Varro's fundamental definition of *monumentum*, as that which is "...done for the sake of memory,"<sup>163</sup> Fellini's hyperbolic interactions with the boarding house's morbidly obese, bedridden landlady, a Chinese butler, an ardent (and questionably senile) fascist, a voluptuous woman washing herself in the kitchen, and a young boy learning how to use the toilet, cogently summarizes and *reminds* the audience of Rome's microcosmic essence as previously seen in Stazione

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<sup>161</sup> The film does not explicitly state if the young man (played by Peter Gonzales) who arrives at Stazione Termini just after the first episode of *Roma* is in fact Fellini. Nevertheless, the description the director gives of himself in *Fellini on Fellini* matches that the appearance and dress of the figure seen in the subsequent episode: "I was tall and thin, I wore white canvas shoes and wandered about the sleazy pizza bars and neon restaurants, trying not to let the holes in my trouser show" (69). Fellini's autobiographical portrayal is further corroborated by Rosenthal 55.

<sup>162</sup> The director later expressed his awe in seeing Rome for the first time: "Imagine what, from a visual point of view, the airy Via Veneto became as it rose steeply from Piazza Barberini to the mosque-like cupolas of the 'Excelsior,' and then on to the arches of Porta Pinciana, opening out onto greenery! To my scared provincial eyes it wasn't even Rome – it was some fairy-tale vision..." (Fellini 69).

<sup>163</sup> I.e. *facta memoriae causa* (*De lingua latina* 6.49). Refer back to Jaeger 17 in the first half of this study for further evidence of human focus of monuments.

Termini. When this purposefully contrasting cast of “characters” all sit down to a communal dinner in the street later that evening, the wide array of culinary delights in front of them pales in comparison to the smorgasbord of these human monuments.

Given the diversity of this essential human component in making Rome as perpetually dynamic as it is, the audience comes to view the Eternal City in *Roma* much in the same way that spectators view a parade or a circus. With Fellini acting as the ringleader of this wholly personal odyssey into the heart of his adopted home,<sup>164</sup> the onlooker is repeatedly subjected to a series of sideshows,<sup>165</sup> spread throughout ecclesiastical fashion shows, burlesque houses, and brothels. The incongruence of these juxtapositions coupled with the sheer volume of such fleeting vignettes has the potential to overpower its onlookers unless the individual can contextualize the contents of this world. In this way Fellini discovers how difficult it is to capture Rome’s essence when he is shown as himself in present day (c. 1970) attempting to make a movie about the City.

After failing to describe “truthfully” the City by filming a small stretch of the Grande Raccordo Anulare<sup>166</sup> and subsequently getting stuck in a traffic-jam by the Colosseum (Figure 5.2.), Fellini moves closer to the center of Rome and looks for representative subjects beyond static clichés of *romanitas*. Perched high atop a crane overlooking the picturesque Borghese Gardens, the camera operator has a view of the entire city in front of him. When asked by members of the crew below what he sees, the operator jumps from subject to subject (i.e. a typical Roman skyline, a girl chasing a ball

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<sup>164</sup> Consider Guido’s (Marcello Mastroianni) role as the ringleader of the many characters who have play a part in his ‘circus of life’ in the finale of *8½*. The relevance of this image to the analysis of *Roma* is further augmented given the metacinematic, autobiographical leanings of *8½*. Bondanella (1992) notes that some critics postulate that Guido represents Fellini himself (165).

<sup>165</sup>Theodorakopoulos argument that the viewer of *Roma* is never in control of what is projected onscreen is astute albeit moot (363) as cinema, like other forms of art, is fundamentally personal and subjective.

<sup>166</sup> I.e. the highway (*autostrada*) that encircles the modern metropolis.



in a meadow) before finally settling on a bevy of middle-aged English-speaking tourists, who have just arrived in the comfort of an air-conditioned coach. The camera, like Strabo's and Ovid's selective gaze at the City's overwhelming collection of monuments, follows these particular subjects for a while until a group of university students breaks the narrative thread, who implore the director to confront "real" concerns instead, the sort the working class faces every day. A lawyer then begs Fellini not to show the degradation of hippies, surly students who have no desire to study, and drug addicts who have sullied an otherwise "lovely city," since Fellini's depiction of Rome will markedly influence audiences' perceptions of the Eternal City around the world. When faced with the diametrically opposed "truths" of these individuals, Fellini decides to pursue those particular truths that have the most meaning to him, based on personal experience.<sup>167</sup>

In light of the innumerable facets that define the City as a whole, Fellini summarizes Rome according to its monuments, which can capture the City's essence compactly and personally. In accordance with Augustan-age considerations of monuments as physically transcendent symbols and markers of a synoptic past and an innately personal nature (i.e. the *Res Gestae*), the monuments of *Roma* amalgamate the detritus of the Roman landscape towards the creation of a new Rome, where myth, fantasy, and reality will all be indispensable towards the perpetuation of the City. Fellini's faithful fabrication of many extant components of the Roman landscape at Cinecittà, including an ancient Roman villa, an entire half kilometer section of the Grande Raccordo Anulare, and the Colosseum featured in the traffic-jam on the *autostrada*,<sup>168</sup> underscores the inseparability of antiquity from modernity as well as the

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<sup>167</sup> Rosenthal 33-4.

<sup>168</sup> Bondanella (1992) 194.

role of the individual in making Rome one's own. As Fellini recounts during a conversation with Chandler:

In *Roma*, I wanted to get across the idea that underneath Rome today is ancient Rome. So close. I am always conscious of that, and it thrills me. Imagine being in a traffic jam at the Coliseum! Rome is the most wonderful movie set in the world (176).

Rome's innate connection to history and cinema<sup>169</sup> in *Roma* thus solidifies the City's occupation of a unique realm amidst fantasy and reality. Beyond the physical nature of these opposing features, however, Fellini sees monuments to *romanitas* all around him. From Anna Magnani of *Open City*, who is equated with the Capitoline she-wolf in *Roma* and even Trajan's Column and the Castel Sant' Angelo in an early draft of the screenplay,<sup>170</sup> to the garrulous prostitutes of Fellini's youth, who taunt their patrons and "ask for active participation, rather than the touristic gaze of the consumer"<sup>171</sup> like the monuments they are, these Romans do as much to define Rome as does St. Peter's Basilica or the Colosseum. In one of *Roma*'s most memorable tangents, the director reminisces on a wartime variety show in which life does more than imitate art—it defines it:

The live variety theater scene in *Roma* illustrates my belief that the audience is often more interesting than the show. The whole world is right there in the theater. That is the way of theater. It takes you so completely that when you leave the theater, it seems you are going into a strange world, and it's the outside which isn't real.<sup>172</sup>

Ironically, the performances on stage that are supposed to achieve a sense of credibility and realism seem woefully contrived when juxtaposed with the visceral responses of the audience, who have no pretensions about showing exactly how they feel at any given

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<sup>169</sup> The American historian Gore Vidal voices this sentiment towards the end of *Roma*, which further qualifies the Eternal City's microcosmic importance as the seat of Catholicism and the Italian government: "Rome is the city of illusions. Not only by chance you have here the church, the government, the cinema. They each produce illusions, like you and I do."

<sup>170</sup> Theodorakopoulos 381.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. 360.

<sup>172</sup> Chandler 177.

time. Amidst the other more comprehensive and honest stages of humanity, Fellini finds the truest successors to Rome, the very foundation of the City's timeless landscape.

After nearly two hours of this love letter to the bizarre, surreal, and wholly personal Rome of Fellini in his *Roma*, an eerie tranquility pervades the streets of Trastevere following a raucous festival in the bohemian heart of the City. Out of this unprecedented silence of the night emerges a motorcycle gang, which roars past a string of instantly recognizable monuments of many styles and ages. Without any impediment, this modern barbarian horde<sup>173</sup> first descends upon Rome's now deserted Baroque monuments, including the Castel Sant' Angelo, Piazza Navona, Piazza di Spagna, and Piazza del Popolo. Passing these works of unquestionable *romanitas*, the gang then makes its way to the ancient core of the City. Past the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli on the Capitoline Hill, the horde somehow scales the Capitoline and circles the equestrian statue of the emperor Marcus Aurelius in Michelangelo's Piazza del Campidoglio, a move that would otherwise be physically impossible. In their final "attack," the bikers pass directly through the Forum Romanum and somehow reemerge on the Via dei Fori Imperiali. Having already broken ranks with the bikers on numerous occasions to emphasize particular aspects of this phantasmagoric terrain, the camera now speeds directly toward the Colosseum without anything to prevent it from reaching this *summum bonum* of Roman monumentality and civilization (Figure 5.3.). Once Fellini has filled the frame with this enduring image, the bikers move on and *Roma* fades to black.

With this audacious confrontation of the Roman landscape, Fellini proves the indispensability of humans to monuments and vice versa in fashioning and refashioning Rome according to the individual. Although the comparison of the bikers to barbarian

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<sup>173</sup> Bondanella (1992) 204.

invaders by one critic potentially threatens the sanctity of this concise union of past, present, and future, Fellini's juxtaposition of these venerated symbols of *romanitas* in the final scene of *Roma* with such intense signs of modernity and youth renews what might otherwise remain a mire of meaningless history. As the director himself states:

I am happy to be living at a time when everything is capsizing. It's a marvelous time, for the very reason that a whole series of ideologies, concepts and conventions are being wrecked... This process of dissolution is quite natural, I think. I don't see it as a sign of the death of civilization but, on the contrary, as a sign of life... The young are aware that a new world is beginning.<sup>174</sup>

In recognition of the entropy of Rome and thus civilization itself, Fellini views the potentially cataclysmic "attack" on the City as a prerequisite for rebirth and renewal. By granting these barbarians free reign over Rome's urban landscape in the final sequence of *Roma*, Fellini consummates the City's "inescapable fate" as expressed by Virgil,<sup>175</sup> only after the Fall of Troy could Aeneas pave the way for future Romans to fashion and refashion Rome's incomparable and eternal palimpsest. Through the possibilities of cinema, which links "mythmaking and image-making"<sup>176</sup> together, the Rome of Fellini is now much more than a city. In accordance with Freud's analogy of the Eternal City to the mind, "in which nothing that has once come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one,"<sup>177</sup> Rome is now truly a state of mind.

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<sup>174</sup> Quoted from Theodorakopoulos 384.

<sup>175</sup> I.e. *ineluctabile fatum*, *Aen* 8.334.

<sup>176</sup> Bondanella (1992) 205.

<sup>177</sup> (1961) 18.

- **Epilogue: Rome for the Ages**

From the fringes of suburban Rome in *Open City* to the most central monuments of Roman antiquity in *Roma*, the evolution of Federico Fellini's portrayal of his adopted home coincides with that of the aforementioned Augustan authors in imagining the City they considered theirs, according to monuments. I have provided evidence throughout both ancient and modern aspects of this study that the observer of Rome, when confronted by the City's awe-inspiring antiquity of indeterminate age and provenance, has continually recognized the human basis of its vast collection of monuments and considered such signs of lasting *romanitas* as physical and symbolic markers with reference to his or her own existence. Although the many uses of these ever-evolving signs of antiquity are not exclusive to Rome, the ubiquitous interactions of Rome's incomparably ancient past with its historically-conscious modernity effectively set the Eternal City apart from its counterparts. New York, Paris, or Moscow may understandably view themselves as the new successors to their cultural progenitor's legacy. Nevertheless, Rome's enduring spiritual autochthony as evidenced by its time-honored monuments still cannot allow itself to relinquish the title of *Urbs*, a distinction it has continually held for more than two thousand years. Because of Rome's juxtaposition of these ancient remnants with comparably wondrous signs of subsequent ages, "the dead" never fully pass away from this microcosm of humanity. With the assistance of human custodians, who continually shape this landscape and can in turn become monuments themselves, the constant renewal and reinvention of Rome's incomparable palimpsest have thus made the City truly unique and eternal.

In a testament to Rome's incalculable influence beyond its urban confines, Fellini's reiteration of the City's veritable immortality as first expressed by his ancient predecessors has empowered a new generation of filmmakers to view their cinematic undertakings as something greater than themselves. Among the works of such renowned cineastes as Terry Gilliam,<sup>178</sup> Stanley Kubrick,<sup>179</sup> and Martin Scorsese<sup>180</sup> to name but a few who owe a debt to the Italian filmmaker,<sup>181</sup> Julie Taymor's retelling of William Shakespeare's tragedy "Titus Andronicus" in the film *Titus* (1999) beautifully summarizes the lasting significance of Fellini's portrayal of Rome, following the director's death in 1993. A few stills taken from *Titus*'s phantasmagoric melding of classical, fascist, and modern sources would be sufficient to prove the correlation between the aesthetic of the Felliniesque and Taymor's fashioning of a timeless Rome as a theatrical stage (Images 6.1., 6.2., and 6.3.). The relevance of such a depiction, however, transcends production values alone as the opening sequence of *Titus* vividly demonstrates.

Immediately after we find ourselves alone with the film's young spectator, Lucius, in a modern kitchen that "could be in Brooklyn or Sarajevo,"<sup>182</sup> a cacophony of "cavalry calls, sirens, machine gun fire, marching armies, airplanes, and bomb

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<sup>178</sup> See the short documentary, "Terry Gilliam on Fellini's *8½*," included on the 2001 DVD of *8½*, to learn more about the relationship between the two directors.

<sup>179</sup> In a 1963 interview with *Cinema* magazine, Kubrick cited Fellini's *I vitelloni* as one of his favorite films of all time (Baxter (1997) 12).

<sup>180</sup> Scorsese's four-hour documentary on postwar Italian cinema, *Il mio viaggio in Italia* (1999), references *Open City*, *I vitelloni*, *La dolce vita*, and *8 ½* among the works that had the greatest influence on him as a filmmaker.

<sup>181</sup> One could also cite Pedro Almodóvar, Tim Burton, and David Cronenberg among this group of filmmakers, whose fondness for the surreal, fantastic, and the intensely personal couches them in the realm of the Felliniesque.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* 19.

explosions”<sup>183</sup> signals the arrival of a ghastly figure, known simply as the Clown. He then takes young Lucius in his arms and whisks him down the stairs of the apartment to the middle of the Colosseum, a setting of the utmost antiquity and modernity as noted in the screenplay:

NOTE: All the buildings in the film are present-day ruins of the ancient Roman empire. Time is blended. In costume as well. It is simultaneously ancient Rome and the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>184</sup>

Amidst a parade of chariots, motorcycles, wooden carts, and mechanized armor, the Roman general Titus Andronicus (Anthony Hopkins) enters valiantly into this surreal foray with his Gothic chattels in tow.

Taymor’s initial utilization of the aesthetic of the Felliniesque to seamlessly unite antiquity and modernity reveals the enormity of her debt to her Italian antecedent in forging a city that is truly without comparison. While the distinction of the City’s boundless heritage is in some respects familiar (i.e. the Colosseum), *Titus*’s amalgamation of what would otherwise be considered among the most strident and anachronistic assemblage of monuments ever conceived sets Rome apart from all other cities as the *sine qua non* of Western civilization. With the fitting benediction, “Hail, Rome, victorious in thy mourning weeds!”, Titus effectively praises Rome in the vein of his cinematic and literary progenitors as a force for the ages: an ever resilient, mutable *caput mundi* that shall never fade from this Earth as long as its admirers see themselves in the City’s timeless reflection of humanity.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid. 19.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. 20.

**Figures\***

Figure 1.1. Manfredi surveys the City before evading Nazi capture in *Open City* (1945).



Figure 1.2. Romoletto leads his friends back to the City.

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\* N.B.: All images presented in this section are my own digital screen captures from the DVD versions of the films noted in the bibliography of this study.





Figure 2.1. Lazzari's artistically and historically eclectic bedroom in *Nights of Cabiria* (1957).



Figure 2.2. Detail.



Figure 2.3. Prostitutes on the *Passeggiata archeologica*, intersected by a *motorino*.



Figure 2.4. Procession of Christian pilgrims on the *Passeggiata archeologica*.



Figure 3.1. Transport of statue of Christ to St. Peter's Basilica in *La dolce vita* (1960).



Figure 3.2. Sylvia's drive into the City along the ancient Appian Way.



Figure 3.3. "Caracalla's," a composite of ancient *monumenta*, fabricated at Cinecittà.



Figure 4.1. The classically fascist Museum of Roman Civilization in E.U.R serves as the stage for the silent film in *Block-notes di un regista* (1969).



Figure 4.2. An ancient Roman watches Fellini's camera crew in the modern metro.



Figure 4.3. Modern truck drivers return to their vehicle after transforming into ancient Roman soldiers near the Appian Way.



Figure 5.1. An ancient Roman milestone dominates our view of Rimini in the opening shot of *Roma* (1972).





Figure 5.2. Fellini's camera crew (far right) films a traffic jam by a model of the Colosseum.



Figure 5.3. The actual Colosseum as seen from the Via dei Fori Imperiali in the last scene of the film.



Figure 6.1. In *Titus* (1999), Saturninus (Alan Cumming) addresses a crowd from the steps of the Senate, appropriately set within the fascist Palazzo della civiltà italiana in E.U.R.



Figure 6.2. Titus (Anthony Hopkins) strolls past Felliniesque prostitutes in Rome.



Figure 6.3. Titus stands amidst ancient ruins on a deserted Roman crossing.

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