

Capital City: Rome 1870-2010

1. Across Two Centuries

In his seminal book *Roma contemporanea*, historian Vittorio Vidotto reminds us that “Roma è sempre stata una città capitale. Capitale della repubblica e poi dell’impero romano; capitale della cristianità, quindi del cattolicesimo, infine anche di uno stato ecclesiastico. Nella memoria dei posteri — e in qualche misura fino ad oggi — non ha mai perso interamente questo carattere” (“Rome has always been a capital city. Capital of the Roman Republic and then of the Roman Empire; capital first of Christianity, later of Catholicism, and, finally, also of an ecclesiastical state. In the memory of posterity — and, to a certain extent, up until today — it has never entirely lost this character,” 4). Rome’s contemporary identity as a modern capital, however, was not easily won; indeed, one could argue that this identity is still fluid — a work in progress, as it were, burdened with multiple pagan, Christian, and secular layers. The process of Rome’s modernization began with the Breach of Porta Pia on September 20, 1870, when the city was freed from the political authority of the pope: Pius IX locked himself inside the Vatican, declared himself its prisoner, and never came out again. The majority of the population welcomed enthusiastically the Savoy troops: culturally isolated and economically weakened, particularly in the course of the preceding decade, most Romans no longer supported the current pope’s rule (Bartolini 17). What had been for centuries a sacred city began the process of officially becoming a secular capital — although Rome’s religious hold on Catholics, it can be argued, continues to influence politics to this day.

Among the most fervent proponents of Rome as the new capital of Italy was Edmondo De Amicis, best known as the author of the children’s book *Cuore* (*The Heart of a Boy*, 1886). He traveled to Rome on September 1870 as a correspondent for the publication *L’Italia militare* (Military Italy) and witnessed the takeover of the papal city. De Amicis wrote about the Breach of Porta Pia in a collection of twelve articles, *Impressioni di Roma* (Impressions of Rome). These texts, as Gabriella Romani explains in “Rome 1870: ‘O mamma o la morte!’ The Breach of Porta Pia According to Edmondo de Amicis,” present a postcard-like image of Rome, in which the city’s artistic patrimony appears as an emblem of national cultural heritage. De Amicis focused on the symbolic value of Rome’s transformation and on the cultural ideal of national unity, with Rome as the embodiment of an Italian citizenry yet to be realized. *Impressioni* provides insights into De Amicis’s “utopian project,” namely, his attempt to represent that unified image of national identity necessary to the formation of Italians; but the text is also representative of the cultural anxieties of post-unification Italy — themselves fundamental to the formation of Italian modernity.

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De Amicis's intellectual engagement with the thorny question of Italian national identity relates Romani's contribution to Chiara Frenquellucci's "*Roma nostra: The Poetry of Unification in the Sonnets of Cesare Pascarella.*" Roman-dialect poet Pascarella expressed, through a crystallized *romanesco*, the growing sense of national belonging and the dawn of "Italian" patriotism in the years following the capture of Rome and its establishment as the capital of the newly formed kingdom of Italy. By presenting a vision of the capital city through the eyes and voice of its inhabitants, Frenquellucci argues, Pascarella — especially in the collections *Villa Glori* (1886) and *Storia nostra* (1941) — was able to reflect on the role of history, language, and cultural identity. In Pascarella's sonnets, historical events appear at the same time intimate and universal. Heroes, artists, and political figures become members of the narrator's immediate community; they are not only Roman but also, by extension, newly Italian.

Because Rome promised balance and mediation, in addition to its considerable historic weight, it was designated as the symbolic as well as political center of the young nation. Shortly after the events of Porta Pia, with a law of February 3, 1871, the capital of the Kingdom of Italy was moved to Rome (Casciato 136) and the king made his official entrance in the city on July 2, 1871. In its urban design, however, Rome in 1870 did not differ much from Leo X's or Sixtus V's sacred Rome (Cuccia 7); the pope-king's capital, therefore, had to be painstakingly transformed, both physically and figuratively, into the capital of a modern liberal state. Through processes of urban recycling typical of the Eternal City, architectural structures underwent more or less extensive transformations, both physical and symbolic — transformations that are emblematic of Rome's dual identity as a holy city and a secular capital. Thus, for example, shortly after Porta Pia, convents and other religious buildings were turned into schools, courthouses, prisons, and a variety of administrative and political offices. Beginning with the burial of Victor Emmanuel II, the Pantheon — architectural icon of ancient grandeur already transformed from pagan temple into Christian church — was patriotically "rededicated" as a mausoleum to the Savoy dynasty, through a compromise between Rome's secular and religious authorities (Tobia 366-68); the Quirinale Palace, once the pope's residence, became the home of the Italian king; and new national symbols were built from scratch. Foremost among these were the allegorical Vittoriano in Piazza Venezia, dedicated to Victor Emmanuel II in 1911 and consecrated as well to the Unknown Soldier ten years later; and, to a lesser extent, the monument to Giordano Bruno in Campo de' Fiori (1889), controversial because of its anticlerical and specifically anti-Catholic overtones (Tobia 368).

Museums did not escape this recycling fate, as Rita Bernini explains in "Rome and Its Museums: 1870-2010." A central question of this essay, as also of the two preceding ones, is how Italian national identity relates to Rome's role

as capital. More specifically, Bernini examines how Rome's city and state museums have changed since 1870, partly because of the new educational function they were expected to fulfill in addition to their more traditional task of conservation. Rome's museums, however, suffer from the absence of a centralized system, which makes it difficult for both residents and visitors to enjoy Rome's cultural-historical offerings through its museums, and to understand how the modern metropolis and capital of Italy lives with its own glorious past. The Museo Nazionale Romano, for example, instituted in 1889, never received the single location initially planned for it; it was housed in the Terme di Diocleziano through most of the twentieth century and then, in the 1990s, it was divided into four different locations.

Among Rome's social changes during its transition from papal to Italian capital, two were most visible: the transformation of the public role of the clergy — who, although no longer in charge politically, preserved a powerful hold on the Catholic population through religious faith and parish activity (Bartolini 18-19); and, especially, a massive flux of immigrants, among whom were bureaucrats from Turin as well as unskilled laborers from the Italian Center and South. This unprecedented immigration provoked the brisk yet often poorly planned growth of the city, beginning with the *febbre edilizia* of the 1880s (Cuccia 27), which involved the destruction of beloved parks such as the Villa Boncompagni Ludovisi.

Of central importance during this period is also the changing cultural role of Rome's Jewish community, the largest and most ancient in Italy. The demolition of the old ghetto led to a geographical dissemination of Roman Jews into other areas of the city. The desire for integration prevailed, at least at first, over the preservation of identity — a process that was to recede in the 1910s and 1920s (Caviglia 329; Bartolini 30). The new synagogue, inaugurated in 1904, became a flashy symbol of the new pact between Rome's Jewish population and the new, liberal Italy (Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea* 107). A London-born Jew, Ernesto Nathan, was elected Mayor of Rome in 1907. It is under his leadership that Rome began to catch up to other European capitals (Cuccia 17). Until the 1930s, Rome's Jewish population was to preserve good relations with the government — including the Fascist regime (Caviglia 338). The darkest day in the modern history of Rome's Jews remains October 16, 1943, when the Nazis rounded up 1,259 Jewish residents of the city: of the 1,022 who were sent to Auschwitz, only seventeen came back (Caviglia 341). This episode is remembered in literary and cinematic texts such as Giacomo Debenedetti's "16 ottobre 1943" and Ferzan Özpetek's film *La finestra di fronte* (*Facing Windows*, 2003).

The new religious freedom born of the Breach of Porta Pia led as well to the building of Protestant churches for the first time within Rome's walls: Rome's weakened role as the sacred city of Catholicism allowed for the introduction and/or unconcealed development and influence of other religious and spiritual traditions. In terms of the city's religious life, this new pluralism is the most

evident change introduced by the events of Porta Pia (Riccardi 283). Although the Protestant presence was perceived by the Catholic authorities as an offense against Rome's Catholic character (Riccardi 284-85), the cornerstone of the American Episcopal church of Saint Paul on Via Nazionale — itself a recent and important street axis of the new capital — was laid in 1873, the Waldensian church on Via IV Novembre was inaugurated in 1883, and All Saints' Anglican Church opened for services on Via del Babuino in 1887.

The Breach of Porta Pia opened the city of Rome physically and symbolically. In the same city now simultaneously resided both winner — the monarchy — and loser — the papacy. Pius IX's choice to remain in Rome despite his self-described status as "prisoner of the Vatican" shows the deep bonds between the pontiff, the Catholic Church, and the city of Rome (the possibility of the pontiff departing had indeed been discussed; Riccardi 271-72). The new capital had to learn to accept changes in the identity — religious as well as political and cultural — not only of its rulers and residents but also of its visitors, who both shaped and were shaped by the city's geography. The Grand Tour of the Romantic age slowly gave way to the age of mass tourism, which, according to Stephanie Malia Hom's "Consuming the View: Rome, Tourism, and the Topos of the Eternal City," played a key role in constructing the identities of both modern Rome and modern Italy. In the discourse of modern mass tourism, the often-invoked topos of the Eternal City marks Rome as a capital fixed in the present time, as well as a place of multiple pasts to be visited. Tourism, then, constructed modern Rome as a non-modern destination by projecting its eternity onto the past, rather than into the future. Correspondingly, the city's touristic signification came to dominate its religious one, even as its secular identity increasingly overshadowed its sacred traditions. Rome's modern identity is intimately bound up with its tourists, who engage in practices — such as reading guidebooks and taking tours — that privilege and orient the city toward a touristically determined past. It is this retrospective view that renders Rome eternal, Hom contends.

The discourse of tourism, like the topos of Rome as the Eternal City, represents Rome in its historical and cultural grandeur. Less familiar than this exaltation of the antonomastic *urbs* is a persistent counter-discourse of anti-Romanism, of antipathy to Rome as both a place and an idea. This is the subject of Josh Arthurs' "The Eternal Parasite: Anti-Romanism in Italian Politics and Culture since the Unification." For its critics, both past and present, the Eternal City has been simultaneously a source and a reflection of Italian deficiencies: Rome has often been cast, literally, as a parasite and as an economic drain on the rest of the peninsula and, metaphorically, as a pathological presence that stifles progress and creativity. The city has been assailed for being at once too provincial and too universal, too small and too grand, too burdened with historical memories and yet devoid of authentic culture. Many of the charges leveled against Rome could also be applied to Italian society as a whole, and

anti-Romanism might fruitfully be approached as a kind of displacement, a deflection of Italian self-criticism. In particular, the capital has served as a mirror in which to contemplate the problem of modernity. More than any other city, Rome typifies the insistent presence of the past in Italy, and the seemingly insurmountable challenge of freeing Italians from the constraints of tradition. Anti-Romanism is also an indication of persistent regional divisions within the peninsula, resentment of the centralized state, and the deep divide between North and South. This is especially evident in the repeated contrast between Rome and Italy's "moral capital," Milan. Arthurs considers debates over the choice of the site of the new nation's capital in the 1860s; the disappointments that followed in subsequent decades as many aspirations for Rome were frustrated; critiques by radical modernists who saw the Eternal City as an impediment to national progress and cultural innovation, as well as by nationalists and early Fascists who saw it as a locus of corruption and ineffectual parliamentarism; reactions against the Roman tradition in the wake of Fascism's demise and Italy's defeat in the Second World War; and contemporary regionalist attacks on "Roma ladrona," particularly from the Lega Nord.

Like Bernini's and Arthurs's contributions, L. Scott Lerner's "Modern Italian Subjectivity in the Era of *Roma capitale* (1870-2010): The Embrace of the Empty Sign" also encompasses the entire time frame of this volume, from Porta Pia to the present day. Lerner's essay is composed of two alternating, interwoven strands. The first follows the story of the neglect of the foundation myth of modern Italy: the Breach of Porta Pia on September 20, 1870, that led to the unification of Rome with the fledgling Kingdom of Italy and the commencement of the era of *Roma capitale*. For the first half-century following this historic event, the Italian government spared no expense in commemorating it — in inscribing it with bold strokes onto the national consciousness. Streets and squares across the nation bore the name *XX Settembre*, and they still do — even if, today, few Italians have any idea what the referent is. The reason is that, as part of the Conciliation of the State and the Catholic Church (the Lateran Accords), the national holiday marking the event was abolished. Consigned to oblivion, to a great extent, was also the meaning of the city's other immensely conspicuous and astonishingly expensive markers of Unification — first among them the Vittoriano and the new urban plan of Rome that accompanied it. The broad question indirectly posed by Lerner's essay in relation to this collective and planned "forgetting" is that of modern Italian subjectivity — how Italians today construe their identity and the role of these memorializations and repressions in that process. The memorialization of a national identity in the nineteenth century and the repression, as it were, of that memory by the Lateran Accords were chapters in the conflict between Church and State in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second strand of the essay explores this same theme, but from the perspective of a very recent series of events: the court battles over the public display of a religious symbol, the crucifix, in the

public schools of the secular state. In December 2009, the European Court of Human Rights handed down a sentence that declared that Italy was in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights as a result of its implicit endorsement of one religion over another in the public schools. Across the political spectrum, a unified chorus arose to protest the court ruling. In this essay, these protestations are viewed as examples of the culture's embrace of the "empty sign" and its vexed relation to its national and religious history and identity.

2. *Fascism and World War Two*

During the years of Mussolini's regime, Rome became the most populous city in Italy, with more than one million residents by 1931 (Pagnotta 233). It is during the Fascist *ventennio* that the modern capital's most important urban and architectural transformations took place, including such diverse projects as Marcello Piacentini's university campus, the *Città Universitaria*; the demolitions (the so-called *sventramenti*) of the densely populated area around the Campidoglio, the Colosseo, and the Borgo; and those residential complexes known as *borgate*, built in the outskirts primarily for the former residents of the neighborhoods destroyed by the *sventramenti*. The period between the mid-1920s until the early 1940s is indeed regarded as a golden age for Italian architecture (Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea* 194). Viewing Rome's recent past as a decadent failure, Mussolini notoriously aimed to refashion the capital so that it might better reflect his grandiose ideals of a new Italy under construction. In Vidotto's words, "Roma, l'esempio di Roma, il modello di Roma rappresentavano un elemento centrale dell'ideologia fascista e mussoliniana" ("Rome, Rome's example, Rome's model represented a central element of Fascist ideology, and of Mussolini's own," *Roma contemporanea* 179). We can recognize, when studying this period, an aestheticization of politics that used monuments and their configuration within the capital city to create a popular sense of Fascism's own ambitions and ruthlessness. Mussolini's approach, in fact, was a strange mixture of deep reverence for Rome's ancient past and uncompromising desecration of its legacy, but it did not constitute as radical a break with the past as he himself repeatedly claimed.

The continuity between the practices of the liberal state and those of the Fascist regime that followed it may be explored in the example of the Garbatella, near the Ostiense quarter. Development of this area had begun right after the First World War, with the intent of providing aesthetically pleasing, low-cost housing that was architecturally grounded in local traditions, even as it drew from the English concept of the "garden city". One result was the creation of the Roman Barocchetto style, inspired by the "minor" or private architecture of medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque Rome (rather than its triumphal counterpart). Low-cost housing in the Garbatella project went hand in hand with high-quality workmanship, original design, and attention to decorative details.

As Antonella De Michelis argues in “‘*Civis Romanus Sum*’: The Self-Conscious *Romanità* of the Garbatella,” this new style was modern not by denying Rome’s architectural tradition, but by embracing it. Just as medieval Roman buildings incorporated ancient remains, so the style of the Garbatella inscribes itself in the urban and architectural palimpsest that is Rome by juxtaposing diverse styles that are different expressions of the same Roman identity. Although the Garbatella was transformed from garden city into Fascist *borgata*, its fundamental continuity of style and function makes for an excellent case study of how liberal and Fascist regimes practiced common urban strategies: decentralization, idealization of rural life, and the claim to a Roman heritage.

De Michelis’s reading of the Garbatella emphasizes the architectural and urbanist connections between the liberal and the Fascist state. Historians’ emphasis on the remaking of Rome under Fascism, in fact, is sometimes the reflection of a particular intellectual sensibility about Fascism, especially intent on evaluating its works in terms of the political intents of its protagonists more than the actual architectural-political outcomes. This is John Agnew’s thesis in “Ghosts of Rome: The Haunting of Fascist Efforts at Remaking Rome as Italy’s Capital City.” In fact, Agnew claims, Fascist manipulation of Rome’s physical fabric failed to achieve what it most intended: the reconfiguration and monumentalization of the city to represent the political breach with the past that was the aim of the Fascist revolution. Ironically, the very totalizing hubris of Fascism is probably the main culprit for this failure: the rhetorical claims of Fascism were defeated by a lack of local knowledge and reliable critical feedback. Agnew focuses on the construction of the Via della Conciliazione and the clearance of a new space around the ruined mausoleum of the Emperor Augustus. Whereas the former can be seen as an attempt not only at reconciling but also at capturing the Vatican for the makeover of the city, the latter is usually considered a major example of the cult of *romanità* — the Fascist celebration of the ancient Roman past as a key to making the current Italy. In the end, although Fascist-era sites such as Via dell’Impero, EUR, and Foro Italico have become integral to the city’s spatial form, they are only part of the overall pastiche of the city, and not the directing elements in the urban fabric that a makeover worthy of its name would have entailed. The richness of Rome’s past and the ambivalence of the regime about its own objectives prevented the successful translation of massive rhetorical ambition into a commensurate concrete transformation of the city as a whole.

Artists, writers, and filmmakers have reflected on the novelties and the shortcomings of the regime’s myth of a monolithic, monumental capital, although their critiques were often veiled so as to avoid censorship. The *Duce*’s demise and the traumas of the Second World War were soon to bring about copious and diverse representations of Rome in all available media. The movie industry was an important aspect of Rome’s economy during the Fascist era (the

Istituto Luce was founded in 1926), not only in financial terms but also for the modern image of Rome this industry intentionally projected (Pagnotta 235).

The Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, in the section of Rome initially conceived as the space for the Esposizione Universale of 1942 (EUR is the acronym for Esposizione Universale Roma), embodies the relationship between Mussolini's dictatorship and modern Italian architecture (the building is endlessly reproduced — for example, on the cover of Vidotto's influential *Roma contemporanea*). In “Filming in Stone: Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana and Fascist Signification in Cinema,” Alberto Zambenedetti discusses four films that utilize this building as the visual metonymy for the conservative, homologizing, alienating, or outright oppressive aspects of Italian Fascism: Federico Fellini's *Le tentazioni del Dottor Antonio* (1962), in which the building symbolizes the hypocritical logic of the eponymous character as well as the rigid moral order of the Christian Democrats; Peter Greenaway's *The Belly of an Architect* (1987), which, through the dialectic between the orthogonal patterns of the building and the film's frame, situates architecture at the center of this director's investigation; Julie Taymor's *Titus* (1999), a geographic exploration of the diachronic architecture of Rome through the overlap of ancient ruins and modern buildings; and Kurt Wimmer's *Equilibrium* (2002), whose urban landscape combines Fascist architecture with computer-generated images in order to conjure up a futuristic scenery. These movies all exploit the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana to represent generic socio-cultural orders characterized by rigidity, conservatism, close-mindedness, militarism, and so forth, even as the Palazzo provides a photogenic set of overwhelming sculptural beauty.

The capillary presence of Fascism in Italian society intentionally extended not only to space but also to time — including free-time activities: the movie industry is an example, of course, as well as, among other things, physical education and sports. Architecturally, this pervasive presence is reflected in the ambitious project of the Foro Italico (originally known as Foro Mussolini), intended to showcase the inborn athletic prowess of the Italian people. Binding physical activity with social life, numerous athletic associations were born during Fascism. Foremost among these, in Rome, was the Associazione Sportiva (AS) Roma. Fascist official Italo Foschi created it in 1927 with the intent to rationalize and reinforce soccer, which was quickly becoming a crucial aspect of Italian mass culture. Francesco Ricatti's “*La Roma: Soccer and Identity in Rome*” investigates the relationship between the city of Rome and its main soccer team: throughout its history, AS Roma has helped Romans resist, adapt to, and appropriate the consequences of phenomena that have changed the modern city. (Exemplary of the complicated relationship of AS Roma with the history of its city is the fact that the team's second president and one of its most effective ones ever — Renato Sacerdoti — had to resign in the 1930s because he was Jewish.) Key aspects in Rome's processes of adaptation and identity construction that are related to the passion for AS Roma include the rivalry with

Società Sportiva (SS) Lazio, the other major team of Rome; the iconic status of AS Roma's native captains and players; the ambiguous relationship with globalization, as represented by multinational corporations and international football institutions; and the contradictory relationship with the glorious past of the Eternal City, as emerges in fantasies of the Roman Empire by AS Roma's fans and players, and by journalists and historians of the team. Whereas Fascist authorities supported AS Roma for its unifying, nationalistic potential — its ability, that is, to produce an Italian identity — the history of this team and of Italian soccer in general reveals instead the reinforcement of local rather than national identities. It is for this parochial purpose that Roma fans resorted to an appreciation of that *romanità* so beloved by Fascism itself for its nationalistic potential.

3. The Postwar Period

The experience of Fascism and the devastations of the Second World War led, in Rome as elsewhere, to a symbolic as well as a physical emptying, and to further confusions regarding the already uncertain issue of national identity. These damages were not counterbalanced, Vidotto claims, by the weak rites of the new Italian republic (*Roma contemporanea* ix). After the traces of its Fascist experience were rethought and rewritten (with the names of many streets changed and the significance of several monuments altered), Rome underwent further transformations during the second half of the twentieth century. Continuity, however, prevailed over breaks with the past, and the city did not lose its long-standing significance as a place of mediation and circulation with respect to the rest of the country. Rome's physical and allegorical contradictions, along with its social and political role for the Italian peninsula as a whole, are expressed in the city's art and architecture, literature and poetry, but also its cinema and its popular culture.

Since 1870, Rome had been steadily expanding: it is only in 1970 that the population growth reached zero. Until then, Rome had grown ten times in terms of population and one hundred times in terms of urbanized territory (Cuccia 15). Many directors and writers engaged with the issues resulting from this massive growth. Alberto Moravia, for example, as Victoria Tillson notes in "A Nearly Invisible City: Rome in Moravia's 1950s Fiction," is often identified as Rome's foremost twentieth-century author. The composition of novels such as *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*, 1951), *Il disprezzo* (*Contempt*, 1954), and *La ciociara* (*Two Women*, 1957), as well as the short stories collected in the *Racconti romani* (*Roman Tales*, 1954 and 1959), coincided with the Christian Democrats' massive expansion of Rome's periphery starting in 1949, and present a city detached from its architectural and natural realities. Nevertheless, according to Tillson, Moravia is indifferent, in artistic terms, to Rome's landscape: this author's Rome as depicted in his 1950s works is relatively

invisible, its representation being primarily aimed at exploring and explaining his characters' existential crises.

Moravia's literary Rome, however detached from the city's actual landscape, communicates effectively the economic and social difficulties of the postwar period, as did contemporary movies such as Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* (*Paisan*, 1946) and Vittorio De Sica's *Ladri di biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thief*, 1948) and *Umberto D.* (1952). Beginning in the 1950s, however, Rome also began to project an image of itself as one of the most desirable places for foreigners to be, especially for those working in the movie industry and related fields. This is the thesis developed in Eugenia Paulicelli's "Fashioning Rome: Cinema, Fashion, and the Media in the Postwar Years." Through a cultural analysis of fashion shows and fashion houses, clothing items (the white suit, the *pigiama palazzo*), and films such as Rossellini's *Viaggio in Italia* (*Journey to Italy*, 1953) and Fellini's *Lo sceicco bianco* (*The White Sheik*, 1951), Paulicelli discusses how fashion and cinema together shaped Rome's image as a place of glamour, art, and beauty.

Nevertheless, this glamorous Rome coexisted next to a very different Rome, one closer to the Rome of Neorealist cinema — the Rome represented in Pasolini's 1962 *Mamma Roma* and analyzed in Gloria Monti's "Traversing the Onscreen City: Nannarella's (Mamma) Roma." Departing from traditional auteur approach, Monti's essay focuses on Pasolini's film in order to investigate the bond between Rome's quintessential actress Anna Magnani and the changing landscape of the city. In this movie, Nannarella (Magnani's *romanesco* nickname), Monti argues, is so thoroughly identified with Rome that her titular character embodies the failure of the country's hopes for a future beyond the war, Fascism, and the German occupation.

Both Paulicelli and Monti conclude their contributions with Federico Fellini's *Roma* (*Fellini's Roma*, 1972), thus bringing us from the immediate postwar period of the Neorealist directors to the 1970s — the time frame of Paolo Matteucci and Karen Pinkus's essay, "The Rome of Pasolini's *Petrolio*." Although he was not, like Moravia, a Roman by birth, Pier Paolo Pasolini is widely regarded as one of Rome's great writers from the second half of the twentieth century. Much work has been done on his 1950s literary and filmic production. Matteucci and Pinkus's analysis in this volume moves twenty years forward, focusing on the city that emerges from Pasolini's unfinished, posthumously published work, *Petrolio* (1975). The author was deeply aware of urbanist controversies and issues such as how to accommodate increasing automobile traffic, the spread of the *borgate*, what aspects of historical or Christian Rome should be preserved, and at what costs. *Petrolio* touches on many of these questions with exquisite specificity. For Matteucci and Pinkus, however, *Petrolio* is not just an urban novel from which the reader may reconstruct a sense of place and time. Rome cannot be understood in all of its historical stratifications, class differences, energies, decadence, and so on, as a

theme in *Petrolio*. Nor can Pasolini's great work — his *summa*, as he called it — be reduced to a portrait of a city during the period of the early 1970s, the Middle Eastern oil crisis, the so-called years of lead, etc. Rather, the two scholars argue that *Petrolio* is the greatest “novel” of Rome ever produced. Precisely because this is a work forever *in fieri* — a work of becoming, that is, a work that is never fixed or finished, that never begins or ends — it lives, in the way that Rome itself does.

Whereas Hom's essay, in the first part of this volume, analyzed the effects of mass tourism on the construction of modern Rome from 1870 until the present day, Anne Wingenter's “Eternal City, Sawdust Caesar: Americans on Tour in Post-WWII Rome (1944-1960)” more specifically examines travel writing by Americans about Rome in the aftermath of the Second World War. After briefly considering how travel literature works to mediate experience and how a particularly vast canon of travel writing has shaped Rome in the foreign imagination, Wingenter turns to the looming presence of World War Two and how the recently overthrown Fascist regime figures in travelers' accounts of the 1940s and 1950s. Three factors influenced postwar American travel to and writing about Rome: first, the recently ended war and defeat of Mussolini's regime had raised awareness of contemporary (as opposed to classical or Renaissance) Italy among Americans, providing a common set of images and stereotypes; second, the emerging Cold War and Italy's unique place influenced American impressions and interpretations of the Roman past and present; third, a new value-laden understanding of travel itself encouraged Americans to think of themselves as “ambassadors of goodwill” conducting “dollar diplomacy” while exercising their freedom and cementing the bonds of the Atlantic community.

4. Into the Third Millennium

Along with the urban face-lifts inspired by the 2000 Jubilee and the cultural politics of Rome's recent mayors, the late twentieth century and the new millennium have marked Rome with a multicultural stamp. From the immigrants inhabiting both center and periphery and peopling contemporary films and books, to the visible presence of foreign architects and artists, to the building of the largest mosque in Europe, the Eternal City's provincial face is changing rapidly. Rome was chosen as the capital of united Italy because it signaled a mythical view of a nation unified in the past, while pointing to a unified future. One of the many questions contemporary Rome invites us to ponder, then, concerns the ways in which Rome's 1870 promise of unity has been and is being fulfilled, betrayed, or, rather, whether such a view should be re-examined altogether.

In the ever expanding discourse on cinema and the city, Rome has had a unique place from the birth of the silver screen. In addition to the usual reasons for the Eternal City's importance, such as its centrality in Italian cinema and its

role in the neorealist movement, Rome's uniqueness in the cinema is due to the implicit friction between cinematography as the quintessential modern technology, on the one hand, and the city's eternity — with all its spiritual, supra-scientific connotations — on the other. Maurizio Viano's essay "Between Modernity and Eternity: *Il divo* in Cinematic Rome" examines Paolo Sorrentino's 2008 film as a Roman film, finding that it curiously doubles the cinematic city's energy, as it were, between modernity and eternity. *Il divo* makes use of digital technology and a modernist film style, all the while evincing a baroque architecture and an intertextual web that situate it firmly within the tradition of films set in Rome. There are basically two dimensions to *Il divo*'s depiction of Rome: Rome as the capital city, seat of Christian Democrat power, and Rome as a location. While Sorrentino's portrayal of *Roma capitale* can be seen as a filmic translation of what Pasolini termed "il Palazzo," the film's main contribution to cinematic Rome, according to Viano, lies in the three sequences in which Andreotti and his bodyguards walk down Via del Corso shortly before dawn. Just as the street's history in the Roman carnival is evoked by the film, so also the essay explores the Corso's long and celebrated intertextual history (the panoply of written and iconographic testimonies of the street's past and glory), finding that Sorrentino turns Via del Corso into a signifier of the hard-to-define eternity of which Rome is a reminder.

Armando Maggi's "The Monuments to Death: Contemporary Rome in Marco Bellocchio's *L'ora di religione (Il sorriso di mia madre)*" likewise engages the filmic representation of Rome in the twenty-first century. The forceful presence of Rome's monuments in this 2002 film is a particularly interesting choice for a director known to privilege interior spaces over external locations. (The other Bellocchio movie set in Rome and shot almost entirely indoors is *Buongiorno, notte, Good Morning, Night*, 2003, which dealt with the kidnapping and assassination of Christian Democratic leader Aldo Moro in 1978.) In Bellocchio's *L'ora di religione (My Mother's Smile)*, the Vittoriano, in particular, is an object of horror and repulsion: its ugliness infects the mind of all who look at it and, in some cases, literally makes them sick. This monument is the apt icon of a city that Bellocchio represents as a new, infernal city of Dis. Because it is overbearing and sinister, the Vittoriano is also compared in *L'ora di religione* to God himself — a God that stands for the horror of that Italian social and intellectual conformity that threatens the subject's very identity.

The contradictions of a city always tottering between eternity and modernity shape Rome's literary as well as cinematic representations. Characteristic of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century has been an increased emphasis on voices traditionally relegated to the margins — the voices, for example, of women, immigrants, the poor, gays and lesbians. It has been noted, to begin with, that Roman society and Italy more generally have failed to address some of the most basic of women's concerns and rights, such as the right to bodily integrity and freedom from physical violence. This is the

background for Stefania Lucamante's essay, "The Making and the Unmaking of the Eternal City: A History of Violence in an Everyday *Perfect Day*." Melania Mazzucco's novel *Un giorno perfetto* (2005) investigates the dynamics leading to domestic abuse and murder in a frame that is global and multicultural, yet compellingly rooted in the reality of Rome — a city whose history, beginning with Mars's rape of Rhea Silvia, Romulus's mother, has notoriously interwoven women, politics, and violence.

Another woman writer discussed in this volume, from the generation just before Mazzucco's, is Patrizia Cavalli. Although her poetry has for the most part privileged a private, personal, individual dimension, Antonello Borra's "Roman Piazzas: Civic Poetry in a Text by Patrizia Cavalli," by contrast, concentrates on and analyzes a rather long and anomalous text by Cavalli, "Aria pubblica" (Public Air, 2002). With its 126 lines divided into thirteen stanzas, the poem is one of the longest in Patrizia Cavalli's production and constitutes a perfect, Enlightenment-style civic epistle on the usage of urban space. Roman piazzas, in recent years increasingly crowded and deprived of their original function, supply the poet with the occasion to open up the space of her poetry, usually dealing with the private sphere, to a public dimension through a text that is both civic and political.

Women protagonists feature as well in several movies by Turkish-born director Ferzan Özpetek. Amy Boylan's "The Appropriation of Public Spaces in Ferzan Özpetek's *Le fate ignoranti* and *Cuore sacro*" discusses the way in which these two movies draw on the image of the Colosseum to critique the strategies of exclusion that continue to marginalize certain inhabitants of the city. In *Le fate ignoranti* (*His Secret Life*, 2001), Özpetek finds an alternative Colosseum (the Gazometro in the Ostiense neighborhood) that he imbues with the collective memory, history, and values of a representative group of Rome's gay community. *Cuore sacro* (*Sacred Heart*, 2005) demystifies the Colosseum by calling attention, through this monument built to commemorate power, to a group that has been brushed aside and forgotten — the city's indigent population. Through his appropriation of public spaces such as the Colosseum and the Gazometro, Özpetek critiques authoritarian control of the city even as he shows possible ways of resisting this control: his protagonists navigate the urban landscape in unconventional ways and subvert spatial authority through their constant, indeterminate movement. By using the monuments to symbolize transformative meetings between his female protagonists and the people who initiate them into new worldviews, Özpetek also participates in the process of adding new layers and new chapters to the monuments' life histories, reinforcing the idea that fluidity is their most important attribute.

Although immigration is not their central issue, *Le fate ignoranti* and *Cuore sacro* repeatedly acknowledge the presence of Rome's immigrants from foreign lands. Immigration had been central to Rome's transformation since its annexation to the Italian Kingdom in 1870: from September 1870 until 1882, for

example, immigration was the only source of demographic growth in Rome, and by the later of those two dates less than half of the population of Rome had been born in that city (Bartolini 6-7). While in 1871 ninety-six percent of the Roman population resided within the Aurelian walls that define the city center, by 1921 eighteen percent lived outside the walls. This move from center to periphery became a veritable exodus in the 1950s and 1960s, accentuating the geographical separation among social classes and contributing to Rome's transformation into a western European metropolis (Bartolini 8-9).

Already in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the area of the Esquiline Hill was regarded as seedy, teeming with pickpockets and fortune tellers (Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea* 113). It is in Piazza Vittorio, the heart of the Rione Esquilino, that one of the most popular books written in Italian by an immigrant writer is set. This novel is analyzed in Graziella Parati's "Where Do Migrants Live? Amara Lakhous's *Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio*." Parati examines the functions of space in Lakhous's novel, in which a square in the center of Rome, Piazza Vittorio, becomes a location of change for migrants, so that the very Roman space from which migrants are usually excluded is perceived as a malleable context inevitably hybridized by the difference that migrants embody. Thus, for example, the presence of a drunken Iranian refugee marks Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore as the place of a desperate other — and not just a touristic, artistic site; the Stazione Termini, the meeting point of Peruvian immigrants, becomes a place of entrapment as well as the locus of departures and arrivals; and Piazza Vittorio, modeled after Turin and built by and for the Piedmontese bureaucrats who moved to Rome right after the Breach of Porta Pia, is the icon of a Rome that is, once again, new and different.

So many of the issues raised by Lakhous's book revolve around the question of identity — ethnic, national, political, linguistic, gender, and more — the very question that, in different ways and to a greater or lesser degree, runs through every essay in this volume. The concept of identity, however popular, easily becomes a volatile one if it is not anchored to memory. As John R. Gillis argues, "the notion of identity depends on the idea of memory, and viceversa [...] memories and identities are not fixed things, but representations or constructions of reality [...] we are constantly revising our memories to suit our current identities" (3). This interconnection is especially visible in the case of the *urbs aeterna*, a city that physically displays its own memory through, for example, its architecturally layered appearance. Rome is made up of what Pierre Nora has suggestively called "*lieux de mémoire*," places of memory that are, ironically, in "permanent metamorphosis" (xi). The examination of Rome's urban spaces, in the essays that follow, allows the reader to observe the formation, transformations, and reproduction of Rome's identity in and through its memory of a past both distant and recent.

Whereas it may be true that the processes of fashion, particularly as reflected in the cinema of Federico Fellini, expose Rome's identity as made up of illusions, of empty surfaces (Paulicelli), the quest for an identity that is uniquely Roman, grounded in place and time, is nevertheless bound to enter any attentive study of the Eternal City. Thus, *Clash of Civilizations* speaks of the changes enacted in the old Roman space by newcomers to it (Parati); their ethnicity rewrites and helps shape the city's own sense of self — and that of its inhabitants — not unlike the arrival in the Piedmontese following the Breach of Porta Pia affected the identity of late nineteenth-century Rome. The urban and national sense of self that was a central objective at the time of Rome's annexation to Italy, shaping the work of both journalists (Romani) and poets (Frenquellucci), continues to be a problematic issue to this day, one inextricably tied to the urban geography of Italy's capital city. Then as now, understanding what makes someone "Roman" — an identity sometimes epitomized, in cinema, by the characters played by Anna Magnani (Monti) — may be seen as a metonymy for the even more elusive, and much sought-after, Italianness. Conversely, for some, urban identity may be at odds with national identity, as if Italians want to distance themselves from Rome in order to confirm their Italianness (Arthurs). Similarly, though in literary terms, Rome can be an absent insofar as ineffectual place (Tillson) or, worse, a place that is inevitably, historically inscribed with, and defined by, violence against women (Lucamante).

Like Lakhous's Piazza Vittorio — and like piazzas more generally, intrinsically defined, and poetically reflected on, as empty spaces to be occupied and thus defined by individuals (Borra) — other Roman locations help decide what Rome is and who Romans are. A sense of Romanness, for example, has often been sought out architecturally: through the local, low-key Barocchetto of Garbatella, which remembers the minor architecture of the ancient and medieval Roman people (De Michelis); more grandiosely, through Fascist projects aimed at restoring an imperial and often mis-remembered form of *romanità* (Agnew) — a particularly striking example of how memory and identity work together to serve specific ideological positions; most recently, through the contemporary building of museum spaces that combine Rome's distant history with the most innovative architectural structures (Bernini). The physical and imaginary spaces of past Romes get recycled, in truly Roman fashion, in order to bolster contemporary identities, through processes imbued with ideological intentions and material consequences. Rome's identification with a palimpsest is reflected in urban projects such as Garbatella and the Museo dell'Ara Pacis, as well as in literary endeavors such as Pasolini's *Petrolio*: malleable and never finished, like Rome itself (Matteucci and Pinkus). Among the most spectacular instances of Rome's architectural and historical recycling as it impacts the city's very identity (by giving it a sense of sameness over time) is the Colosseum, whether in the representation of its ancient form — identified with the eternity of both

Rome and Giulio Andreotti in *Il divo* (Viano) and as the place where supporters of “la Roma” soccer team physically and symbolically convene to celebrate victory over “la Lazio” (Ricatti) — or in its modern incarnations: the Ostiense Gazometro depicted in Özpetek’s films (Boylan) and the Colosseo Quadrato, the nickname for the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana at the EUR (Zambenedetti).

A twentieth-century place that has also become an icon for the city and a contested location of Roman identity is the monument to Victor Emmanuel II, or Vittoriano, repulsively ugly and guilty of negatively influencing later Roman architecture (Maggi), and the locus of historical amnesia despite its geographical, patriotic remapping of the city center (Lerner). The Vittoriano’s bombastic patriotism brings us back to the idea that identity, rather than being fixed, is dynamically formed through contact with the other in both the present and the past, in memory and the imagination. Romans understand who they are, that is, thanks to relations, for instance, with the Piedmontese of the nineteenth century who built places such as Piazza Vittorio in remembrance of their own Turin; with the migrants — first from other parts of Italy, later from distant countries — of the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries; with the visitors and tourists of the past century and a half, whose accounts and practices have identified the Eternal City as non-modern and past-oriented (Hom) and downright shaped Rome, materially as well as metaphorically (Wingenter). Of the long history of the Eternal City, this volume considers only the past one hundred and forty years and a necessarily limited number of subject areas (much remains to be said, for example, about Rome’s transformation from sacred to secular city, as well as about Roman art and Roman economy during this period). Nevertheless, this relatively brief time span and this partial list of topics are sufficient to recognize the complexity of the relationship between memory and identity. Each of this volume’s essays, through different lenses and unique perspectives, examines how modern Rome is coming to be Italy’s capital city.

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