REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING THE ANCIENT CITY

Edited by
Javier Martínez Jiménez and Sam Ottewill-Soulsby

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Front and back cover artwork by Sofia Greaves.

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Series preface

The present series of three volumes was made possible by a five-year Advanced Grant from the European Research Council under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 693418). By an ironic twist of fate, our 'Impact of the Ancient City' proposal was submitted to and accepted by the ERC at the very period when many in the UK seemed to have lost sight of the power of the ideals of free movement of goods, people and ideas. The University sector in general – and Cambridge in particular, the Classics Faculty of which hosted the project – felt that popular rhetoric had lost sight of solid advantages. The benefits reaped from the circulation of people and ideas go beyond the economic. The academic enterprise is and always has been a cosmopolitan one, and it is a relief that our government has agreed that this is one aspect of the old relationship with Europe worth preserving. Our gratitude to the European Union is therefore heartfelt.

In Europe and across the globe today there is tremendous interest in urbanism as a defining feature of our world, but often without sensitivity to the historical depth of cities. What we proposed was to think again about the relationship between cities with a Greco-Roman past and the long history of urbanism across the Mediterranean that has continued to the present. To do this, we felt it would not help to suggest a single story line. The story of 'Classical reception' increasingly concerns Classicists who, when challenged on the relevance of this past world to the present, point to a long and changing story of relevances. Strangely enough, there has been surprisingly little attention given to the 'reception' of ancient, Greco-Roman urbanism. To fill that gap, what we hoped to explore was how the city is not only a fundamental characteristic of Greco-Roman civilisation, but has acted as a vital mechanism by which that civilization was generated, transmitted and transmuted. Our project is about understanding changing responses to the urban past over the duration of two millennia, with a focus on the Mediterranean region.

The ERC Advanced Grant presented us with the exceptional opportunity to be ambitious in both scope and range while creating a small community of scholars with expertise from different periods and areas that reached beyond the capacities of any single scholar. From the outset the project was designed to range chronologically from late antiquity to the present, geographically across the Mediterranean, east and west, culturally across the Christian and Islamic worlds, and in disciplinary terms across the study of texts and physical remains. Despite the generous support, we soon discovered that it was impossible to do more than sample this vast area, selecting a group of scholars who both complemented and challenged each other: a

late antique archaeologist specializing in Visigothic Spain (Javier Martínez Jiménez), an early medieval historian focusing on relations between the courts of Charlemagne and Umayyad Spain (Sam Ottewill-Soulsby), an Arabist and historian of the medieval Middle East (Edward Zychowicz-Coghill), an archaeologist working on late antique and early Islamic Jordan and Egypt (Louise Blanke), an architectural historian exploring the transition from Byzantine to Ottoman (Suna Çağaptay), a late antique historian who has turned her attention to Ottoman Greece (Elizabeth Key Fowden), a PhD student with a background in Classics studying urban planning in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italy (Sofia Greaves) and a principal investigator specializing in Roman social history and urban archaeology in Italy (Andrew Wallace-Hadrill).

Other Cambridge colleagues joined our discussions on a regular basis, notably Tom Langley, writing a PhD on ideas of the city in Greek Patristic writers, Professor Amira Bennison, a historian of the medieval Maghrib, especially its cities, Professor Rosamond McKitterick, a leading figure in the study of Carolingian France and papal Rome, and Professor Martin Millett, a Roman archaeologist with a longstanding interest in urbanism. We benefited from the support and advice of the members of our Advisory Committee, both in Cambridge (in addition to the above named, Cyprian Broodbank, Robin Cormack, Garth Fowden, Alessandro Launaro, Robin Osborne and John Patterson) and beyond – Luuk de Ligt (Leiden), Çiğdem Kafescioğlu (Istanbul), Ray Laurence (Sydney), Keith Lilley (Belfast) and from Oxford, Josephine Quinn, Bryan Ward-Perkins and Chris Wickham. We also enjoyed the invaluable support of two administrators, Nigel Thompson of the Classics Faculty and Beth Clark, whose calm efficiency facilitated conferences and seminars, enabled foreign travel and smoothed contact with the bureaucracies at both ends.

We invited many scholars, from Cambridge or further afield, to share their knowledge with us at our weekly seminars. We also organised one-day workshops, including one on the Roman and Islamic city in North Africa and one on Cities and Citizenship after antiquity (that led to an *Al-Masāq* special issue)[1], as well a panel for the 2018 Leeds International Medieval congress on 'Memory' and two three-day conferences, one in Istanbul and one in Rome. The last three underlie the three volumes in the present series. In each of those conferences, the members of our group contributed, but we knew that to cover the ground we needed to bring in international colleagues. The three volumes that constitute the present series are far from exhausting the output of the project, and each of us has papers and monographs in the pipeline or already out. Each of the three volumes has its own set of questions, but together they build up an overriding collective agenda of exploring how the cities of the Greek and Roman past, and such ideas of the city that were articulated around them, have impacted on the city and the idea of the city in later periods.

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill
29 July 2021

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[1] Javier Martínez Jiménez and Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, *Cities and Citizenship after Rome*, *Al-Masāq. Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean* vol. 32 no. 1 (2020).

Acknowledgements

De auctoribus, conditarum urbium plerumque dissensio invenitur
There is much disagreement about who was responsible for the founding of cities
Isidore, *Etymologies*, 15.1.1

The ancients knew that all cities were founded by great kings. So too was this volume, which would not exist without Andrew Wallace-Hadrill who, as the Principal Investigator of the ERC Advanced Grant 'Impact of the Ancient City' (grant agreement no. 693418), gathered both the editors of this volume, as well as many of the contributors, and turned their minds to cities (and us, mere dwellers, into the project's citizens). The editors are also grateful to other members of the project including Louise Blanke, Suna Çağaptay, Elizabeth Fowden, Sofia Greaves and Edward Zychowicz-Coghill, who have offered essential help and guidance, as did our adopted member Thomas Langley and our advisory board members Rosamond McKitterick and Amira Bennison. We also want to thank Beth Clark, our project administrator, for her tireless work, and the Faculty of Classics for hosting us through one of the strangest periods in recent memory. We are also deeply grateful to Oxbow, and in particular to Julie Gardiner and Felicity Goldsack for their help and enthusiasm.

This volume has its origins in a series of panels organised by the editors on 'Remembering and Forgetting the Ancient City' for the 2018 Leeds International Medieval Congress, responding to the conference central theme of 'Memory'. Although only some of the chapters that follow were first introduced in these sessions, the conversations that began on those warm early July days would shape and determine the questions this book asks and the answers it seeks. The editors would like to thank Pablo Díaz Martínez, Pablo Poveda Arias and Lenneke van Raaij for their contributions to those panels, and the many attendees who raised awkward questions and important problems. Lastly, we must necessarily thank the reviewers who assessed and commented on the different chapters.

This manuscript was finished on the 13th of September 2021, day of Saint John Chrysostom, patron saint of preachers, speakers and orators.

Illustrations

Contributors

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Contributors

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Islam in the Hellenic sphere is the theme of ELIZABETH KEY FOWDEN's research, which draws together architectural, visual and textual sources to analyse religious and intellectual exchange. Spanning from late antique Syria to Ottoman Greece (with an excursus into contemporary Arab art), her publications include *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran* (1999), 'The lamp and the wine flask: Early Muslim interest in Christian monasticism' (2007), 'Jerusalem and the work of discontinuity' (2019) and 'The Parthenon Mosque, King Solomon and the Greek Sages' (2019). She is Senior Researcher on the Impact of the Ancient City project and co-editor of the volume *Cities as Palimpsests? Responses to Antiquity in Eastern Mediterranean Urbanism*.

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which post-colonialism, socioeconomics and resilience theory shape new evidence-based narrations on the cultural history, materiality and heritage of the east Mediterranean during the first millennium CE.

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Preface

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

Among the kaleidoscope of imaginary cities which Italo Calvino's Marco Polo offers to Kublai Khan, emperor of the Tartars, one thread is of cities and memory. Calvino's cities have no one relationship with the past, but a paradoxical complexity. Two of these cities may illustrate the range of contrasts, Maurilia and Zaira. The traveller to Maurilia is invited to reflect on its transformation from a provincial town to a metropolis.

> In Maurilia, the traveller is invited to visit the city and, at the same time, to examine some old postcards that show it as it used to be: the same identical square with a hen in the place of the bus station, a bandstand in the place of the overpass, two young ladies in the place of the munitions factory. If the traveller does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one, though he must be careful to contain his regret within definite limits ...[1]

The truth is that the nostalgically cultivated image of the past not only overstates its attractions, but its relevance to the present.

> Beware of saying to them that sometimes different cities follow one another on the same site and under the same name, born and dying without knowing one another, without communication among themselves ... It is pointless to ask whether the new ones [the gods of the place] are better or worse than the old, since there is no connection between them, just as the old postcards do not depict Maurilia as it was, but a different city which, by chance, was called Maurilia, like this one.[2]

In Maurilia, the treasured postcards of the past conceal a deeper disconnection, of a city which has no real continuity with its past (even its gods, like Virgil's gods of Troy, have abandoned it). But that is Maurilia. Zaira is defined by its past.

> In vain, great-hearted Kublai, shall I attempt to describe Zaira, city of the high bastions. I could tell you how many steps make up the streets rising like stairways, and the degree of the arcade's curves, and what kind of zinc scales cover the roofs: but I already know that this would be the same as telling you nothing. The city does not consist of this, but of relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past: the height of a lamppost and the distance from the ground of a hanged usurper's swaying feet ...

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[1] Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 26.
[2] Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 26–27.

> A description of Zaira as it is today should contain all of Zaira's past. The city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of its streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls.[3]

If Maurilia parades a fantasy past, Zaira's past is everything, and far from being paraded and narrated, is implicit in the wrinkles of its fabric. If we ask how the cities of antiquity have impacted on the cities that have followed them, we must be alert to both of Calvino's paradoxical extremes, and many more. One might think of Rome, and several other Italian cities, as like Maurilia, flaunting the postcards of the ancient past which the fascist regime so prolifically generated. Or one might think of Istanbul as a Zaira, a 'palimpsest city' in which the script of the past has been deleted, and yet shines through at every corner, its complex history implicit in its streets 'like the lines of a hand'.

'Cultural memory' has attracted much discussion of recent decades. Harking back to Maurice Halbwachs's 'mémoire collective',[4] and building on Jan and Aleida Assmann's 'kulturelles Gedächtnis'[5] and Pierre Nora's 'lieux de mémoire',[6] interdisciplinary convergence between historians, sociologists, critics, philosophers and psychologists has developed the rich potential of shared memory of the past at the heart of social (and often national) identity.[7] Students of classical antiquity have embraced this potential, most notably in the three volumes on 'Roman Memory' edited by Karl Galinsky.[8] Not only could Mussolini use his excavation of the Mausoleum of Augustus and the Ara Pacis to consolidate an image of the Roman past from which he could draw authority, but Augustus himself in his new Forum had used a display of statues of republican heroes to redefine the Roman past and the relationship to it of the new Augustan order.[9] Halbwachs contrasted the 'living' collective memory from the 'dead' memory of history. But historians know that history is fluid, constantly rewritten to engage with the concerns of the present. The historian knows that both Augustus' and Mussolini's representations of the past were driven by contemporary agendas; and part of history is the story of the invention and reinvention of the past.

But while this field of studies overlaps at some points with and offers stimulus to our project, our agenda is a different one. Our concern is not so much with the city as a container of memories, real or constructed, of *lieux de mémoire*, but with the ancient city as an object of memory, with *mémoires du lieu.* Our emphasis is not only on the postcards of Maurilia, the paraded memories of a nostalgic past that seek to

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[3] Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 13.
[4] Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire.*
[5] Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* (among a vast output).
[6] Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire.*
[7] See for instance the round-up in Erll and Nünning, *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*; Olick *et al.,* *The Collective Memory Reader.*
[8] Galinsky, *Memoria Romana* and *Memory in Ancient Rome.*
[9] Woolf, 'Mars and memory'.

redefine the present (though these too catch our attention), but also with the implicit memories of Zaira written into a city's fabric, like the 'lines of a hand', including the network of streets, which like the layout of the southern Campus Martius in Rome have dictated the subsequent development of the urban fabric, without being perceived as such by the inhabitants.

In proposing a project that would think again about the relationship between the city, or rather cities, of the Graeco-Roman past, and the long history of urbanism that has continued to the present, we felt it would not help to suggest a single storyline (and the proposal cited Calvino for this reason). The story of the reception of the classical is one of increasing concern to classicists who, when challenged on the relevance of this past world to the present, point to a long and changing story of relevances. Strangely enough, though the city is widely seen not only as a fundamental characteristic of Graeco-Roman civilisation, but as a vital mechanism by which that civilisation was generated and transmitted, and despite the vast contemporary interest in urbanism as a defining feature of our own world, there has been surprisingly little attention given to the 'reception' of ancient urbanism.

One reason is perhaps that more than a century ago, the enquiry started off on a particular track which has since showed its own shortcomings. Francis Haverfield, though now criticised for his take on Romanisation, was a pioneer among Roman historians of the broadening of the field by the use of archaeological material. He played a central role in the foundation both of the British School at Rome (in 1901) and of Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies (in 1910), two institutions structured to promote exchange between historians and archaeologists. In 1910 he took part in the crucial London Town Planning Conference, arguing that antiquity had much to teach town planners of the day; and in 1913 he elaborated these ideas in his *Ancient Town-Planning*. In both he put heavy emphasis on the importance of orthogonal planning, the 'grid', identifying the straight line and right-angle with civilisation itself, and the unplanned bent line with barbarism. His scheme was simple: the end of antiquity brought the end of regular planning, a collapse which lasted throughout the European Middle Ages and the Islamic world at all periods; the return in the Renaissance to regular planning (and the influence of Vitruvius) was a return to civilisation based on Graeco-Roman principles.

His attitudes, only too redolent of the heyday of Edwardian British colonialism, have weathered ill, and now look absurd, grotesquely underestimating the extent of regular planning in the European Middle Ages and in the Islamic world, but also giving far more prominence to the importance of the grid plan than in any ancient author. Part of the agenda of this project is to re-examine the importance of grid planning, especially in colonial contexts, and this is a set of issues addressed in the third volume of this series. At the same time, it is revealing to investigate the emergence of the set of values which gave such prominence to ancient grid planning. These were not invented by Haverfield, nor in Edwardian Britain, but were widespread in Europe in

the nineteenth century, as Sofia Greaves' pioneering study of nineteenth-century planning and hygiene in Italy shows.

Haverfield's emphasis on orthogonal planning was simultaneously misleading and reductive. Of course, the grid plan is an important feature of at least some ancient cities, particularly in the colonial situation where the *tabula rasa* (not a blank map, but one from which earlier features have been deliberately erased), combined with flat terrain, allowed such a simple plan to be laid down, and that applies as much to the colonial foundations of the New World as to those of antiquity. But regular planning was only one of the concerns expressed by ancient urban theorists, who gave rather more emphasis to issues of hygiene, of healthy air and healthy water: it was perhaps the Roman concern with water supply (through aqueducts) and disease control (through systems of sewerage) that most struck and was most enthusiastically imitated by nineteenth-century urbanists. The central importance of infrastructure to the success of the modern city shows perhaps a more enduring influence of Roman urbanism than grid-planning.[10]

But even if we throw in aqueducts and sewers with the street network of a Roman city, that does not begin to exhaust the importance of the ancient city as a model. If one returns to what ancient writers had to say about the city (and to re-examine these has been a significant part of our agenda), not only does it become increasingly difficult to map the modern idea of a city (typically the urban settlement to the exclusion of the country) onto the ancient idea that integrates city and country, as Max Weber argued and Moses Finley re-emphasised, but it is hard to talk about the city (*polis*, *civitas*) without reference to the citizen (*politēs*, *civis*). That is why it was an ancient proverb that men, not walls, made a city. Even if the walls were the image that first sprang to mind with the ancient city, the survival by Athens of the Persian sack of 480 depended on the survival and continuity of its citizen body. Martin Devecka has even argued that the idea of a ruin was impossible for the classical Greek city: it was the uprooting and annihilation of the population of citizens that defined the destruction of a city.[11]

For this reason, the first product of this project was a volume looking at cities and citizenship in the post-Roman world.[12] It is a treasured myth among classicists that the classical definition of the citizen was so special (and though far from all cities were democracies, ideals of democracy and freedom are seen to be part and parcel of that definition) that it could not survive the passage to the Middle Ages. But ideas of citizenship were fluid, and though in the world of the Roman empire little of democracy attached to them, they remained a fundamental feature of Roman law and Roman thinking long after Caracalla in 212 introduced supposedly 'universal' citizenship. In a post-Roman world in which the Theodosian Code was the starting

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[10] Amin and Thrift, *Seeing like a City*. See Greaves in this volume and the other contributions to the series.
[11] Devecka, *Broken Cities.*
[12] Martínez Jiménez and Ottewill-Soulsby, *Cities and Citizenship after Rome.*

point of legal systems, citizenship, and its distinction from slavery, continued to form constitutive ideas of local city membership.[13]

Grid plans, hygienic infrastructure and citizenship are simply aspects of a reception of Graeco-Roman models of the city that is as varied as it is wide-ranging. The exceptional funding of an ERC-funded project creates the potential to be ambitious in scope and range. Martin Devecka's *Broken Cities* is impressive for its success in ranging from classical Greece to late antique Rome to Abbasid Baghdad to the Mexico of Cortés. The individual scholar can expand their range, if they have ambition and talent, but there are clear limits. A team of people bringing to the table different expertise from different periods and areas can set their ambitions that much higher. It was part of the design of this project from the outset that it should range chronologically from late antiquity to the present, geographically across the Mediterranean, east and west, culturally across the Christianised and Islamicate worlds, and in disciplinary terms across the study of texts and that of physical remains. Naturally, we soon discovered that generous though the funding, it was impossible to do more than sample this vast area.

Our group of scholars, gradually assembled in late 2016 and early 2017, adopted the regular working practice to meet on a weekly basis, usually to discuss a text, with the discussion led in turn by one of our number. Often we chose texts that were clearly relevant, but of which few or none of us had previous expertise, starting with Isidore's *Etymologies*, a seventh-century text that proved to have numerous points of discussion, and extending to the fourteenth-century Catalan author Eiximenis, or Arabic geographers like Al-Idrisi and Ibn Khaldun, the evocative descriptions of travels in Greece by the Ottoman writer Evliya Çelebi, or the nineteenth-century urban theories of Ildefonso Cerdá. Then there were sites to which our archaeological colleagues introduced us, from Mérida and Reccopolis in Spain, to Jarash in Jordan and Bursa in Turkey. Later, they led us on memorable field trips, to the Iberian Peninsula, to Turkey and to Rome. Progressive exposure to a wide range of previously unfamiliar texts and unfamiliar places gave us a common ground, a shared set of interests and issues.

The three volumes that constitute the present series are far from exhausting the output of the project, and each of us has papers and monographs in the pipeline or already out. Each of the three volumes has its own agenda, but together they build up an overriding agenda, of exploring how the cities of the Greek and Roman past, and such ideas of the city that were articulated around them, have impacted on the city and the idea of the city in later periods across the Mediterranean. The present volume, *Remembering and Forgetting the Ancient City*, is different from the others in that it does not come out of a major conference. Its origin lies in a panel forming part of the International Medieval Congress held at Leeds in 2018, but in the end, we felt it would have greater coherence if it focused on papers by the members of the project group itself. 'Remembering' as a theme came out of the theme of the Congress, 'Memory', and in part that reflects the growing impact of studies of cultural

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[13] See Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civitas Romana*: The fluidity of an ideal'.

memory; but memory in a different way was fundamental for our project. Our aim was to illustrate the very diversity with which, at different times and in different places, 'the ancient city' has been remembered.

When we use the expression, 'the ancient city', we have learned to place it in scare quotes. We have read together what Fustel de Coulanges, Max Weber and Moses Finley have to say about 'the ancient city', and its distinction from 'the medieval city' or 'the Islamic city'. Inescapably the notion has stuck that 'it' was a quite distinctive phenomenon with characteristics that separate it from 'the city' of different period. The latest, and in many ways admirable, book of that title by Arjan Zuiderhoek (2017), traces it from its beginnings in archaic Greece to its end in late antiquity. A rather broader picture is offered by Greg Woolf's *Life and Death of Ancient Cities: A Natural History* (2020): he too sees a moment of expiry in late antiquity, though he refuses to identify archaic Greece with the appearance of a phenomenon that, archaeologically, has far deeper roots. But from the point of view of this project, it is an obstacle to box off periods like this, as if cities which have a continuous long-term existence undergo moments of one-off universal transformation. The city, as Calvino understood, always lives with its past; and though the past may seem like a foreign country, that is as true of the past of one century ago as that of a millennium ago. From this point of view, we have found it particularly unhelpful to talk of 'the decline and fall of the ancient city': for all the admirable array of evidence which Wolf Liebeschuetz deployed to argue his case, in the end it is a matter of subjective judgement to say that the growth of power of bishops marks the end of an ancient culture, particular when that culture is falsely defined as 'secular'.

An approach we have found more illuminating is that of resilience, a theoretical framework brought into the discussion by Alan Walmsley working on late antique and Islamic Syria. Walmsley took his cue from the archaeologist Charles Redman, who adopted a theoretical structure with a basis in ecological science. The essential idea is that a resilient organism responds continuously to environmental changes. These may be small and gradual, or rapid and catastrophic. The organism moves through a continuous cycle, between exploitation and conservation (when positive environmental conditions are sustained), through adaptive phases of release and reorganisation (when they change or become adverse). For Redman, memory plays a crucial role in this cycle, for it is not only by the adaptations provoked by changed conditions, but the memories of the past implicit in a continuing organism that make adaptation resilient. If with Redman, rather than seeing stability as the norm, and any change as a threat, both stability and change are seen as features of a continuous cycle, we will be less inclined to endow the city of antiquity with a false stability, when in truth there is change and adaptation throughout, and less inclined to see the adaptive and resilient city as having undergone a transformation so radical that it becomes an entity of a different nature.

Rather than entering into a fruitless argument over whether 'the ancient city' declined and fell, we are interested in how, in a long-term cycle of change, cities

drew on elements from a period of their past which could never escape their notice, both because of the sheer scale and solidity of its physical remains, and because of the abundant literature and discussion surrounding it with which a classical-based education made them familiar. But it is not always the same elements that catch their attention, and it is not always the same rationale that leads them to use and adapt such models. This project is about understanding changing responses to the urban past over the duration of two millennia, with a focus on the Mediterranean region.

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Chapter 1

Zimbabwe and Rome: Remembering and forgetting ancient cities

Sam Ottewill-Soulsby and Javier Martínez Jiménez

> For a site or monument to retain its significance across time, it must be the subject of continual reinvestment; that is to say, it must be modified and transformed by others who take on its legacy, even if they distort it. Memory is the condition, not the negation nor the opposite, of history.[1]

These observations by François-Xavier Fauvelle appear in the introduction to his history of medieval Africa, *The Golden Rhinoceros.* He notes that one of the challenges of writing such a history is the lack of any such continuity of memory among many of the great cities of sub-Saharan Africa in the period. An example of this is the extraordinary remains of the city known as Great Zimbabwe, which flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the other 'Zimbabwe-type' settlements distributed on the Zimbabwe Plateau.[2] The first European explorer to closely examine the site of Great Zimbabwe in 1871, Karl Mauch, was awed by what he found, but frustrated by the lack of knowledge or interest in the remains shown by the local Shona people.[3] Later scholars interested in the history of these remains have attempted to employ oral sources from the Shona, with some success, but the results are controversial.[4] Something of the difficulty is revealed by the name given to the city, commonly translated as 'houses of stone', suggesting a relationship to the site predicated largely on the most obvious physical remains rather than an enduring link to the inhabitants of the city. In the absence of continuous memory, outside narratives have been applied, beginning with Mauch, who attributed the city to King Solomon, whose builders must have raised the city for the Queen of Sheba.[5] Others saw in the walls of

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[1] Fauvelle, *The Golden Rhinoceros*, 7.
[2] Pikiraya, *The Zimbabwe Culture*, 123–155.
[3] Connah, *African Civilizations*, 260.
[4] Huffman, *Snakes and Crocodiles.* See the criticisms of Beach, 'Cognitive archaeology and imaginary history', 47–72.
[5] Carroll, 'Solomonic legend', 233–247.

the city the hands of the Egyptians, or the Phoenicians, or the Arabs, peoples with a respectable pedigree of city-building familiar to the observers. In more recent years they have become symbols of African civilisation and achievement, with the 'houses of stone' lending their name to the country they are found in as part of a rejection of the Rhodesian colonial past.[6]

This volume is about ancient cities in the Mediterranean. Yet we begin far away from it because the high veld of southern Africa offers a viewpoint to grasp how unusual this classical or Greco-Roman city is. The cities of the Roman Mediterranean are, for the most part, historically known. Although there is much that is mysterious about them, we have their names, sometimes preserved in daughter languages, sometimes rediscovered through inscriptions in writings we can read and understand. For many of those cities we also have their stones. The essential archaeological labour which is the chief source of our growing knowledge of the Greco-Roman city takes place in conversation with the words of the inhabitants of these cities, whether from learned texts and histories, solemn official inscriptions or from ribald graffiti. Unlike Great Zimbabwe, places like Rome or Leptis Magna or Petra can be understood from the inside view of the past as well as the outside view of the present. Such a comparison is not intended to aggrandise the Roman past at the expense of that of Zimbabwe, for memory is not inherently virtuous. Rather it is meant to make it clear that there is a historical question here that needs an answer.

As Fauvelle observed, the key difference is memory. The Roman city has been continually remembered while those of Zimbabwe – and here we could add Mohenjo-Daro and Teotihuacán and a hundred other cities across the world – have not.[7] Much of our knowledge of the classical city comes from the work of scholars in the last few centuries. The steady accumulation of knowledge and understanding built by generations of increasingly technically skilled and methodologically sophisticated practitioners standing on the work of their predecessors has resulted in a deeper comprehension of the ancient city than was previously conceivable. But this was made possible because over the course of the past two millennia there has never not been someone interested in the memory of the ancient city. The texts we employ were consciously preserved and used and studied, creating a continuous thread of memory, even when peoples who were not invested in the classical past came and went.

It is with the survival of the ancient city via memory that this volume is concerned. As many of the chapters will demonstrate, the preservation of the memory of the classical city was by no means inevitable. An example of what forgetting the ancient city looks like may be found in the Old English elegy, 'The Ruin', which describes (most probably) the ruins of Roman Bath:[8]

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[6] Garlake, *Great Zimbabwe*, 209–210.
[7] Wright, *The Ancient Indus*; Bueno, *The Pursuit of Ruins.*
[8] Wentersdorf, 'Observations on *The Ruin*'.

Wondrous is this masonry, shattered by the Fates, the fortifications have given way, the buildings raised by giants are crumbling.[9]

The city is unnamed and its Romanness unspecified and forgotten. For the poet, their bathhouses and 'wondrous walls' were both the alien 'work of giants' and achingly recognisable in their 'many mead-halls filled with human-joys'. The tension between foreign and familiar provides much of the energy of the poem, with a universal experience being brought out of contact with a lost and distant past. It is quite possible that the author of 'The Ruin' was familiar with classical culture, yet their description shows how even a literate society could potentially forget the Greco-Roman city, reducing their ruins to 'houses of stone', to be conjured but not remembered in a context where all standing stone buildings were inherited from this mysterious past.[10] Many of the chapters in this volume are concerned with times and spaces where the Roman city was forgotten. These histories of forgetting are just as interesting and worthy of study as the histories of memory considered elsewhere. As some of the chapters in this book demonstrate, the Islamic world is particularly relevant as a place where the memory of Rome could run thin. The example of Great Zimbabwe is once again instructive here. We will encounter Solomon among the ruins of North Africa and on the Parthenon in Athens.

Continuous inhabitation of the city does not guarantee the survival of its memory. This point is made clear in Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*, where the Monkey-People squat in the Lost City:

The monkeys called the place their city, and pretended to despise the Jungle-People because they lived in the forest. And yet they never knew what the buildings were made for nor how to use them.[11]

The monkeys' claim to the city is rendered hollow by their inability to remember it. When they attempt to make the space their own by rearranging the plaster and stone, their efforts are scuppered because they promptly forget what they have done:

They explored all the passages and dark tunnels in the palace and the hundreds of little dark rooms, but they never remembered what they had seen and what they had not; and so drifted about in ones and twos or crowds telling each other that they were doing as men did.[12]

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[9] 'The Ruin', *Anglo-Saxon and Norse Poems*, 'Wrætlic is þes wealstan— wyrde gebræcon, burgstede burston; brosnað enta geweorc', 54.
[10] For a range of interpretations, see Keenan, '*The Ruin* as Babylon'; Doubleday, '*The Ruin*'; Thompson Lee, '*The Ruin*: Bath or Babylon?'; Hunter, 'Germanic and Roman Antiquity'; Abram, 'In search of lost time'; Critten, 'Via Rome: medieval medievalisms'.
[11] Kipling, *Jungle Book*, 44.
[12] Kipling, *Jungle Book*, 44.

The city is lost because people who built the city, who lived in it and made it their own, are gone and forgotten. The stones have no meaning because they have no memories, and no new ones are being made to replace them.[13]

In attempting to understand the enduring memory of the ancient city, we can draw upon the voluminous scholarship of the field of memory studies.[14] Marlena Whiting and Elizabeth Key Fowden in particular consider in their contributions the ways in which topography encouraged and reinforced communal memory, thereby creating complex relationships with the ancient city. Such consideration of the construction of memory within historical landscape goes back to the accepted founder of the field. In his *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte*, the great Maurice Halbwachs explored the way a shared memory of a fictional past was constructed for sites across the Levant on which Christian communities across the world created their common histories.[15] This importance of place was at the heart of the revival in interest in Halbwachs' work in the 1980s, when Pierre Nora travelled France to investigate the way a national history was built around places of memory.[16] That the city served as a particularly good refuge for memory has long been understood from this perspective.[17] Memory in the specifically ancient world has not been neglected, thanks to the labour of scholars such as Jan and Aleida Assmann and Karl Galinsky.[18] The importance of memories of the Greco-Roman past on subsequent generations has enjoyed much fruitful exploration.

Much of this work has focussed on sites of memory, reminiscent of the urban mnemonics used by Cicero and other classical rhetors to pin the points of memory onto a succession of physical elements of the city.[19] This volume is concerned with something slightly different, the memory of an entire city as a community, the space where, in Fauvelle's words, memory conditions history. In these memories whole cities live because, as present reminders of the past, they exist within the urban space, either physical or cognitive. This multi-dimensional understanding of place allows cities to understand themselves with temporal depth.[20] In order to understand the role played by memory in the survival of the ancient city, many of the contributors have embraced resilience theory. Emerging from the study of ecology, resilience theory provides a model for thinking about how systems adapt to change.[21] While in

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[13] Goswami, *Colonial India*, 117, 126.

[14] Erll, *Memory in Culture*.

[15] Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire*.

[16] Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*; den Boer, '*Loci memoriae – Lieux de mémoire*'.

[17] Benjamin, *One-way Street*; Crang and Travlou, 'The city and topologies of memory'; Sheringham, 'Archiving', 10.

[18] Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*; Assmann, 'Canon and archive'; Galinsky, *Memoria Romana*; Galinsky, *Memory in Ancient Rome and Early Christianity*.

[19] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 3.16.29; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 11.2.21; Cicero, *De Oratore*, 2.86.

[20] Cresswell, *Place*, 7–14; Lalli, 'Urban-related identity'; Stedman, 'Toward a social psychology of space'; Taylor, *Narratives of Identity*.

[21] Gunderson and Holling, 'Resilience and adaptive cycles', 25–62; Redman and Kinzig, 'Resilience of past landscapes', 14.

the study of the human past resilience has been employed more by archaeologists than by historians, people working with ideas and written texts may also benefit from some of its modes of thinking.[22]

Resilience theory places great emphasis on resources that can be drawn upon and exploited at different stages of the cycle. The memory of the ancient city might be one such resource that can be drawn upon by subsequent inhabitants of the city. In the case of the ancient city, some elements, like large buildings, may prove resilient because of their size and their secondary usefulness; some others, like urban councils, may be resilient because their role in managing the city and its community. Some others may prove to be resilient only after being reimagined under a modern light, like urban hygiene. Louise Blanke and Alan Walmsley develop this point in their contribution to this volume, offering a radical statement for the rewriting of the history of the eastern Mediterranean using resilience theory, while both Andrew Wallace-Hadrill and Javier Martínez Jiménez draw upon resilience heavily in their treatments of sixth-century Italy and high medieval southern France respectively.

Resilience theory offers a helpful way of examining how systems under stress can rapidly change while retaining a sense of continuity, or subsequently return to former concepts or methods of organisation in a new context when those resources are once again useful.[23] In this way, the historian or archaeologist can accept both change and continuity as neither diametrically opposed, nor necessarily as markers of success or failure, but instead as part of a process in which systems adapt. This is important for considering the memory of the ancient city. As Fauvelle noted, to survive the ancient city must evolve and adapt, both in its physical structure and in the way it is perceived. Many of the chapters in this volume are therefore concerned with how memory of the city changed, and how those adaptations helped it to survive.

This volume is also interested in the manner in which the ancient city was forgotten. The act of remembering a city can be fundamentally tied to its forgetting; Aleida Assmann observed that 'when thinking about memory, we must start with forgetting'.[24] The manner in which the ancient city was forgotten is as interesting as the way in which it was remembered, revealing as it does much about the needs or desires of those for whom the ancient city had no meaning or purpose. Nor is forgetting a straightforward act of oblivion. The path to Lethe takes many routes, accidental and deliberate, slow and rapid, although its course is unusually difficult to track for obvious reasons. This process of forgetting can interact with others of rediscovery, a resurrection of memories performed in the context of previous amnesia in a new context.

A consequence of this line of thought is the observation that not all places and times remembered the ancient city equally clearly. Two major factors seem to have decided the strength of the lingering echo of Greco-Roman urbanism. The first is how

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[22] See the use made by Walmsley, *Early Islamic Syria*, 146–147.
[23] Redman, 'Resilience theory in archaeology', 70–77.
[24] Assmann, 'Canon and archive', 97.

easily accessible the ancient city was. One obvious yet somewhat misleading element here is chronology. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill demonstrates, the ancient city was easy to remember in sixth-century Italy because the inhabitants effectively still lived in it. Yet, as we have seen with the Old English 'The Ruin', chronological proximity does not guarantee memory. The ancient city could be forgotten with remarkable speed, before being aggressively reclaimed in modernity, as posited by Sofia Greaves' examination of nineteenth-century Naples. Nor did being near the physical remains of the ancient city necessarily guarantee that it would be remembered. The ruins of the Roman world would catch the imagination of many in North Africa, but Ibn Khaldūn would be forced to chastise his fellow Maghrebis for their ignorance. For the ancient city to be remembered accurately depended upon preserving rites, *habitus*, and knowledge. To a degree, ancient urban *habitus* and rites that proved resilient beyond antiquity preserved local versions of memories of the ancient city, but historical knowledge and access to the languages needed to be available to continue and interpret these memories. Here we can see the significance of the Carolingian Renaissance in preserving and circulating classical texts.[25]

But for that to happen depended upon a second factor, which is that the Greco-Roman past had to be relevant. There had to be a reason to copy ancient texts and drill young people in increasingly foreign languages. There had to be a purpose to remembering who lifted up the walls of the crumbling buildings around which you happily lived your lives or other, more useful, histories would quickly take their place. It is tempting to turn to Pirenne here and declare that the Arab conquests marked the great divergence point in remembering the ancient city.[26] In this reading, the continuity of the Church with its emphasis on Latinity and interest in the Christian Roman past, combined with a reverence for the political legacy of Rome as the model of rule, ensured that the Roman city remained accessible. This is opposed to the Islamic world, which had its own language of religion and government and a history of the community of the faithful in which Rome was either irrelevant or the enemy.

Such a binary comparison offers some useful possibilities. It highlights the importance of the late antique Christian Roman city. Forgotten or disregarded as a poor mockery of the true classical city for much of modernity, the post-Constantinian period loomed large in the urban memories of medieval Europe. Its architecture of basilicas offered a physical model even as its Christian emperors and writers offered moral examples and intellectual resources. As a result, this volume contains a number of chapters such as those by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill and Thomas Langley that tackle the late antique city directly, while other contributors, such as Javier Martínez Jiménez, consider its legacy for subsequent urbanism. This line of consideration also invites us to examine alternative ancient cities to the Greco-Roman one, which could offer their own intellectual hinterlands and link to a distant past that might prove

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[25] Pohl and Wood, 'Cultural memory and the resources of the past'.
[26] Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne*; Effros, 'The enduring attraction of the Pirenne thesis', 188–194.

more useful. Edward Zychowicz-Coghill addresses this subject in his chapter as he considers the parallel importance of the ancient Iranian city in the Islamic world.

These are fruitful avenues to explore. But as a group our contributors would reject any false dualism between a Christian European world that faithfully remembered the Greco-Roman city and an Arabic Islamic world that forgot its classical past. The ancient city was remembered as it was needed, intertwined with other memories and reimagined to be of use to those who came after it. Biblical villains and Greek aetiological narrative strengthen each other in the Carolingian narratives discussed by Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, while Hannibal makes common cause with Solomon in the histories addressed by Amira Bennison. The result is not confusion, but rather a profusion of narratives tailored to the purposes of those who told them. That the ancient city lived and mattered can be attested by the manner in which it was remembered.

The resilience of the ancient city

In the popular imagination, the Roman city is fundamentally remembered by its buildings. Elegant columns raise up dignified temples next to rowdy baths fed by mighty aqueducts, while their more bloodthirsty neighbours cheer the gladiators in the circus. These elements have been subsequently employed by modern artists and writers, being present in both *The Course of Empire* cycle of 1833–1836, in which the American painter Thomas Cole sought to depict what he saw as the universal rhythms of the rise and fall of civilisation by depicting a decidedly classical city, to the highly successful young-adult novels and subsequent film adaptations of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*, where the oppressive urban regime of Panem (*et circenses*) is clad in Roman aesthetics.[27] Classicists of the last few generations have sought to add more colour to the gleaming white marble of this vision of the ancient city, but the enduring memory of the Roman world for the public remains enduringly monochrome.[28] The physical fabric of this Roman city, replicated in monumental scale across the empire in the first and second centuries AD, is also of great importance to scholars in defining a specific type of urban experience.[29] The decay or demolition of structures such as aqueducts, baths and theatres is employed as a measure for determining the end of not just of a type of city, but of the Roman world as a whole.[30]

In defence of this approach, the erection of these monumental buildings demanded a huge expenditure in time, resources and labour, as did their subsequent upkeep. They thus offer powerful testimony to the priorities of both wealthy elites and city governments in the period. The facilities and amenities they provided changed the

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[27] Miller, 'Thomas Cole and Jacksonian America'; Collins, *The Hunger Games*; Makins, '"Written in a language called Latin about a place called Rome"'; Makins, 'Refiguring the Roman Empire'.

[28] Bradley, 'The importance of colour', 427–457.

[29] Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*.

[30] Liebeschuetz, 'The end of the ancient city,' 1–49; Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City*; Underwood, *(Re)using Ruins*.

lifestyles of the inhabitants of the city, but they were also part of the way that cities in the period were identified and distinguished from other forms of settlement. Pausanias' celebrated doubts in the second century AD about whether or not Panopeus in Phocis could truly claim to be a city centred on precisely this physical infrastructure, over whether:

> one can give the name of city ['πόλιν'] to those who possess no government offices ['ἀρχεῖα'], no gymnasium, no theatre, no public square ['ἀγορὰν'], no water descending to a fountain, but live in bare shelters just like mountain cabins, right on a ravine.[31]

Yet this passage also offers a hint at the importance of other factors in the definition of the city. The entity that Pausanias considers bestowing the name of city upon is not a place, but a group of people (who no doubt had their own opinions about Pausanias' qualifications for deciding whether or not they got to be a city).

This was not to say that the physical landscape of the city was meaningless, but rather that its significance came from its relationship to the people of the city. The buildings offered a service to the city, helping it to live its best life, but they were also the spirit of the city made manifest in stone and timber. Pausanias could know the people of Panopeus by the rudeness of their houses. The construction of a monumental temple told watchers both temporal and supernatural that the city was willing to mobilise its community's labour for a generation in order to express its piety and reverence for its past.[32] Augustus' rebuilding of Rome provided amenities for the citizens and provided good public relations for his regime, but also communicated the nature of the city and the greatness that had won it an empire.[33] These were structures raised not just for the present but also for the future, to provide the physical evidence for the peculiar spirit of an urban community to be used for the construction of later memory, which would inspire emulation.

The monumental buildings mattered, but as an extension of a civic community, subject to its needs, expectations and desires.[34] The raising and lowering of these structures, while worthy of notice, did not necessarily signify change in the way the city thought about itself or a rejection of its history and its identity. Any analysis of the ancient city and when it ended that depends entirely on its physical landscape misses something essential because the ancient city was never defined purely by its buildings. Whether the inhabitants thought of themselves as part of the ancient city matters precisely because that was one of the most important ways the city was identified in the classical past. This is why all the best arguments for a rapid collapse of the Greco-Roman city have examined the human element in the city, whether it is Liebeschuetz's analysis of the decline of *curiales* or the brilliant volume assembled

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[31] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.4.1.
[32] Woolf, *The Life and Death of Ancient Cities*, 216–217.
[33] Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 29.
[34] Smith, 'Form and meaning in the earliest cities', 25.

by Brogiolo and Ward-Perkins in 1999.[35] Many of the contributors to this volume challenge this literature, either because they disagree on points such as the decline of the *curiales*, or because they view the late antique city as a category of Roman city linked to those that came before it. Nonetheless, they have to engage with them precisely because they take the ideas of the city seriously.

This volume takes a different approach, arguing that change in the ancient city was not a sign of its death, but rather of its life. Much like Tancredi in Lampedusa's *The Leopard*, many of the inhabitants of the ancient city were well aware that to remain static was to court oblivion and that change could be the only way to maintain the values that they believed defined their community. This observation of the potential preservative or restorative properties of carefully managed destruction, inspired by resilience theory, is a key theme for many of the contributions to this volume. In all of these cases, the physical fabric of the city was altered precisely to maintain or resurrect a defining virtue associated with the ancient city. Memory was essential to this process, because it provided the inhabitants of the city with a sense of connection to their past even as they altered the physical landscape beyond recognition. Taking this approach offers a means to get past the somewhat stale debate about the end of the ancient city, by asking what the inhabitants of those cities thought was happening, and the extent to which the gradual disappearance of the physical structures associated with a particular sort of Roman city necessarily meant the end of the civic community with it.[36] Rather than pitting decline against transformation, we can instead employ new lenses to think about changes to the ancient city.

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill demonstrates the potential use of resilience theory in the second chapter of this book for re-examining the ancient city. He considers how the cities of early sixth-century Italy adapted to a new political environment under the rule of a Gothic dynasty. As he shows, Cassiodorus repeatedly ordered or praised the dismantling of ancient buildings not because the regime of Theoderic wanted to forget the ancient city, but precisely because they wanted to remember it. In order to preserve the civic communities of Italy it was necessary to repair their crumbling infrastructures, something most easily achieved by repurposing marble and other building stones from elsewhere. This destruction led to creation, the formation of a new embodiment of all the virtues of the ancient city at Ravenna. For Cassiodorus, the defining idea of the civic community was *civilitas*, the virtue that differentiated humans from animals by making them a sociable being that lived by laws and justice. As Wallace-Hadrill indicates, Cassiodorus may well have been aware that he lived in 'modern' times, sensing a chronological distance between the Classical ideal he had been brought up in and the actual civic and urban contexts of his own time, but he was determined that the civic virtues of the past would not be forgotten, even if they required that the city undergo considerable adaptation.

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[35] Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*; Brogiolo and Ward-Perkins, *The Idea and Ideal of the Town*.

[36] Humphries, 'Cities and the meanings of Late Antiquity', 5–16.

Another benefit of this engagement with the memory of the city is that it makes it easier to embrace multiple different ancient cities. If the ancient city could retain a sense of its own identity despite a changing urban landscape, then it becomes possible to consider many more types of Greco-Roman city beyond those with the strict armature desired by observers such as Pausanias. A prime example is the late antique Roman city. For much of medieval Europe, the Roman city was that of the third and fourth centuries, its heroes the early Christian martyrs and bishops who represented and protected the citizens of the city long after their deaths, its defining landscape the cemeteries, churches and basilicas where the people of the city gathered for worship as a community.[37] As Fustel de Coulanges suggested, the city as a community defined by its shared participation in cult, mediated by the specific remembered civic history, was not an entirely alien concept for older forms of the Roman city.[38]

Our understanding of the way these civic communities were perceived is fundamentally shaped by the sources available. In the *Variae*, Cassiodorus is at his most classicising, the good Roman official in the service of a good Roman state. His retirement in his monastery at Vivarium suggests a very different interpretation of Cassiodorus. If not for the survival of the *Variae* it would be very easy to view him as a much more stereotypically 'medieval' figure. Likewise, Thomas Langley's examination of the *Liber Pontificalis* and its portrayal of papal building programmes suggests that their work in repairing the urban infrastructure was presented in terms that were at odds with the classical tradition even when they were apparently similar. Langley demonstrates that this was an unusual perspective in the wider context of other Italian cities, particularly when compared to similar texts in Ravenna. This indicates the importance of understanding depictions of the city within their broader setting, but also that there were times when strategically forgetting the ancient city was a desirable rhetorical strategy.

It is precisely such forgotten ancient cities that Louise Blanke and Alan Walmsley address in the third chapter of the book through the application of resilience theory. Rebelling against past narratives that have positioned the late antique period as an age of urban collapse and despair in the east Mediterranean, they offer a clarion call for a new way of writing history drawing upon resilience theory. Using the cities of Baysān/Scythopolis, Fiḥl/Pella and Jarash/Gerasa as case studies, they reread the physical record of these sites to show a series of communities that responded to repeated crises caused by invasion, disease and earthquakes by adapting, retrenching and persevering.

In doing so, they remind us of the ancient cities forgotten by modern scholarship for being inconvenient to European concepts of what it meant to be Roman, employing 'the cities of stone' to challenge the erasure of the late antique city. In all three communities, memory of the past city was deployed differently in response to the crisis. Jarash shows the clearest emphasis on preserving the past. At Baysān and Fiḥl,

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[37] Humphries, 'Cities and the meanings of Late Antiquity', 24–28.
[38] Momigliano, 'The ancient city of Fustel de Coulanges', 325–343.

new types of settlement developed, but ones which rested within the former cities. Resilience theory allows these pasts to be addressed. Blanke and Walmsley present a new vision of how cities and communities can survive, one that is applicable to the modern world. In this way the memory of the ancient city plays a role in the resilience of current societies.

Javier Martínez Jiménez applies a similar lens of resilience theory while demonstrating the importance of remembering the ancient past for the inhabitants of the medieval cities of southern France. In his chapter, Martínez Jiménez explores the replacement of the late antique churches of these cities with new Romanesque cathedrals in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Despite our understanding that this dismantling constituted a break with the ancient city, this church building was part of the way the citizens reaffirmed their connection to their forebears by celebrating the first bishops of their communities. Their city was defined by its shared love of God, a virtue they associated with their Roman past that could be best preserved and celebrated by remodelling the last remaining elements of the urban fabric from that past. Far from forgetting the ancient city, these Romanesque cathedrals were part of its remembering.

The concept of the ancient city as the ideas and virtues that animated its community was also of significance to those who sought to return to it in the modern period. Sofia Greaves explores the ways in which urban reformers in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Naples attempted to restore their idealised understanding of the Roman past, defined in their minds by its rationality as manifested by its hygiene. New buildings were required to retrieve this ancient spirit that lay in their memories. While few were as radical as Marino Turchi, who advised affecting the rebirth of the city by copying the example of Nero and torching it, the quest to restore the virtues of the Roman past necessitated a complete overhaul of the urban fabric of the city, one that would return Naples to its true glory with sewers and aqueducts.

It was revulsion at the physical casualties of this sort of dramatic remodelling of the ancient city in order to save it that motivated Giovanni Piccinato to seek another way of interacting with the urban past. In the last chapter of this book, Suna Çağaptay shows how Piccinato applied the lessons he had learned from interactions with the Roman city in Italy to the redevelopment of Ottoman Bursa after the fire of 1958. Of particular importance to him in preserving Bursa's memory were the spaces between the monumental structures. He sought to refashion the city in a way that was ready for the needs of the future, while true to all the layers of its past. Çağaptay's work on this decidedly unclassical city thereby offers a useful point of comparison to developments elsewhere in the Mediterranean, where the desire to restore the ancient city has come at the expense of other layers of the urban past. In doing so, she illuminates the tensions involved in attempting to preserve the classical city by destroying it.

Together, these chapters point to the importance of the memory of the ancient city as a community identified by its shared values connected through an ancestral link to the place in which it lives. The ancient city validates, legitimises and defines

because it explains the present with the gravitas and malleability of the past. As these contributors show from their variation, this was not a fixed concept, with the nature of the defining virtue shifting from justice to faith to rationality, with many other interpretations available. For all of these perspectives, the urban fabric was a tool to achieve the preservation or restoration of the memory of the ancient city. The destruction or alteration of the physical city was not always an act of forgetting and could be a statement of memory.

Tales of the city

An integral part of becoming a classical city was adopting a shared past that placed the urban community within a wider cultural history. This involved changes to the reckoning of time. An ancient city might not participate in the Olympics, but it could count its years and fix its chronology by them.[39] But it also required positioning the city within the recognised history of the Greek world. Panopeus' status as a city may have been dubious when measured on the basis of its buildings, but Pausanias did observe that in addition to sending 'delegates to the Phocian assembly', the place could claim a deeper heritage.[40] Panopeus lacked grand monuments, but it possessed a connection to Prometheus in the form of two large stones which 'smell very like the skin of a man. They say that these are remains of the clay out of which the whole race of mankind was fashioned by Prometheus'.[41] While pungent clay was not the most obvious or fragrant item to build a community's claim to significance on, this tie to humanity's deepest origins gave it a place in the deeper Greek understanding of the past.

Participation in the memory of these particular historic events played an enormous part in a city's identification as part of the Greek world. Of these, the most revered was probably the Trojan War. Panopeus' case for city status was reinforced by its mention in the *Iliad*, as Schedius, king of the Phocians, who 'dwelt in a house in famous Panopeus', was slain by Hector in the battle for the body of Patroclus.[42] Pausanias undermines this point by speculating that Schedius might have feared the Boeotians and used Panopeus as a fortress to protect himself against them.[43] Nonetheless, an appearance in the works of Homer was an important statement of legitimacy. The efforts made by Virgil and other Roman writers to link their city and their struggle with their defining opponent, Carthage, to the fall of Troy, speak to the value of being able to claim such a connection.[44] Less legendary conflicts could be used to similar effect. Just as Rome sought to place its wars with Carthage as part of the legacy of Troy, so too did Syracuse seek to connect its battle with Carthage to the Persian

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[39] See for example the efforts of Quintus Fabius Pictor, Beck and Walter, *Die frühen römischen Historiker*, 92.

[40] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.4.1.

[41] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.4.4.

[42] Homer, *Iliad*, 17.1307.

[43] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.4.2.

[44] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*; Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar*, 82–84, 98; Dillery, 'Roman historians and the Greeks', 77–107.

wars that took place at the same time, as the western half of a grand struggle for the survival of Greek civilisation.[45]

As Virgil understood, being able to place the founding of a city within a reputable history as the offspring of a celebrated parent (albeit in his case one that was opposed to the Greeks), was a key part of joining the club of civilised cities.[46] Mercantile trading settlements in the western Mediterranean rebranded as Greek colonies in the sixth century BC.[47] In doing so, they became the descendants of communities in the Greek homelands.[48] These largely fictive kinships could have very real political and economic consequences. Being founded by a heroic figure was also a way in which cities became part of this world. Hercules was a common ancestor for settlements across the Mediterranean. In later centuries Alexander and Augustus would offer a similar service for cities stretching from Afghanistan to Spain.[49] Essential to this process was the active remembering of a particular understanding of the city's past and its relation to a wider Greek and later Roman history. In this way the past became a resource to be discovered and exploited. Resilience theory suggests that such resources may be abandoned when a change in circumstances makes them no longer useful, but that they may then be returned to in a different way at a later point, an insight that many of the contributors to this volume engage with.

The arrival of a new universal model of the city could have a major impact on pre-existing urban settlements.[50] In her chapter in this volume, Marlena Whiting explores the manner in which Greco-Roman civic cult interacted with the pre-existing sacral landscape of Nabataean Petra. Local gods were matched to those familiar to the classical pantheon, while a new set of temples were erected in the city centre, away from the traditional sites of worship. Whiting demonstrates that there were multiple traditions of the city in the ancient Mediterranean apart from the Greco-Roman, the memory of many of which proved surprisingly durable in the face of the political and cultural power of the classical city. Elizabeth Key Fowden adds to the polyphony in her account of the Olympeion precinct in Athens by undermining the unity of the concept of the 'Greco-Roman' city and how such an idea is perceived or fabricated during the early Modern period. As her analysis of Pausanias shows, the many layers of Greek and Roman urbanism frequently rested uncomfortably against each other. Pausanias' efforts to downplay Hadrian's building programme speak to the conflicts within the concept of the ancient city. To these varieties of ancient city can be added the late antique city, a much-debated entity organised around a new religion and architecture and with changes in its elite management that was nonetheless entirely Roman in its self-understanding. The way in which these very different sorts of Roman cities could

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[45] Asheri, 'The art of synchronization in Greek historiography', 52–89; Harrison, 'Sicily in the Athenian imagination', 84–96; Harrell, 'Synchronicity', 119–134; Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar*, 44–59.

[46] Horsfall, 'Aeneas the colonist', 8–27.

[47] Woolf, *The Life and Death of Ancient Cities*, 213–222.

[48] Malkin, *Myth and Territory*.

[49] Millar, 'Empire and city, Augustus to Julian', 76–96.

[50] Fentress, *Romanization and the City*.

be remembered as a singular ancient city are suggested by the writings of Frechulf of Lisieux, discussed by Sam Ottewill-Soulsby. From his ninth-century vantage point, the cities of Virgil, Josephus and Boethius coalesced into a unified urban past.

Frechulf's problem was to integrate a pagan classical memory of the city with a biblical one. The rise of new faiths and powers brought with them new pasts. Already in the Hellenistic era, Greeks, Jews, Egyptians and Babylonians had debated how their widely divergent deep chronologies could be reconciled or decided between.[51] As Christianity increased in power and influence across the fourth-century Roman Mediterranean, a new geography and history emerged. Palestine and other places associated with the Biblical past developed a far greater significance.[52] Other cities, including the mightiest and most celebrated Rome, acquired a new Christian past and landscape, one of martyrs and bishops and churches. Not the least of the cities affected was Petra, as Whiting shows, which became integrated into the topography of divine history as part of the Exodus narrative. The result was a complicated and contested process of integration into the new memorial priorities of the fourth century.

A similar process accompanied the spread of Islam, starting in the seventh century. While there was considerable continuity, this new Islamic world brought new cities, particularly in north Africa, and new layouts, as existing settlements shifted to reflect the economic and social power of Muslim Arab settlers and the amenities they needed.[53] New antiquities, flavoured by Qurʾānic interpretation, Arabic poetry and legend and Persian history and mythology, rose to prominence as the interpretative framework by which the past city could be understood. Fowden guides us through the subtleties of this process, showing how the temple completed by Hadrian in honour of Zeus became the Persianate palace of Solomon raised by jinn, in a manner reminiscent of Great Zimbabwe. These varying elements brought by the expansion of knowledge associated with the Islamic world were by no means without their inner tensions. Edward Zychowicz-Coghill provides a vital perspective to this diversity of approach in his analysis of the embrace of pre-Islamic Sasanian ideas of the city by Persian Muslim writers such as Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī. In doing so he offers a comparison to the challenges faced by those wrestling with the Greco-Roman city.

The rise of these new pasts frayed the connections between the cities of the Mediterranean and the Greco-Roman world, which was entirely forgotten in some places, and preserved as an echo in others. Here the remains of Roman urbanism were most likely to become 'cities of stone'. Nonetheless, both the physical remains and the ideas of the ancient city represented a challenge to those who came after them. As Amira K. Bennison observes in this volume, the ruins of the ancient city in North Africa demanded explanation from the region's inhabitants and scholars in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These were survivals of a civilisation divorced from the present, and potentially a moral warning. The remnants of the Christian late

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[51] Dillery, *Clio's Other Sons.*
[52] Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage.*
[53] Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 54–80.

antique period also represented a conquered past whose defeat was a central part of the story of Islamic north Africa. Despite this distance, the power of the ancient city continued to fascinate. The texts Bennison examines draw upon the many pasts available to learned Muslims of the period, including biblical narratives and Arabic folklore, to which Roman accounts such as those of Tacitus and Orosius were part of a wider range of ingredients. These histories were added to scientific observations and measurements of the wondrous structures still standing.

Not all Muslim writers discussed the physical landscape of the ancient city from such a distance. Elizabeth Key Fowden introduces us to Mahmud Efendi and his approach to the remains of the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens. He was a native son of Athens and his history of the 'City of Sages' fused an Islamic past with a Greek one, in which Hadrian builds a palace in a city founded by Adam and Cecrops. These figures were a vital part of the history of the urban community to which he belonged. Similarly, Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī felt a deep connection to the ancient ruined cities of Iran, seeing in their remains a civilised Iranian past that he was the heir to which had been destroyed by outside tyrants, most notably Alexander. The stone fragments of the ancient city became part of the story of the current city. For Ḥamza and Mahmud they were earlier stages of their history, whereas for the writers of north Africa, they were the previous world that their own had to defeat in order to begin.

It was not just the physical remains of the ancient city that could be troublesome for those who came after. Classical ideas of the city also potentially posed difficulties for those who came after it. Greco-Roman culture possessed great authority over large swathes of the medieval world. A case in point is the Carolingian empire as discussed by Sam Ottewill-Soulsby in this volume. The Carolingians promoted a grand revival of classical texts and Latin culture. The descriptions of cities in some of these writings meshed uncomfortably with the Christian knowledges that dominated intellectual thought. But these contrasts could also be an opportunity for scholars. Ottewill-Soulsby shows how Frechulf of Lisieux brought together Greco-Roman and the biblical concepts of the first city into a coherent narrative. In doing so, he used the former to strengthen and deepen his understanding of the city as a corrupting influence, a loss of innocence that shaped the subsequent course of human history. While it would have been much easier for Frechulf to have ignored these divergent voices, the ancient city mattered to him enough that he had to incorporate it into his vision of what it meant to be human in a fallen world.

Frechulf was the subject of Carolingian monarchs who saw themselves as the heirs to the pagan emperors of Rome. A century later, Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī wrote for Būyid patrons who fashioned themselves on the model of pre-Islamic Persian monarchy. Like Frechulf, Ḥamza wrote a universal history by bringing divergent accounts into alignment, in his case, the traditions of Persia and the Arabs. In particular, he drew upon the potentially difficult materials of the Zoroastrian Avesta scripture. In doing so, he succeeded in fashioning a universal aetiological narrative of Iranian culture driven by Persian monarchs which could dovetail with an Islamic history

of the world. His cities were the beneficial gifts of wise monarchs that served the development of human civilisation, unlike those Frechulf, which were the tools of greedy tyrants intended to oppress their fellows in pursuit of luxury. For both, the ancient city was an essential means of understanding the development of human society.

The same tools of wide learning, synthesis and omission that served Frechulf and Ḥamza in their placing of the ancient city in the universal course of history were also employed by Mahmud Efendi in his local history of Athens. All three lived in intellectual contexts where multiple traditions of knowledge possessed authority, but they also showed an unusual openness to working with the contradictory accounts they found of the city. In doing so, they made a conscious decision to attempt to find the truth of the past by wrestling with difficult sources because understanding the ancient city mattered to all of them. It was memories of the ancient city preserved in texts like these that ensured that the Greco-Roman city would continue to survive as a historical concept that could be accessed by later scholars.

As Whiting suggests, the arrival of Greco-Roman ideas of what a civic community should be sometimes had disruptive effects on the pre-existing city. Fowden indicates that this was not a phenomenon confined to the ancient world as she discusses the reactions of Western Europeans to worship at the *musalla* established in the Olympeion precinct in Athens. Their expectations whetted by their education in the classics, nineteenth-century visitors were often disconcerted by this apparently profoundly un-Greek activity, which was frequently erased in their depictions of Athens. Fowden nonetheless places prayers for rain at the *musalla* within a long tradition of water-related worship, stretching back to the temple of Zeus itself. This discussion of long patterns of religious activity in an area just outside an ancient city which adapted to multiple different layers of faith and practice resembles Whiting's analysis of Jabal Harun outside Petra. Ancient cities were defined by their ideas and some of them proved surprisingly resilient in the face of external change.

As these chapters indicate, although all ancient cities developed in their own geographical and historical context, they were also interpreted in the light of more general concepts of what cities were, fixed within a specific history of the development of urbanism. The Greco-Roman city was one such history, applied both in antiquity and then in modernity, but the imperial faiths of late antiquity, such as Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Islam, would create their own. These models existed in conversation with what went on before, sometimes in dialogue, sometimes drowning them out. Old layers could be entirely effaced or restored. The results were very rarely uniform, with a complex and partially digested mixture being more the rule than elegant stratigraphy. The contributors to this volume have taken all these memories of the ancient city seriously, no matter how poorly they may fit modern understandings of it. If nothing else, they testify to the continuing impact and resilience of the ancient city for those who came after.

Cities of stone

This interest in the memory of the ancient city in the post-Roman world sometimes takes us to very strange places. We shall wander through curious lands that seem designed to mock the cities we know. The ancient city as recalled by those who came after could be downright risible. In this category we can include the *Libro Fiesolano*, a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century history of Florence which sought to develop an alternative Roman past for the city. According to the chronicle, the city of Fiesole, from which the Florentines were descended, was ruled by Catilina and his plausibly named son, Hubert Caesar, 'and so it happened that this Hubert Caesar took a Fiesolan wife and had sixteen children, who multiplied greatly in their realm, as it pleased God'.[54] To modern eyes such a story is almost charmingly ludicrous. This attempt to interweave a late medieval Italian city into Roman history, making the inhabitants literal descendants of a famous if poorly understood Republican figure, stands out for its clumsiness among many other similar chronicles of the past.

This illustrates the point that the people discussed remembered the Greco-Roman city from different distances. Sometimes this was a matter of geography. Frechulf of Lisieux and Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī spent most of their lives at a remove from the Mediterranean. Although both encountered the physical fabric of the Greco-Roman past, it remained something of an abstraction to them, a set of ideas for the former, a rival to the Iranian past for the latter. Chronology also had an impact. Cassiodorus was born at a time when the last flowering of the Western Roman Empire was still very much in living memory. This was not the case for the other contributions to this volume, with consequences for how visible the institutions and buildings of the ancient city were. The amount of chronological distance does not straightforwardly equate to knowledge about the ancient city. Modernity saw the rise of a more historically accurate view of the Greco-Roman past, albeit one shaped by happy accidents such as the discovery of Pompeii.[55] But the passing of the years encouraged those interested in the ancient city to think in terms of restoring it or reviving it rather than continuing it. As in the case of the nineteenth-century visitors to Athens, it could mean that observers fluent in the classics could fail to see a very real living, resilient city stood in front of them because their vision was obscured by the ruins of the past.

The variable distance is important when we think about remembering the ancient city. But the accuracy of the post-Roman world's ideas of the ancient city are entirely orthogonal to the concerns of this volume. Rather, the contributors explore that world's relationship to the ancient city on their own terms. We intend to travel to the strange ancient cities remembered by our subjects. Some of the people in this book attempted to understand the ancient city with the resources and perspectives available to them. Others sought to preserve and continue it by repairing and replacing the buildings. Still others endeavoured to restore the ancient city by rearranging or

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[54] Beneš, *Urban Legends*, 25.
[55] For a fascinating series of case studies on the complicated reception of the site of Pompeii, see Hales and Paul, *Pompeii in the Public Imagination.*

demolishing it. Yet the ancient city remained something to be remembered, valued and imagined for all of these people, allowing it to survive as more than houses of stone raised by jinn.

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Resilience and memory

Chapter 2

The cities of Cassiodorus: The resilience of urban values

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

City life and resilience theory

Among the letters written by Cassiodorus as Praetorian Prefect to Theoderic's successor, Athalaric, is one (8.31) addressed to the province of Bruttium, from which Cassiodorus himself came (Scyllaceum, Squillace in modern Calabria which was then part of Bruttium). The king writes with distress to the inhabitants of the region, who are abandoning city living, to urge them to return to the joys of urbanity.[1] As often, Cassiodorus reaches for an image from natural history. Birds of gentle disposition, thrushes, storks and doves, love to flock together, while the rapacious hawk seeks solitude. To shun human society is to become suspect. Farmers, *coloni*, naturally live on the land they cultivate, but *curiales* who enjoy civic honours as members of the city council ought to live in cities. What is not to enjoy about living in cities, he urges:

> Who wouldn't enjoy meeting nobles? Who wouldn't enjoy chatting with their peers? Visiting the forum, practising honest arts, pursuing their own affairs through the courts, occasionally playing board games, going to the baths with their friends, giving dinner parties with lavish reciprocity?[2]

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[1] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, 8.31 (7): 'redeant igitur civitates in pristinum decus: nullus amoenitatem ruris praeponat moenibus antiquorum' (Therefore let the cities return to their original fine form: nobody should prefer the pleasantness of the countryside to the walls of the ancients).

[2] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, 8.31 (9): 'cui enim minus grata nobilium videatur occursio? cui non affectuosum sit cum paribus miscere sermonem, forum petere, honestas artes invisere, causas proprias legibus expedire, interdum Palamediacis calculis occupari, ad balneas ire cum socii, prandia mutuis apparatibus exhibere?'

As Claude Lepelley showed, this letter is open to two opposite readings.[3] You could use this letter as evidence of the breakdown of the classical city. The rich landowners are shunning their urban responsibilities and hunkering down in the countryside in their villas. That is of course part of the picture of the decline of the ancient city that historians like Wolf Liebeschuetz offer us.[4] But equally striking is the survival of an ideal of urbanism, and the willingness of a Gothic king, albeit with heavy prompting from his spokesman, to support it. And though this ideal is directed in particular at the members of the local elite, the urban pleasures he evokes stretch beyond the elite: board games, *Palamediaci ludi*, were a popular pursuit, as the numerous examples cut into paving in late antiquity attest.[5] Yet is this any more than a nostalgic echo of a long-lost past?

Throughout his letters, repeatedly and insistently, Cassiodorus as the mouthpiece of the Gothic regime presses the cause of urbanism, the repair of urban fabric, the maintenance of urban institutions and values, the patriotic duties of the citizen, *civis*, and the ideal which Cassiodorus deserves more credit for entirely reformulating, of *civilitas*.[6] I will look at these ideals in more detail in this paper, but I should first like to do so in the context of a theoretical framework, that of resilience.[7] The potential of the ecological theory of resilience for understanding the city in late antiquity has been explored by Alan Walmsley and is explored in greater detail by him in this volume.[8] The essential difference from theories of decline and fall and of collapse is that it envisages repeating cycles of adaptation to changing environmental conditions. Rather than envisaging a bell curve in which a system grows and flourishes, then enters a state of crisis, declines and collapses, it foresees a loop-shaped cycle between growth, consolidation, crisis ('release') and reorganisation. The system will not simply return to its original state but will draw on memories of the past to combine with adaptive responses to the changed environment. The outcome is not 'transformation', ushering in a system fundamentally different from what went before, but adaptation containing many elements of the previous system.

In the case of the city of late antiquity, it is clear that there is neither total collapse nor transformation into a fundamentally different system. It is precisely this process of adaptive change that Cassiodorus illustrates so well. One characteristic feature of the civic system of late antiquity is the residence within the urban centre of the landowning elite, required by law to offer their services to the city as *curiales.* Their

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[3] Lepelley, 'Un éloge nostalgique'. This letter is also the starting point for a thorough discussion of cities in Cassiodorus, together with texts, commentary and French translation, by Valérie Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 30–33; see also in brief, Fauvinet-Ranson, 'Les valeurs idéologiques'. See further Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 124–126; La Rocca, '*Mores tuos*'; Marazzi, 'Ostrogothic cities', 108–109.

[4] Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall*, 7, 95–96, 378 etc., cf. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, vol. 1, 762.

[5] See Purcell, 'Literate games'.

[6] Cf. Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 30–44.

[7] For the use of resilience theory in the study of Roman cities, see Walmsley, *Early Islamic Syria*; Alston, 'Urban transformation'; Sinclair *et al.*, *Urban Mind*, 12.

[8] See below; the essential discussion is Redman, 'Resilience theory in archaeology'.

abandonment of the city centre would point to a system under stress; the intervention of the Gothic regime through Cassiodorus indicates a phase of reorganisation and recovery.

As we will see below, one of the dominant themes of Cassiodorus' official correspondence is the attempt to conserve and restore the urban fabric and to bolster traditional civic values, including the central role of the local ruling class. In ecological terms, the change to environmental conditions that might trigger crisis is precisely the massive presence in Italy of the Gothic military: under the deal struck at the beginning of the regime, one third of the landed property of Italy passed into their hands, and however this was organised, it is clear that it must have had a major negative impact on the old landowning elites. Added to that, there were Gothic officials in every city, and pressure from Goths to appropriate neighbouring properties, sometimes by violence. That the old civic system will have been under stress is obvious. Yet at the same time the Gothic regime wanted compromise, which is what we see at work in the letters, and in particular the spirit of compromise was embodied in in new formulation of the old ideal of *civilitas*, one that now extended from the treatment of citizen by citizen to relations between Roman citizens and Goths.

Not the least interesting feature of Cassiodorus' *Variae* is that, at a moment when the city is evidently under major stress, he identifies explicitly what both the physical realities and the ideals comprise. What I want to do is to think about the city not just as a phenomenon in the landscape or as an architectural blueprint, but as a complex set of ideas about human society, relationships and values. Cassiodorus is an eloquent spokesman of a set of ideas that is doubtless seen by the players to be under threat, but which in its articulation could serve a vital function, that of transmission of social memory.

Cassiodorus' *Variae*

Cassiodorus long suffered a degree of neglect, not least thanks to Mommsen's scathing treatment of him in his still definitive edition, but also to the lack of translations and commentaries.[9] Thomas Hodgkin, author of the eight-volume Victorian classic, *Italy and her Invaders*, produced in 1886 a useful volume on the *Variae* that was half-way between translation and summary.[10] Since 1992, English readers have been grateful for Sam Barnish's translation, and regretful that it represents only a small selection of the *Variae*.[11] But the last decade has seen a transformation of our knowledge. Pride of place must go to the six-volume commentary and translation into Italian produced by a group led by Andrea Giardina,[12] himself the author of important essays on the author;[13] at the time of writing, the first volume with introduction is still impatiently

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[9] MGH AA 12. Note the critique of Mommsen's negative influence in Pergoli Campanelli, *Cassiodoro*.
[10] Hodgkin, *The letters of Cassiodorus*.
[11] Barnish, *Selected Variae*.
[12] Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie*; of the six volumes, the first and last were yet to appear at time of writing.
[13] Some reprinted in Giardina, *Cassiodoro politico*.

awaited. More recently, we owe a translation into English of the complete collection of Cassiodorus' letters to Shane Bjornlie.[14] And there are other projects under way.[15] This is a good moment at which to review just what we can learn from the *Variae* about the cities of Ostrogothic Italy.[16]

Cassiodorus is a privileged witness in that he combined, on the one hand, membership of the Roman imperial elite, and familiarity with its literary values and legal systems with, on the other hand, some three decades of service to the Gothic regime of Theoderic (491–526) and his successors Athalaric (526–534), Theodahad (534–536) and Witigis (536–540). He held a succession of high administrative roles, appointed *quaestor sacri Palatii* in 507 while his father was Praetorian Prefect, then *Magister Officiorum* from 523, and finally himself Praetorian Prefect from 533. But while unquestionably well-informed, he must fall under suspicion as one only too skilled in deploying his rhetorical skills in service of convenient appearances. Clearly, as spokesman for the Gothic kings, he had every interest in representing their government in the most positive light: that, after all, was his role. But in editing a selection of these letters for publication, he falls under suspicion of giving a further spin, in producing a retrospective apology for the Gothic regime and the role of 'collaborators' like himself in supporting it. The suspicion is the greater in view of his presentation of relations with both Boethius and Symmachus, the most conspicuous victims of Theoderic's final years, as positive.[17] Bjornlie has argued that the *Variae* were put together and edited after the fall of Witigis and Ravenna in 540. Whereas traditionally the *Variae* have been dated before the fall of Witigis, he argues that Cassiodorus moved or was moved to Constantinople along with other members of the royal court – he was certainly there later – and the *Variae* represent a fine instantiation of the case which Procopius later puts in the mouth of Gothic ambassadors, that the Goths had faithfully preserved all the laws and traditional usages of the Romans (*de bello Gothico* 6.6.17–18).[18] Indeed, we can think of the Gothic kings as treading a tightrope between the need to keep happy their own supporters, tens of thousands of armed 'Goths', with the need to win approval from the local population, and above all the senatorial elite, with their dangerously close contacts with Constantinople.

It is a thankless task to distinguish the many levels of 'voice' we hear in the *Variae*: is this the authentic voice of the Gothic king, or what Cassiodorus as spokesman

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[14] Bjornlie, *Cassiodorus, the Variae*.

[15] Notably a digitalization project led by Mariette Horst based at Mainz.

[16] On Ostrogothic Italy in general, see Moorhead, *Theoderic in Italy*; Amory, *People and Identity*; Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration*; Arnold *et al.*, *Companion to Ostrogothic Italy*. On the cities of Italy in Cassiodorus, see Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*; Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*; Marazzi, 'Ostrogothic cities'.

[17] The legal background to this episode is discussed by Saitta, *Civilitas*, 51–61.

[18] Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition*. The suggestion that Cassiodorus was aiming his message at specific circles in the bureaucracy is less convincing, see P. Heather's review, *Early Medieval Europe* 24 (2016), 369–370. The traditional dating before 540 is defended by Pierfrancesco Porena, 'Gioco di ombre a Costantinopoli: Cassiodoro, papa Vigilio, Giustiniano' seminar 30 April 2021 in the series *Seminari Cassiodorei*.

urged on the king, or what Cassiodorus as editor felt it would have been better for the king to have said? But the nature of such letters is that the levels cannot be neatly separated stratigraphically. We should read Cassiodorus' letters fully alert to their doubly persuasive role; and both what the Gothic kings wanted people to think, and what Cassiodorus wanted people to think of them, are a constitutive part of the realities of Ostrogothic Italy.

Urban fabric

We may start with Cassiodorus' ideas about urban fabric.[19] One recurrent idea is that it is the duty of the good citizen to care about the urban fabric, its preservation and enhancement.[20] We first encounter Theoderic urging the citizens of Rome to show their love for the city by paying for building works. The king wants to be encouraged by a display of civic affection to improve the city, for nobody can love a place that he understands the inhabitants do not care for.[21] If they pay up, then his generosity will be redoubled. And this being Cassiodorus, he urges them to follow the example of nature: the very birds that wander in the sky love their nests, wandering animals love their dens and voluptuous fish return to their caverns: how much more so should its inhabitants love Rome?[22] To Cassiodorus, civic spirit is not unnatural, a social construct, but part of the order of nature.

A little later, Theoderic issues an edict to all Goths and Romans, instructing them to hand over all loose stone suitable for the repair of city walls.[23] He is probably concerned here with the walls of Rome, but it is expressed as a general principle: city construction is a worthy object of regal care, because the repair of ancient cities is a credit to the age. Hence all should join in willingly. In his anxiety to turn Ravenna into a great capital, Theoderic helped himself to building material stripped from elsewhere.[24] That a king sought to burnish his own image is no surprise, but the way Cassiodorus chose to represent it was as a common civic duty: Rome must willingly provide marble from the Domus Pinciana because it is the sign of the noblest citizen

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[19] See Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 197–227. The political importance of Theoderic's building activity is discussed by Saitta, *Civilitas*, 103–138. For a full discussion of Theoderic's buildings, La Rocca, '*Mores tuos*'; further, Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition*, 234–253; Lafferty, *Law and Society*, 206–239; Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration*, 201–230.

[20] See Pergoli Campanelli, *Cassiodoro*.

[21] *Variae*, 1.21.1: 'Provocandi sumus affectuosis civium studiis ad augmenta civitatis, quia nemo potest diligere quod habitatores intellegit non amare. unicuique patria sua carior est ...'

[22] *Variae*, 1.21.3: 'Aves ipsae per aera vagantes proprios nidos amant: erratiles ferae ad cubilia dumosa festinant: voluptuosi pisces campos liquidos transeuntes cavernas suas studiosa indagatione perquirunt cunctaque animalia ubi se norunt refugere, longissima cupiunt aetate constare. quid iam de Roma debemus dicere, quam fas est ipsis liberis plus amare?'

[23] *Variae*, 1.28: 'Digna est constructio civitatis, in qua se commendet cura regalis, quia laus est temporum reparatio urbium vetustarum.'

[24] On the reuse of material, sometimes classified as 'spolia', Dey, 'Politics, patronage'.

to seek to augment his country.[25] Similarly, the curials (*curiales*) of the unidentified city of Estuni needed to understand that sending their marble slabs to Ravenna was a higher good, for it was far better for the material to support the cause of revival than to lie around as a painful memory of past times. [26] Similarly the *curiales* of Catania are given a pat on the back for their civic devotion (*caritate civica*) in repairing city walls and given permission to use the material from the collapsed amphitheatre for repairs.[27] So much is this a matter of principle that Cassiodorus includes in his book of model standard letters permission to someone offering to take over a ruinous public property for improvement at his own cost: 'Go on', he urges, 'and let what lay in ruins through careless antiquity take on a decorous aspect, for it is the mark of a good citizen to ornament his city.'[28]

   Athalaric is only slightly less insistent than Theoderic on urban improvements. The *curiales* of Parma are sternly rebuked for failing to clean out their sewers.[29] His grandfather Theoderic has provided water by an aqueduct, but the water supply was useless unless the drains were kept clear. It is a matter of civic duty: the citizen has no spirit if he is not held by gratitude to his city. The king issues an edict to stop his Gothic officials and soldiers from seizing the property of *curiales*: the state, the *res publica*, which the king defends is not just one city, but all cities, and for each citizen, his own city is the *res publica*.[30]

   One could of course argue that Theoderic's paraded concern with maintaining urban fabric is a mere mask, a pretence of continuing a tradition from the high empire that was no longer practicable in the changed circumstances of the sixth century.[31] There may always be a gap, sometimes substantial, between what a government claims to have achieved, or wishes to achieve, and what it actually achieves. But what is interesting here is precisely the rhetoric which Theoderic and Cassiodorus thought suitable and effective. It was based on the assumption that the maintenance of urban

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[25] *Variae*, 3.10: 'nobilissimi civis est patriae suae augmenta cogitare.' Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie,* vol. II, 217–218 notes that the domus Pinciana was an imperial property.

[26] *Variae*, 3.9: 'In municipio itaque vestro sine usu iacere comperimus columnas et lapides vetustatis invidia demolitos: et quia indecore iacentia servare nil proficit, ad ornatum debent surgere redivivum quam dolorem monstrare ex memoria praecedentium saeculorum.'

[27] *Variae*, 3.49: 'Atque ideo suggestionis vestrae tenore comperto, quam caritate civica in communiendis moenibus suscepistis, absolutam huius rei vobis censemus esse licentiam ... [3] Saxa ergo, quae suggeritis de amphitheatro longa vetustate collapsa nec aliquid ornatui publico iam prodesse nisi solas turpes ruinas ostendere, licentiam vobis eorum in usus dumtaxat publicos damus, ut in murorum faciem surgat, quod non potest prodesse, si iaceat.'

[28] *Variae*, 7.44: 'age itaque ut per te decorem sumat quod neglectum incuriosa vetustate iacuerat, quatenus boni civis laudem invenire merearis, si faciem tuae civitatis ornaveris ...' See Dubouloz, 'Acception et défense des loca publica'.

[29] *Variae*, 8.30: 'quapropter tam utillimae rei omnium debet studere consensus, quia civis animum non habet, qui urbis suae gratia non tenetur.'

[30] *Variae*, 9.2: 'unicuique civi urbs sua res publica est'.

[31] See La Rocca, 'Una prudente maschera'; see the reply of Marazzi, 'Ostrogothic cities', 105–106.

fabric was a desirable end and a fundamental function of rule, an assumption borne out by centuries of imperial legislation on the theme.[32]

The citizen, then, is bound up with the fabric of the city, and Cassiodorus shows us the spectacle of a dynasty constantly attentive to the repair and enhancement of the urban fabric, especially in Rome but generally across Italy. It is remarkable on how many of the principal types of urban monument they intervene.[33] There is some priority to defensive walls: in addition to Rome and Catania, as we have seen, measures are taken to repair the walls of Arles (3.44) and of Syracuse (9.14) where Gildila the corrupt count of the city gets a rocket from Cassiodorus for raising a special tax to finance the repair of the walls and then failing to repair them. An almost equally pressing concern are aqueducts and drains. A pair of letters from Theoderic to Argolicus, the City Prefect of Rome, and to the Senate, announce the dispatch of an agent, Johannes, to sort out water problems. They must repair the splendid drains of Rome which are a wonder to all who see them, and superior to the wonders of other cities.[34] The drains of Rome are not a mere practicality of hygiene, they are the high point of Roman urbanism. The next letter turns to the aqueducts, where the problem seems to be that private landowners have illegally been tapping the public water supply to work their mills and water their vegetable plots (3.31).[35] The penalties for doing so will be fierce, as they will be for the robbing of metal, and the robbing of stone from temples and public buildings for private repairs. Later we meet an edict addressed to all landowners, though those of Ravenna are specifically mentioned, on the importance of controlling vegetation around aqueducts.[36] A little sermon follows: it is easy to remove vegetation when young, but neglected bushes turn into trees and then you need an axe. The effect of this neglect is devastating, a *civilis eversio*, as bad as the attack of battering rams in a siege. By contrast, an aqueduct in good repair provides liquid as pure as that fresh from a spring, and keeps the public baths impressive and swimming pools full of glassy water. So again, his care goes beyond the mere issue of hygiene and Cassiodorus' florid prose reminds us that

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[32] On imperial legislation protecting historical monuments see Janvier, *La legislation du Bas-Empire Romain.*

[33] Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 199–221.

[34] *Variae*, 3.30: 'proinde illustris sublimitas tua spectabilem virum Iohannem nos direxisse cognoscat propter splendidas Romanae cloacas civitatis, quae tantum visentibus conferunt stuporem, ut aliarum civitatum possint miracula superare ... quae enim urbium audeat tuis culminibus contendere, quando nec ima tua possunt similitudinem reperire?' Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie*, vol. II, 256 for the echoes of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* (36.104).

[35] Identical concerns go back to the *senatusconsultum* of 11 BC cited by Frontinus, *de Aquis*, 2.106, legislation reiterated by Constantine, *Codex Theodosianus*, 15.2.1 = *Codex Justinianeus*, 11.43.1.1.

[36] *Variae*, 5.38: 'nam quae nunc virgulta sunt, erunt, si neglegantur, et robora. ista enim quae modo facili avulsione dirimuntur, postea vix securibus icta succumbunt. atque ideo sociata debetis properatione contendere, ut praesenti diligentia futuri laboris evadatis incommoda. haec est enim civilis eversio, sine oppugnatione discidium, aries, ut ita dixerim, fabricarum.' Similar regulations go back to the *senatusconsultum* of 11 BC cited by Frontinus, *de Aquis*, 2.126, legislation reiterated by Valentinian, *Codex Theodosianus*, 15.2.2.

urban amenities are the glory of urban culture. The theme is taken up again as we have seen in Athalaric's rebukes to the citizens of Parma.

Among aqueducts, pride of place must go to Rome. It is the duties of the *Comes Formarum*, the Count of the Aqueducts, as set out in the formula (7.6). In the wonders of Rome, beauty and utility come together, and never more so that with the aqueducts. Cassiodorus can give himself the chance here of a fine purple passage on the extraordinary engineering technique of the Roman aqueduct, in which human work competes with nature in terms of durability through the centuries, while slipping in a warning on the vital importance of maintenance.[37]

Walls, water supply and drains sound like the mere basics of urbanism. But we also find Theoderic concerned with the repair of storage facilities (*horrea*): the patrician Paulinus has undertaken to repair *horrea* in disrepair through their antiquity, and the king grants him total licence to repurpose for his own private use buildings in a city in which it is right that all buildings should gleam again, lest ruins spoil the sight of the many splendours of Rome, which is praised on the lips of the whole world.[38] Similarly, Symmachus is praised at great length, and offered a financial subvention into the bargain, for his work in restoring buildings in Rome and its suburbs, and especially the theatre of Pompey. It is not enough for Rome to work: it needs to look good. One phrase in particular catches the eye: Symmachus is both a diligent imitator of antiquity and a noble institutor of the modern.[39]

This thought, and this phraseology, recurs in several guises in the *Variae*. It is not simply a matter of repairing and conserving antiquity, but of creating something new and up-to-date. The use of the word *modernus* here is quite significant.[40] If to us it might evoke a surprising modernism, that is actually in place. The word itself is not classical Latin. Cassiodorus' language is permeated with the Latin of Cicero and the younger Pliny, but every now and again he uses what we might think of as a neologism, or perhaps a late-Latinism, or even, as I rather prefer, a modernism. *Modernus* is also met in Ennodius, the bishop who wrote a panegyric of Theoderic.[41] The formation

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[37] *Variae*, 7.6: 'In formis autem Romanis utrumque praecipuum est, ut fabrica sit mirabilis et aquarum salubritas singularis. quot enim illuc flumina quasi constructis montibus perducuntur, naturales credas alveos soliditate saxorum, quando tantus impetus fluminis tot saeculis firmiter potuit sustineri. cavati montes plerumque subruunt, meatus torrentium dissipantur: et opus illud veterum non destruitur, si industria suffragante servetur.'

[38] *Variae*, 3.39: 'in ea praesertim urbe, ubi cuncta dignum est constructa relucere, ne inter tot decora moenium deformis appareat ruina saxorum. in aliis quippe civitatibus minus nitentia sustinentur: in ea vero nec mediocre aliquid patimur, quae mundi principaliter ore laudatur.'

[39] *Variae*, 4.51: 'Notum est enim, quanta laude in suburbanis suis Romam traxeris ... : antiquorum diligentissimus imitator, modernorum nobilissimus institutor.' Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition*, 170–171 suggests that the whole letter to Symmachus is a subsequent invention, containing a satirical attack on his fondness for theatres. Considering that Cassiodorus claimed to be related to Symmachus, it is unclear what he had to gain by mocking him.

[40] Cf. Moorhead, 'The word modernus'; Moorhead, *Theoderic in Italy*, 427–428; Giardina, *Cassiodoro politico*, 43–44; La Rocca, '*Mores tuos*', 12; Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie*, vol. II, 202 and 394.

[41] On the style, Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 25–28.

of the word is authentic: *modernus* from *modo*, now, just as *hodiernus* from *hodie*. But in this case, it carries a charge: there can and should be a nobility in the modern.

So, in praising Inportunus to the senate and elevating him to the patriciate, we hear that his family has decorated the modern age with antique morals.[42] Theoderic is a believer in his modern age as well as antiquity. When the *curiales* of Estuni are ordered to supply building material for Ravenna, they are told that Theoderic's intention is to construct the new, and to conserve the old ('nova construere, sed amplius vetusta servare') and to erect the modern without diminution of the previous.[43] Cassiodorus himself in drafting the formula for the appointment of the Palace Architect (7.5) enjoins on him the duty both of restoring the antique to its original glow and producing new work of similar antiquity; the antique and the modern are antithetical yet interlinked, the antique should be made new, and the new antique.[44] For this reason if for no other we might question the recent thesis of Bjornlie that Cassiodorus wrote his *Variae* as a critique of Justinian and his taste for innovation.[45] Neither Cassiodorus nor Theoderic, unless he was misrepresented, were opposed to innovation and modernism, but it had to go hand in hand with respect for and restoration of the antique. This seems to me highly relevant to the cycle of resilience: conservatism coupled with innovation is a crucial form of adaptation to changing circumstances.

Civic values

But a city cannot survive on fabric alone. It survives on an idea of urbanism, a set of institutions and a set of values.[46] And Cassiodorus as the voice of the Gothic regime is quite as keen on promoting those institutions and values as on preserving and improving fabric. At the top of his list of priorities is the ruling class of the city, the members of the *curia* or *curiales*.[47] In the modern accounts of the late antique city which represent the city as being in a long decline, a key element is the supposed decline of the curial system.[48] Under the high empire, the rich, especially landowners, are supposed to have played a positive role in urban prosperity by voluntarily offering services (*munera*) to their communities in exchange for office and curial status. From

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[42] *Variae*, 3.5: 'qui non solum ornamentum familiae suae, sed ipsi decus senatui praestitere: **modernis saeculis** moribus ornabantur antiquis.'

[43] *Variae*, 3.9: 'proinde **moderna** sine priorum imminutione desideramus erigere.'

[44] *Variae*, 7.5: 'Hinc est quod spectabilitatem tuam ab illa indictione curam palatii nostri suscipere debere censemus, **ut et antiqua in nitorem pristinum contineas et nova simili antiquitate producas**.' Pergoli Campanelli, *Cassiodoro*, 27–81 sees in this and similar passages an anticipation of modern conservation theory – overoptimistically.

[45] See Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition*, 234–240 on *novitas* as a negative concept.

[46] See Scivoletto, 'Cassiodoro e la retorica della città'.

[47] Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 41–71 for the administration of Ostrogothic cities and the role of the *curiales*; Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 38–41.

[48] The thesis goes back to Jones, *The Greek City*, 192–210, developed further in Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, 724–766, and thence forms the central thesis of Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall.*

the third century, membership of the *curia* progressively becomes both hereditary and obligatory, and there is an increasing volume of imperial legislation tightening the conditions of obligation as local elite members use imperial service and the church as excuses for evading their local duties. At the same time, *curiales* become responsible for tax collection, finding themselves in the curious position of both collecting and paying taxes in the form of local services. As Jones puts it, the legislation shows both 'that the imperial government considered the maintenance of the city councils essential to the well-being of the empire, and that many members of the city councils strongly disliked their position'.[49] The result, as he sees it, is the decline both of city councils and the city, though he shows that city councils persisted in the west until at least the seventh century under Visigothic rule, and in Francia as late as the eighth and ninth centuries.[50]

Four centuries is a mighty long time for a decline, and another way of looking at it is to register surprise and interest that both Visigothic and Ostrogothic rulers made efforts to extend a system that was potentially unpopular among the rich and dysfunctional. Jones relies heavily on the law codes, from the *Codex Theodosianus* to Justinian; but since a function of the codes was to make the taxation system work, it is not all that much of a surprise to find emperors closing loopholes that permitted tax evasion. The value of Cassiodorus, in contrast to the law codes, is to reveal a little more of government thinking on this issue.

The importance of the *curiales* to the system of government emerges at once from the sheer number of letters addressed by Cassiodorus to the *curiales* of cities across Italy, but also Gaul and Suavia (the formulations vary, sometimes also to *possessores*, landowners, sometimes also to *defensores*, but always to *curiales*).[51] This is simply how to get things done in cities, even if they have governors (*comites*). The letters make clear that the government wishes to cherish and support the *curiales*. In the mid-fifth century, the emperor Majorian described the *curiales* as 'the sinews of the commonwealth and the innards of the cities'.[52] Jones in citing this uncharacteristically omits the close parallels from Cassiodorus.[53] An edict of Athalaric is eloquent.[54] It protests against the outrageous abuse of the *curiales* ('o importabile malum!' *importabilis* being another of those Cassiodoran late Latinisms). Any offender will be

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[49] Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 748.

[50] Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall*, 131. See further for Visigothic Spain, Curchin, 'Curials and local government'; Fernández, *Aristocrats and Statehood*. On the survival of the *Gesta municipalia* in Francia, see Barbier, *Archives oubliées du haut Moyen Âge*.

[51] Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 43–45 lists 39 cities and two castella mentioned in the *Variae*; cf. Marazzi, 'Ostrogothic cities', 101. On the terminology, Cecconi, 'Honorati, possessores, curiales,' with an important critique of the rigidly hierarchical definitions offered by Liebeschuetz; Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 47–51 supports this interpretation.

[52] Majorian (457–461) *Novellae*, 7.458: 'curiales nervos esse rei publicae ac viscera civitatum nullus ignorat.'

[53] Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 748, n. 85.

[54] *Variae*, 9.2: 'curiales, quibus a provida sollicitudine nomen est, gravissima dicuntur infestatione quassari, ut quicquid eis honoris causa delegatur, ad iniuriam potius videatur esse perductum. o nefarium scelus, importabile malum!'

fined 10 pounds of gold, or flogged. Any soldier (by implication, a Goth)[55] depriving them of their estates will be disciplined by a *iudex*. The *curiales* are urged to raise their spirits: they should live in a polity characterised by concord, like that of the cranes described by natural historians (*politia* here is a term Cassiodorus takes directly from Ambrose's *Hexameron)*. Not in vain did antiquity call them the lesser senate, the sinews and innards of the cities.[56] Cassiodorus, who as an imperial administrator was deeply versed in imperial legislation such as is preserved in the Codes, is evidently citing Majorian, and in calling him *antiquitas* attributes greater prestige to the idea.

In a closely comparable context, Cassiodorus sets out in one of his *formulae* (standard letters) the exceptional circumstances under which the Praetorian Prefect can order the sale of lands belonging to a *curialis*.[57] Antiquity has prudently defined that the property of *curiales* should not be broken up easily. By whom, he asks, can the *urbium munia*, the services of the cities, be sustained, if the sinews of the cities (*civitatum nervi*) are cut off? Again, Theoderic writes to Bishop Gudila about some men whom the *curiales* of Sarsina say belong to their number, but have been reduced to slavery: how could men whom *antiquitas* called the lesser senate be reduced to such a disgraceful condition?[58]

The overwhelming tone of Cassiodorus' letters about *curiales* is protective. The formula for the Praetorian Prefect attributes to him powers beyond those of any other government officer. He alone may flog the *curiales*, 'who are defined by law as the lesser senate'.[59] Libanius had vociferously protested against the flogging of *curiales* in the fourth century, and here the power to flog them is restricted and exceptional. In several letters the *curiales* are seen as relatively small property owners who stand in danger of exploitation by big landowners and their tax evasion. Theoderic writes to the senate to reprove senators for failure to pay taxes, thus landing the *curiales* in debt,[60] and in the next letter issues an edict against failure to pay tax by *praepotentes* which lands the *curiales* in debt (2.25).

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[55] See Amory, *People and Identity*, 21; Buchberger, *Shifting Identities*, 37–66.

[56] Ibid. 'Erigite colla, depressi! sublevate animos, malorum sarcinis ingravati; date studium recuperare quae vos male cognoscitis amisisse. Unicuique civi urbs sua res publica est … Grues moralem noverunt exercere concordiam … quarum morem scriptores rerum naturalium contuentes **politiam** quandam inter ipsas esse commemorant, quas civico affectu vivere cognoverunt. Has si vos imitemini, omnes a vobis pravitatum calumnias excludetis. nam vos, qui recti vota recipitis, habetis per leges potestatem in civibus vestris. non enim in cassum vobis curiam concessit antiquitas, non inaniter **appellavit minorem senatum**, **nervos quoque vocitans ac viscera civitatum**.' On the debt to Ambrose, see Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie*, vol. IV, 292–295.

[57] *Variae*, 7.47: 'a quibus enim urbium munia poterunt sustineri, si civitatum nervi passim videantur abscidi?'

[58] *Variae*, 2.18: 'quam videtur esse contrarium curionem rei publicae amissa turpiter libertate servire et usque ad condicionem pervenisse postremam, **quem vocavit antiquitas minorem senatum**?'

[59] *Variae*, 6.3: 'curiales etiam verberat, qui **appellati sunt legibus minor senatus**.'

[60] *Variae*, 2.24: 'ne necesse sit curiali per multiplicem et inefficacem conventionis laborem in exiguis vestris illationibus sua potius damna suscipere.'

A vivid illustration of a curial family which could no longer afford to carry out its duties concerns the family of a lady called Agenantia. Athalaric writes to his Praetorian Prefect giving him permission to remove Agenantia and her sons from the album of *curiales* in Lucania.[61] Such a proceeding is exceptional because the most sacred laws have tied the *curiales* to their duties unless and only if released by the emperors (in practice, of course, it may have been much more common than he admits). They will now be reduced to the condition of *possessores*, landowners not in the *curia*, and learn what it is like to be on the other side and suffer all the difficulties which they have been used to imposing on others.

These letters might seem to bear out the idea that the *curiales* were under pressure, subject to abuse by those above them, and hatred by those below them, and that consequently the system was in decline. Maybe: but they also show that they were regarded as essential for the functioning of cities, and cities as essential for the functioning of central government, and consequently deserving of specific privileges and protection from above. Again, this is a contradiction Lepelley catches.[62] If the position of the *curiales* had since the third century become progressively less tenable, and their role in sustaining urban life in constant decline, we need to explain why not only emperors, but Ostrogothic kings three centuries later felt that their protection was so crucial. An opposite perspective is offered by Salvian of Marseilles in his characterisation of the *curiales* as the oppressors of the cities in his bitter epigram 'quot curiales, tot tyranni'.[63] The case of Agenantia illustrates both that the burden of responsibility could become intolerable to the families trapped in this role, and that from another perspective it put them in a position of power over their fellow landowners.

According to the thesis of Liebeschuetz, *curiales* progressively lost influence and found their role overtaken by that of bishops.[64] Is there any trace of this in Cassiodorus?[65] It is striking that *episcopi* do not feature in the regular lists of addressees of letters to cities. Bishops are addressed when the church is directly involved, like Gudila, who seems to have been complicit in freeing some *curiales* from their civic duties by making them 'slaves' of the church (*Variae* 2.18), their right of jurisdiction within the church is acknowledged (*Variae* 1.9), and they intervene directly in distributing compensation to communities for damage caused by passing troops (*Variae* 2.8); but we are in a rather different world from that described later in the

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[61] *Variae*, 9.4: 'Quapropter illustris magnificentia tua Agenantiam uxorem Campaniani viri disertissimi in Lucania provincia constitutam filiosque eorum de albo curiae suae faciat diligenter abradi ... proinde in possessorum numero potius collocentur passuri nihilominus molestias quas ipsi aliis ingerebant.' Giardina, *Cassiodoro Varie*, vol. IV, 304–305 on the relationship of *curiales* and *possessores*. The latter must be non-curial landowners.

[62] Lepelley, 'La survie de l'idée de cité républicaine'.

[63] Salvian, *de Gubernatione Dei*, 5.4: 'quae enim sunt non modo urbes sed etiam municipia atque uici, ubi non quot curiales fuerint, tot tyranni sunt?' See Wallace-Hadrill, 'Salvian of Marseilles'.

[64] Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall*, 137–168, chapter titled 'The Rise of the Bishop'.

[65] Well discussed by Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 160–168.

sixth century by Gregory of Tours, when bishops indeed play a dominant role in the cities of Francia. In this sense, the civic administration described by Cassiodorus is highly traditional, as indeed Theoderic intended it to seem.[66]

And so it would be without the omnipresence of the Goths, who live alongside Romans in their cities, are constantly urged by Theoderic to live in peace and amity, respecting the rules of civil society, and who benefit from their own officials, the *comites civitatum*, to whom the other city officials owe obedience and who exercise jurisdiction in all cases involving Goths.[67] As the formula for the *comitiva Gothorum* addressed to the *civitates* puts it, 'Since with God's help we know that Goths live intermingled with you ...', the *comes* is appointed to resolve disputes involving Goths.[68] It was perhaps this presence of a substantial body of people who did not count as Romans that made it so important to underline the persistence of Roman tradition. Critics in Constantinople, as painfully emerged at the end of Theoderic's reign, were only too open to scare stories of abuse of Romans by Goths.

SPQR

If Cassiodorus is protective of the *curiales* as *minor senatus* of the *civitates*, it goes without saying that he was positive about the Roman senate to which he, like his father before him, belonged. As the first letter of the collection proclaims, from Theoderic to the emperor Anastasius, they are bound together by a shared vision of a unified Roman empire, and by love of the city of Rome, 'veneranda Romanae urbis adfectio' (1.1).[69] Numerous letters to the senate expatiate on the reverence due to that body. Perhaps more revealing is when cracks begin to show, above all in the relationship between the senate and the *plebs Romana*, because as Theoderic repeatedly makes clear, it is not just the grandees of the senate he supports, but the Roman citizen body as a whole. Problems blow up in the first book over the circuses with their factions and the pantomimes who seem to have been closely related to the factions, and to have had the capacity to stir them to rioting.[70] *Variae* 1.20 introduces the theme with a disclaimer by the king whether a *princeps* really ought to trouble himself with the games when he has so many regal concerns, an idea that seems to echo a letter of Fronto to Marcus Aurelius arguing that trivial though they may seem, the games are

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[66] Cf. Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 41–44; on bishops and clerics in the *Variae*, cf. Saitta, *Civilitas*, 65–88. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall*, 164–166 on bishops in Gregory of Tours.

[67] Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 71–95 for thorough discussion of the *comitiva*, 117–124.

[68] *Variae*, 7.3: 'cum deo iuvante sciamus Gothos vobiscum habitare permixtos.'

[69] According to the Anonymous, *Excerpta Valesiana*, 66, Theoderic on his visit to Rome promised explicitly to respect the laws of his predecessors. On Theoderic and Rome, see La Rocca, 'An arena of abuses'; Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration*, 201–230. On the senate, see La Rocca and Oppedisano, *Il senato romano nell'Italia ostrogota.*

[70] Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 149–155; Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 380–440 for full discussion of 'spectacles'; Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, 92–118 on their continued importance in the Ostrogothic period.

to be taken seriously by an emperor.[71] He calls on the patricians Albinus and Avienus to adjudicate which of two competing pantomimes should be the official pantomime of the Greens. This fails to settle the dispute, and shortly afterwards we meet a letter about a row between the supporters of the Greens and the senators Theodorus and Inportunus resulting in the death of a supporter.[72] It seems that they have responded to insulting chants by sending in armed men against those for whom they should feel citizenly affection (*civicus affectus*). It is one thing for a senator to respond to an insult from a passing man in the street, but mockery at the games is traditional and acceptable. This is followed up by a string of angry letters (1.30–33). Theoderic tells the senate that if anyone's servant kills a freeborn citizen (*ingenuus*), he is to hand him over at once to justice, or incur a fine of 10 pounds of gold, and the king's displeasure. The next letter is addressed to the Populus Romanus and urges that spectacles should be an occasion of sweet music not discord: 'Romana sit vox plebis' (1.31). Senators must not be insulted. The next is a lecture to the city Prefect Agapitus on the proper relations of Senate and Plebs: the tradition of popular insults has to be kept under control, and if any senator forgets the rules of civility (*civilitatis immemor*) and has a freeborn citizen killed, he is to be punished.[73]

Perhaps the most revealing letter about the plebs is one written by Cassiodorus as Praetorian Prefect on the issue of food distributions, *opsonia*, for the Roman people (12.11).[74] The official in charge of the distributions must ensure that regal benefactions should not be polluted, like clear water polluted with mud, by corrupt agents. All fraud is serious, but fraud against the Roman people is intolerable (*importabilis* again). The people should receive the full amount granted and be kept happy. Nor should benefit fraudsters be allowed: the grant is aimed at full Roman citizens (*Quirites*); nobody of servile condition should sneak into the place of the freeborn ('non subripiat locum liberi fortuna servilis'), for it is an offence against the majesty of the Roman people if the purity of its blood is contaminated by the company of slaves. As Cassiodorus was doubtless well aware, Augustus had used similar words about purity and contamination to limit access to the corn dole.[75]

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[71] *Variae*, 1.20: 'Licet inter gloriosas rei publicae curas et regalium sollicitudinum salutiferos fluctus pars minima videatur principem de spectaculis loqui, tamen pro amore rei publicae Romanae non pigebit has quoque cogitationes intrare ...' Cf. Fronto, *Principia Historiae*, 2.17.

[72] *Variae*, 1.27: 'Sed ne forsitan magnificos viros loquacitas popularis offenderit, praesumptionis huius habenda discretio est. teneatur ad culpam quisquis transeunti reverentissimo senatori iniuriam protervus inflixit, si male optavit, cum bene loqui debuit. Mores autem graves in spectaculis quis requirat? ad circum nesciunt convenire Catones.'

[73] *Variae*, 1.32: 'si vero senator **civilitatis immemor** quemquam ingenuum nefaria fecerit caede vexari, protinus relatione transmissa perennitatis nostrae multam perculsus excipiat.'

[74] *Variae*, 12.11: 'non fiat Latialis pretio, qui civitatis illius non habet iura nascendo. ... munera ista Quiritium sunt. non subripiat locum liberi fortuna servilis. in maiestatem populi Romani peccat, qui sanguinis illius puritatem famulorum societate commaculat.' This model of civic euergetism is in contrast to that of Christian charity, see Salzman, 'From a Classical to a Christian city'.

[75] Suetonius, *Augustus*, 40.3: 'Magni praeterea existimans sincerum atque ab omni colluvione peregrini ac servilis sanguinis incorruptum servare populum ...'

Civilitas

Cassiodorus and his Gothic masters (to disentangle their voices defies the genre) thus offer us a surprisingly traditional image of the SPQR. Both senate and people matter. The gulf between free citizen and slave matters. For a senator to use his slave to kill a citizen is not acceptable: it is an offence against *civilitas*. And it is this idea of *civilitas* which represents the most coherent and extensive bundle of values in Cassiodorus which lies at the heart of his thought about cities and citizenship. All who write about Cassiodorus are conscious of the centrality of this ideal, as they could scarcely fail to be, for the word cluster *civilis/civilitas/incivilis/incivilitas* recurs with an astonishing frequency, and in a wide range of contexts.[76] Some think the concept so vague as to be almost meaningless. So, Jim O'Donnell in his study of the author passes over the idea with some distaste:

> *Civilitas* is in fact part of a larger scheme of slogans that springs from the whole pattern of denatured language with which Cassiodorus loaded the *Variae*.[77]

He goes on to describe the slogan as 'linguistic spinelessness'. By contrast, I want to make a case for *civilitas* as a form of social memory in changed circumstances, of Roman ideals adapting to the new realities of Gothic occupation.

The first point to make is that Cassiodorus' usage of the term is strikingly non-Classical. The root sense of *civilis* is that which takes places between citizens, above all the great opposites, civil law (*ius civile*) and civil war (*bellum civile*). However, as I discovered when working on Suetonius, in the early empire it acquires a new meaning, as the behaviour of an emperor, who despite his apparently kingly status, behaves as if he were but a fellow citizen. Suetonius in his *Life of Augustus* is the first to coin this as a virtue, *civilitas*.[78] By the time we get to Cassiodorus, there is a new range of meanings, referring to the highest values of civility and civilization. This usage is not encountered in earlier writers (Sidonius Apollinaris is old-school on this), but is found in both Cassiodorus and his contemporary Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia and panegyrist of Theoderic.[79]

Whether Theoderic himself encouraged the use of the word we cannot say, though it was the job of a panegyrist to use language that was welcome; but the point is that it is a word that has a special relevance in Ostrogothic Italy. It is a word cluster

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[76] Discussion is extensive: see Scivoletto, 'Cassiodoro e la retorica della città'; Saitta, *Civilitas*; Amory, *People and Identity*, 116–118; Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition*, 251–253; Arnold, *Theoderic and Roman Imperial Restoration*, 126–130; Giardina, *Cassiodoro politico*, 35–39.

[77] O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus*, 96.

[78] See Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis princeps'.

[79] Ennodius, *Panegyric of Theoderic*, 3: 'Educavit te in gremio civilitatis Graecia praesaga venturi; 4: quis hanc civilitatem credat inter familiares tibi vivere plena executione virtutes?; 11: video insperatum decorem urbium cineribus evenisse et sub civilitatis plenitudine palatina ubique tecta rutilare. video ante perfecta aedificia, quam me contigisset disposita. illa ipsa mater civitatum Roma iuveniscit marcida senectutis membra resecando; 20: sed inter proeliares forte successus.. civilitatis dulcedini nil reservas?'

that applies to human relations, between citizen and citizen, but also, and crucially, between Roman citizen and Goth. Central to it is the rule of law (*ius civile*), and its opposite is the use of violence.[80] Thus, as we have seen, a senator who sends armed slaves against the Roman plebs is *civilitatis immemor*. This is simply not how citizens should treat each other. In the half dozen letters that concern the circus riots, *civilitas* is invoked in each. The use of violence by senators to defend their honour is simply incompatible with behaviour between fellow citizens. The senate should know because it is *ipsam civilitatis sedem*, the seat of civility.[81] Particularly instructive is Athalaric's general edict.[82] Word has reached his ear of whisperings, *susurrationes*, that certain parties despise *civilitas* and chose to live with the savagery of beasts, until returning to rustic origins they regard human law as bestially odious. Civility thus maps into the developmental scheme by which man distinguishes himself from the beasts by living in cities under the law. Athalaric emphasises that all must live by the law, even those close to the royal family (the young king and his spokesman may be thinking of Theodahad, his cousin and successor, who is sharply criticised elsewhere, 4.39): they too must go through the courts and accept their judgements. First on his list of some ten types of abuse is illegal seizure of property, 'under which civility can neither be claimed nor be a reality'.[83] He then throws in breaking up the marriages of others, bigamy, extorting corrupt payments, magic and physical abuse of the poor. It is an extraordinary mixture, but the clear central theme is the rule of the law. The following letter addressed to the senate insists on the rule of law, *ius civile*, and wishes the king's own civility to be recognised.[84]

Civilitas covers the proper treatment, within the law, without violence and bestiality, of several groups of people. One notable group is the Jews.[85] No fewer than five letters concern synagogues in Genoa, Rome and Milan. The first to the Jews of Genoa (2.27) gives permission to preserve an ancient building by reroofing. The next reinforces all ancient legislation for the protection of the Jews.[86] Improving thoughts are offered on how the protection of laws is the proof of civility, for this is what sets apart civilized

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[80] On Theoderic and law, see Lafferty, *Law and Society*.

[81] *Variae*, 1.27: 'Si exterarum gentium mores sub lege moderamur, si iuri Romano servit quicquid sociatur Italiae, quanto magis decet **ipsam civilitatis sedem** legum reverentiam plus habere?'

[82] *Variae*, 9.18: 'diu est, quod diversorum querellae nostris auribus crebris susurrationibus insonarunt quosdam **civilitate despecta affectare vivere beluina saevitia**, dum regressi ad agreste principium ius humanum sibi aestimant feraliter odiosum.'

[83] Ibid. 'sub qua nec dici potest civilitas nec haberi.'

[84] *Variae*, 9.19: 'Haec in coetus vestri splendore recitentur et per triginta dies praefectus urbis locis celeberrimis faciat sollemni more proponi, **ut nostra civilitate recognita** spes truculentis moribus auferatur.'

[85] See Tabata, *Città dell'Italia*, 124–126; Saitta, *Civilitas*, 89–99. Jews were similarly protected in Visigothic Spain, see Chernin, 'Visigothic Jewish converts'.

[86] *Variae*, 4.33: '**Custodia legum civilitatis est indicium** et reverentia priorum principum nostrae quoque testatur devotionis exemplum ... atque ideo praesenti auctoritate censemus, ut quaecumque legum statuta moverunt, circa vos illibata serventur, quatenus **quod ad civilitatis usum constat esse repertum**, perpeti devotione teneatur.'

man from beasts. The Jews are permitted to use existing statutes so far as compatible with civility. But the threat to civility is real: a few letters later we hear that there has been rioting in Rome and the synagogue burnt down: if anyone has complaints to bring against the Jews, they should bring them to the senate, but Theoderic wants everyone to live together peacefully (4.43). Along similar lines is a letter to the Jews of Milan, who have complained about physical assault and violence, and have invoked the king's protection: Theoderic agrees to protect civility, though he does observe that the Jews themselves must do nothing *inciviliter*.[87]

Thus, civility is not merely a matter of proper relations between Roman citizens under Roman law, though that idea is central, but is elevated into a general virtue of civilized life that distinguishes man from beast.[88] Hence, and this is what makes the idea so interesting, it applies to relations between Romans and Goths.[89] The stock-in-trade of a Goth is violence: they are soldiers, and their virtue is what protects Italy. But that violence is not to be turned against the unarmed civilian population. The contrast between Roman civility and barbarism is spelt out most clearly in a series of letters regarding the government of two recently acquired provinces, Gaul (*i.e.* southern Gaul) and Pannonia.[90] Theoderic addresses all provincials of Gaul: they must learn to return after a long interval to Roman ways; they have been restored to *antiqua libertas* with *moribus togatis*, so must put off barbarity and mental cruelty. They must learn to live like settled people unlike the random barbarians. He has sent them a governor to restore civil rule (*civilem regulam*). Despite having seized the area from his Visigothic kin, Theoderic cheerfully represents their rule as barbaric in contrast to his own. Later Wandil as governor of Avignon is urged to repress all violence: let our army live *civiliter* with the Romans, otherwise there is no point in freeing them (3.38). Ibba, his principal general in Gaul, is urged to restore certain property to the church of Narbonne: he should take care that as he is famous in war, he should be outstanding in civility (*civilitate eximius*).

A following letter addressed to all barbarians and Romans in Pannonia (3.24) is a little more explicit about what barbarian ways mean: why, Theoderic asks, do they keep reverting to duelling (*monomachia*)?[91] Who will believe there is now peace if people fight in times of civility ('si sub civilitate pugnetur')? They must learn to imitate the Goths who know how to fight externally and behave modestly internally.

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[87] *Variae*, 5.37: 'Libenter annuimus quae sine legum iniuria postulantur, maxima cum **pro servanda civilitate** nec illis sunt neganda beneficia iustitiae, qui adhuc in fide noscuntur errare.'

[88] On this philosophical tradition, see Scivoletto, 'Cassiodoro e la retorica della città', 328–334.

[89] *Civilitas* as a principle of relations between Romans and Goths is well discussed by Saitta, *Civilitas*, 7–61; see also Amory, *People and Identity*, 489–554; Barnish, 'Roman responses'.

[90] *Variae*, 3.17: 'atque ideo in antiquam libertatem deo praestante revocati vestimini moribus togatis, exuite barbariem, abicite mentium crudelitatem, quia sub aequitate nostri temporis non vos decet vivere moribus alienis.'

[91] *Variae*, 3.24: 'Cur ad monomachiam recurratis, qui venalem iudicem non habetis? ... aut pax esse unde creditur, **si sub civilitate pugnetur**? imitamini certe Gothos nostros, qui foris proelia, intus norunt exercere modestiam.'

But that Goths did not always remember to live up to these standards in Italy is made crystal clear by a sequence of letters. The Goths of Piccenum and Samnium are summoned to court for a donation.[92] But they need to be reminded not to devastate the fields and crops through which they pass, because Theoderic pays his army to keep civility intact ('ut ab armatis custodiatur civilitas'). The passage of a Gothic army through the landscape was no joke, and later when Belisarius landed in Sicily, and the Goths were sent against him, Cassiodorus as Pretorian Prefect has to urge the landowners of Lucania and Bruttium not to take up arms to defend their territory, since they will be compensated for losses; they must not seize weapons to commit barbarity (*barbariem*), but continue with their patriotic cultivation (*patrioticus* is another Cassiodoran first).[93]

It was evidently a struggle not only to contain the violent urges of the Gothic rank and file, but to get those promoted to high positions to behave. We have already seen the letter in which Athalaric takes to task his governor of Syracuse, the Goth Gildila, for pocketing the money raised to repair the city walls.[94] But he has also been interfering in the judicial process and calling to his court arguments between Romans over which he had no jurisdiction. He is told in no uncertain terms to back off and recognize that Goths were there as a defence force, not as judges. You defend the laws with arms and leave the Romans to litigate in peace. For the glory of the Goth is the protection of civility ('Gothorum laus est civilitas custodita').

Perhaps the most striking example of Theoderic's insistence on civility is the dressing-down he delivers to his nephew Theodahad (4.39, cf. 5.12).[95] Domitius has complained that his lands have been seized by violence instead of taking the issue to court *civiliter*. Such greed is out of place in a man of Amal blood, when the family enjoys the purple. Theodahad was to be Theoderic's successor but one, and people have asked why Cassiodorus included such a potentially embarrassing letter. But there is no better way of showing the Amal dynasty's attachment to the principle of *civilitas* than to show Theoderic teaching a member of his own family a lesson. After Theodahad's fall from grace and death, it was easy enough to revive this letter as a demonstration of how good Gothic kings thought.

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[92] *Variae*, 5.26: 'illud tamen necessario commonentes, ut venientium nullus provenire possit excessus, ne possessorum segetes aut prata vastetis, sed sub omni continentia properantes de custodita disciplina grata nobis esse vestra possit occursio, quia ideo exercituales gratanter subimus expensas, **ut ab armatis custodiatur intacta civilitas**.'

[93] *Variae*, 12.5: 'continete ergo possessorum intemperantes motus. ament quieta, quos nullus ad incerta praecipitat. dum belligerat Gothorum exercitus, sit in pace Romanus.'

[94] *Variae*, 9.14: 'Ordinariis iudicibus amministrationum suarum potestas inlibata servetur...**Gothorum laus est civilitas custodita.** tota ad vos fama confluit, si vobis rarus litigator observet. vos armis iura defendite, Romanos sinite legum pace litigare.'

[95] *Variae*, 4.39: 'Hamali sanguinis virum non decet vulgare desiderium, quia genus suum conspicit esse purpuratum ... Domitius itaque vir spectabilis data nobis supplicatione conquestus est, possessiones iuris sui, id est illam atque illam, ab hominibus vestris neglectis legibus fuisse pervasas, **dum civiliter oportuit recipi**, si iure videbatur exposci.'

Conclusion

What then can we learn from Cassiodorus' obsessive invocation of *civilitas*? One approach, such as that recently of Shane Bjornlie, is to see Cassiodorus as conducting a defence of the Amal regime, and the collaboration of Romans like himself with the regime, addressed after the invasion of Belisarius to the court at Constantinople. To me a more convincing audience (given the language) is the senatorial elite in Rome. Either way, Cassiodorus is surely representing the Ostrogoths as ruling according to principles approved of by Roman tradition, like *civilitas*.

A more helpful approach, it seems to me, and one that does not involve postulating hypothetical audiences, is to invoke resilience theory. The Gothic settlements of the fifth century potentially represented a major trauma to the system: Roman urbanism, Roman law and Roman practice were under threat. An ecological trauma leads to adaptation supported by social memory. Cassiodorus draws constantly on the memory bank represented by *antiquitas* in an attempt to rebuild the old urban system, or rather to assist the new masters of Rome to do so. This is something more than 'nostalgia': it is an attempt to use memory to construct a new future. But it was essential not to reject the new realities. Gothic rule is the new modernity, which is why respect for antiquity always goes hand in hand with praise of modernity. And one way we can observe this process of adaptation is in changes to the Latin language. Far from displaying 'linguistic spinelessness', Cassiodorus adapts. *Civilitas* is an old and recognizable word. But in the new circumstances, it acquires a new meaning. It is all about sustaining civil rule and civil law in the midst of barbarity, *barbaries*. For Augustus, the opposite of *civilitas* was *superbia*, the arrogance of an Oriental king.[96] For Theoderic, the opposite is the violence always simmering beneath the surface in an Italy full of armed Goths amidst an unarmed civilian population. In a word, it is under the impact of the new 'barbarian' reality that Latin invents a new word for civilization. Urbanism is more than physical and institutional structures. It is a way of thought. What Cassiodorus does is spell out in considerable detail such a way of thought, whether in terms of fabric or institutions or ideals. He spells it out for the benefit of the Gothic kings for whom he acts as mouthpiece. And the very fact that Cassiodorus spelled it out, and that the *Variae* were read, meant that he contributed to the social memory on which later generations continued to draw.[97] He offered an urbanism that was not mere antiquarianism, but a recipe for a new and modern world.

Only in one way may it be thought that Cassiodorus failed to reflect the new modernity. Despite his later career as a founder of a monastery, he has astonishingly little to say about the Church. Our expectations that the curials will have been replaced by rule of bishops, and that the city will have ceased to centre on temples, the forum and pagan institutions, and found a new focus in ecclesiastical buildings, are in no

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[96] See Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civilis princeps*'.
[97] Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 443 points to the popularity of the *Variae* as revealed by manuscripts in medieval royal chancelleries.

way borne out.[98] But there is more to this than conservative nostalgia. Serving kings who made a point of adherence to the Arian faith, Cassiodorus was in no position to advocate the importance of Nicene Catholicism in Italy. In matters of faith, Theoderic adopted a remarkable position of neutrality: 'We cannot exercise control over religion, since nobody is compelled to believe against his will', a position in stark contrast to the zealotry of Justinian and many imperial predecessors.[99] That meant that the ideal of a city which he offered, unlike that of Salvian of Marseilles, could not be defined by its faith. It is perhaps in that sense that Cassiodorus' attempt to project the urban ideals of the past into the future lacked traction, in Constantinople and elsewhere.

Acknowledgements

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[98] Cf. Fauvinet-Ranson, *Decor Civitatis*, 41–44. For a challenge to the view that bishops rapidly took over civic administration, Patzold, 'Zur Sozialstruktur des Episkopats'.

[99] *Variae*, 2.27.2: 'religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus'; cf. Saittta, *Civilitas* 97–99. On the complexity of religious identity among the Germanic peoples, see La Rocca, 'La cristianizzazione dei barbari'.

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Chapter 3

A *fundamentis noviter*: The idea of the ancient city, the ninth-century *Liber Pontificalis* and civic thought in early medieval Italy

Thomas Langley

Civic traditions were vibrant in early medieval Italy, as the *laudes civitatum*, *gesta episcoporum* and a number of other genres reveal. These texts drew on the civic model established in late antiquity and represent an evolution rather than a break with ancient traditions. Yet scholars often view late antiquity or the early Middle Ages as witnessing the end of the ancient civic tradition.[1] Ecclesiastical influence is often taken as the key distinguishing feature: namely that (a) the *civitas terrena* was replaced by the *civitas Dei* in contemporary thought and thus that (b) individuals came to identify with their church rather than their city, with patriotism toward the latter more or less completely eclipsed.[2] Yet the ancient and medieval cities cannot be so readily separated. An Ambrose or an Augustine might have ardently wished for the *civitas terrena* to be eclipsed by the *civitas Dei*, but such a project was never completely realised. Rather, I will argue that although the interests of church and city were identified, one did not replace the other. Indeed, writers rejoiced in rich churches, virtuous bishops and prosperous flocks as signs of a flourishing *urbs*, *patria* and *civitas*.[3] Explicitly city-focused terms like these evidence the concern of their users with the city itself, and thus with civic ideas, although I will argue that such concerns can be inferred even when these terms are not used explicitly. In this

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[1] For the gradual transformation of the Roman landscape in late Antiquity see Humphries, 'From Emperor to Pope?', 56–58.

[2] As argued in for example Brogiolo, 'Ideas of the town', 123–124. For the assumption that Christianity as a universalising religion had a fundamentally different outlook to that of the Classical city see for instance Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, 223–248; Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 503–505. Likewise, historians of political thought often skip the early medieval period when discussing the legacy of civic or patriotic ideas – thus Viroli, *For Love of Country*, 19–22.

[3] And churches themselves were often funded by imperial or lay elite benefactors in late antiquity – Humphries, 'From Emperor to Pope?', 34–36, 46–47.

respect – the continuity of the idea of the city as a focus of activity – we may speak of a clear continuity with the ancient world.

I will argue that the inheritance of the classical city manifested itself in a second main way in early medieval Italy and more specifically early medieval Rome, taken for the purposes of this enquiry as the period from the beginning of the seventh century to the final breakdown of the Carolingian Empire in the late ninth. Simply put, classical ideas continued to influence early medieval views on how this civic sphere ought to function – what being a city actually entailed. I suggest that, though aspects of urban institutions and civic topography changed from the later Roman empire to ninth century Italy, that does not give us grounds for differentiating the cities of this latter period as qualitatively distinct from their earlier counterparts, at least along the crude binary of ancient and medieval.[4] After all, ideas about what made a good city changed as much (if not more) over the ancient world's long history.[5] I will thus argue that the writers of early medieval Italy not only preserved from antiquity a sense of civic consciousness, but that that consciousness inherited certain features, ideas and language from its pre-papal antecedents.[6]

The *Liber Pontificalis*: The text

The *Liber Pontificalis* (LP) is the papal history *par excellence* and one of the most important documents for understanding early medieval Rome, and thus the legacy of ancient and late antique ideas. The LP takes the form of a series of papal biographies composed over the early Middle Ages (from the early sixth to the late ninth centuries), narrating the lives of the popes from the apostle Peter to Stephen V (r. 885–891), with a couple of gaps in its coverage.[7] The text was remarkably popular. Elements of it survive in over eighty extant manuscripts and epitomes, in at least five main traditions of textual transference, although the number of manuscript witnesses drastically

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[4] The transformation to the 'papal city' is placed at various moments by scholars – Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City*, 33 prefers an early fifth century dating; Noble, 'Topography, celebration and power'; Humphries, 'From Emperor to Pope?', 24–25 prefer the eighth century or even later. Even in the 'papal' city, as I will argue, civic ideas retained influence.

[5] For scholarship on changes in ideas of the Roman city see Lomas, 'The idea of a city'; Zanker, 'The city as symbol'; Edwards and Woolf, 'Cosmopolis: Rome as world city'.

[6] See Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica'. Thus also West-Harling: the 'perception of Rome in the ninth and tenth centuries referred to a mix of ... the city of St Peter, the capital of the *Patrimonium* of St Peter, the city of Augustus and Trajan, the city of Constantine, and the capital of the Christian Roman Empire', West-Harling, *Rome, Ravenna, and Venice*, 484.

[7] There have been a number of recent modern works on the textual formation of the LP of which see Bertolini, 'Il *Liber Pontificalis*'; Geertman, 'Genesi del "Liber pontificalis"'; Bougard, 'Composition, diffusion et réception'; Gantner, 'Lombard recension'; McKitterick, 'Papacy and Byzantium'; and now McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*. Although the format of the LP is consistent for most of the ninth century, the lives of Nicholas I (r. 858–867) and Hadrian II (r. 867–872) resemble conventional histories much more closely, and thus offer a more limited selection of material for the kind of analysis conducted here – see Davis, *Ninth Century Popes,* 189, 203–204, 249–250.

contracts over the ninth century.[8] Its popularity led to significant variation in the LP's text, and led scribes to amend the text more deliberately – adding in details relevant to local audiences not included in the version of the LP disseminated from Rome.[9] In its most extreme form, this adaptation even provoked the creation of an entirely new genre, the *gesta episcoporum*, detailing the history of local bishops.[10]

The Roman *Liber Pontificalis* itself was probably produced and promoted by the papal bureaucracy. Its extensive diffusion, adaptation and imitation testifies to a substantial extra-Italian interest in papal affairs.[11] The text's probable audiences included the papal bureaucracy and clergy, the lay aristocracy and citizens of Rome, the inhabitants of the papal, Lombard and Frankish territories in Italy, and the lay and ecclesiastical elites of Latin Christendom more generally, principally Francia.[12] Though not so much a feature of the earlier LP, by the ninth century the lives consistently presented papal activities in the best possible light, suggesting an awareness of the text's propagandistic function, though other audiences did not always read it with such priorities in mind.[13] It is this more literary bent to the ninth century LP that makes the later sections particularly rich in civic ideas. This is particularly striking in the case of wall-building. Notices of wall construction and repair evolve from short functional entries in the eighth century to elaborately phrased treatments stressing the popes' patriotic virtue.[14] The contemporary flourishing of its close kin, the *gesta episcoporum*, in this period offers another reason. Although, as I will argue, civic ideas informed the text in earlier periods, it was this stylistic shift that caused them to be more overtly expressed.

From this short summary, it may seem strange to discuss the *Liber Pontificalis* as a source for civic ideas. The LP's papal focus, and the longstanding view that urban life in Italy suffered after the fall of Rome and only revived in the high Middle Ages, have meant that the city has often seemed secondary in popes' self-presentation.[15] The structure and genre of the work may also seem to confirm this: the longest papal lives

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[8]   Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs*, xvi–xxi.

[9]   Gantner, 'Lombard recension'; McKitterick, 'Scaliger MS 49'.

[10] For an overview of the genre see Sot, *Gesta Episcoporum*; see further papers in Bougard and Sot, *Liber, Gesta, histoire.*

[11] Bougard, 'Composition, diffusion et réception', 134; McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy.* For specific elements see Gantner, 'Lombard recension'; McKitterick, 'Scaliger MS 49'; and now McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 204–220.

[12] See Noble, 'A new look at the *Liber Pontificalis*', 349–350, 353–354; McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 171–173, 220–223. These groups were, naturally, not monolithic. For lay literacy in the early Middle Ages see McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, 211–270.

[13] Indeed, the particular Frankish interest in the LP as a source for early rather than contemporary papal history may account for the dearth of manuscripts containing ninth-century lives, given the importance of Carolingian manuscripts in transmitting the earlier parts of the text – thus McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 220–223.

[14] Earlier examples: LP 91.2, 92.15, 97.52, 97.102.

[15] See Herbers, *Leo IV.*, 41–45. At worst, secular civic ideas are viewed as entirely absorbed by the Church – thus Llewellyn, *Rome in the Dark Ages*, 140. This has begun to change in recent years, see for example Daileader, 'One will, one voice, and equal love'; Welton, 'The city speaks', 30–37.

are made up in large part by records of papal donations to the city's churches, phrased in formulaic fashion and drawing on register material – activity which has seemed a world away from the euergetic, city-focused spending of the classical period.[16]

The LP's relationship to the genre of ancient imperial biography provides a partial answer. As McKitterick has argued, the LP shares several features with imperial biographies, which (in their Suetonian incarnation) concerned themselves with emperors' building programmes in the city of Rome – programmes which sought to paint emperors as supreme and uncontested civic benefactors.[17] The related genre of ancient and late antique panegyric was another probable influence. Originally a sixth-century composition, the LP's penchant for lists of buildings built and treasures donated anticipates elements in Procopius's *On Buildings*, a relatively close contemporary.[18] *Buildings* has sometimes been thought unfinished due to the relatively bare lists of constructions that feature in the work's later chapters, but it is plausible that such lists were actually there to display the sheer volume of Justinian's construction.[19] As Geertman has argued, the inclusion of material from registers of donations in the LP emphasised the scale of papal benevolence.[20]

As well as its genre, the political role of patronage within the text and the contemporary political scene is another clue to its civic interests. For the popes' position was not unchallenged in the early Middle Ages. Despite the claims popes made on the imperial legacy, emperors and other secular powers were present at Rome in some form into the seventh century.[21] Later rulers in Constantinople and Francia frequently sought to intervene in Roman affairs.[22] Within the city, local aristocrats and factions competed for influence. And ecclesiastical potentates within the papal orbit, like the archbishops of Ravenna or the abbots of Farfa, often sought independence

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[16] For this paradigm see Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*; contrast however Pietri, 'Évergétisme et richesses', 321–322; Salzmann, 'Euergetism and charity'.

[17] McKitterick, 'Roman Texts and Roman History'; McKitterick, 'The transformation of the Roman past'. Deliyannis has argued for the influence of an Old Testament model from the Book of Kings, see Deliyannis, 'A Biblical model for serial biography'. For the ideology of imperial building see Zuiderhoek, *The Politics of Munificence*, 110–112; Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 111.

[18] Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, 89–90.

[19] For the view that *Buildings* was unfinished see Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, 84–85. The lists themselves are found at Procopius, *Buildings* 4.4, 4.11, 5.9.

[20] Geertman, 'Documenta, redattori e formazione', 154; see also McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 125; contrast the view that this material was there to 'fill out' the text in Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs*, 50; cf. Davis, *Ninth Century Popes*, 250. One should note however the differing emphasis placed on donation in different lives, which reflects the differing circumstances of their composition – see Herbers, 'Agir et écrire'.

[21] Humphries, 'From Emperor to Pope?'

[22] Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City*, 117–118; Noble, 'Topography, celebration and power'; Christie, 'Charlemagne and the renewal of Rome'; Humphries, 'From Emperor to Pope?'; West-Harling, *Rome, Ravenna, and Venice*, 484–485.

from papal control.[23] Successive popes thus faced the need to legitimise and promote their rule within the city of Rome as well as outside it.

As has been argued by previous historians, presenting oneself as a civic benefactor was a key element in building legitimacy in early medieval Italy more generally.[24] In the LP's case, this also meant excluding or playing down the roles of other patrons. A case in point is the text's treatment of the funds raised by Emperor Lothar I (r. 840–855) to build a wall around St. Peter's and its environs, an area which had been pillaged by Arab raiders in 846.[25] Although the majority of the money was contributed by the emperor's Italian subjects, the LP emphasised pope Leo IV's (r. 847–855) contribution – and its civic valence.[26] 'The same loving pope did much to banish the danger to all the Romans'[27] by requesting Lothar and Louis's aid, continuing work begun by his predecessor Leo III (r. 797–816).[28] Although mentioning the silver sent by the emperor and his brothers, the text placed particular emphasis on the pope's role.[29] Leo 'with his own mouth' asked the assembled notables how best to complete the city, personally organising the procurement of labour.[30] It was 'through the many labours and struggles of the most blessed prelate' that 'the walls were completed as he was desiring',[31] as he 'used to go about the various construction-sites now here, now there, with watchfulness and concern' heedless of rain or shine.[32] Giving primary credit to the bishop as the overseer and commissioner of the donation even if he didn't provide the capital for it was hardly new.[33] Indeed, the tendency to make the reigning emperor or magistrate the author of the building in question was common by late antiquity.[34] Yet as Davis comments, Leo's papacy was not even the origin of the initiative to fortify the Vatican (as the LP claims), for already in Sergius's reign before the end of 846 Lothar had begun raising funds for this purpose.[35] The LP thus

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[23] For a nuanced analysis of the various challenges popes faced in the early ninth century see Goodson, *The Rome of Pope Paschal I*; for specific aspects see Belletzkie, 'Pope Nicholas I and John of Ravenna'; Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy*.

[24] Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 86–88.

[25] See Lothar's capitulary: *De expeditione contra Sarracenos facienda* 7–9, 66–67.

[26] As one might expect Lothar's capitulary is much less interested in the civic valence of the emperor's contribution, advertising it instead to his subjects as due to the need to protect the '*Romana ecclesia, quod caput est christianitatis*', *De expeditione*, 2, 65–6.

[27] LP 105.68, 'isdem amabilis pontifex magnam pro Romanis omnibus cepit aberre angustiam', 123.

[28] LP 105.68.

[29] LP 105.69, 'ipse cum suis fratribus non modicas libras argenti direxit', 123.

[30] LP 105.70, 'ore suo', 123.

[31] LP 105.70, 'per multos labores atque certamina beatissimi praesulis totum ut desiderabat', 123.

[32] LP 105.71, 'modo hic, modo illic, per diversas murorum fabricas vigil ac sollicitus discurrebat', 124.

[33] Deliyannis, 'Ecclesius and San Vitale'; for the LP specifically see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 104.

[34] See for instance Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, 100 n. 116.

[35] Davis, *Ninth Century Popes*, 1995, 139 n. 105. For the dating of Lothar's capitulary see Zielinski, 'Reisengeschwindigkeit und Nachrichtenübermittlung'.

clearly sought to claim the exclusive mantle of civic patron for the pope himself, shutting out his imperial competitors.[36]

The *Gesta Episcoporum* and the civic context of the *Liber Pontificalis*

Perhaps the most powerful evidence for the LP's civic aspect, however, is its role in creating an entirely new genre of civic history. Beginning with Gregory of Tours but blossoming in the Carolingian and Ottonian periods, a series of authors wrote histories of bishops patterned on the LP.[37] This so-called *gesta episcoporum* married concern for the city in question with a broader interest in religious, political and dynastic history, often with contemporary political goals in mind.[38] More so than the LP, these texts portrayed local bishops as inheritors of 'capital of sanctity' built and conserved by centuries of forebears.[39] Along with an accumulated sanctity came bishops' roles as custodians of a late antique urban heritage which, for these authors, essentially was the ancient city. Thus, in his mid-ninth century work, the *Liber pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis* (LPER), the Ravennate deacon Agnellus proudly claimed of San Vitale that 'no church in any part of Italy is similar to this one in precious stones, since they almost glow at night just as they do in the day',[40] and that 'no church in Italy is similar in structures and in mechanical works.'[41]

Both Agnellus and his sources viewed episcopal leadership in terms of the civic obligations to one's fellow citizens and city familiar from antiquity.[42] In epitaphs quoted by Agnellus bishop Felix (r. 709–725) was praised as having 'suffered many hardships for his *patria*', while bishop Damian (692–708) was lauded as having

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[36] Compare a dedicatory inscription from the wall itself, which placed Lothar in a secondary position to Leo – Gibson and Ward-Perkins, 'The surviving remains of the Leonine Wall', 31. By contrast, some Frankish copies of the LP add references to the gifts of Pippin I in Rome: McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 210.

[37] On genre, date and evolution see Sot, *Gesta Episcoporum*; Riches, 'The changing political horizons of *Gesta Episcoporum*'; for the LP's influence on the genre see also McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 171–172. The parallel genre of *gesta abbatum* do not concern us here.

[38] Sot, 'Historiographie episcopale et modele familial en Occident au IXe siècle'; Deliyannis, *The Book of Pontiffs of the Church of Ravenna*, 29–30.

[39] Sot, *Gesta Episcoporum*, 15.

[40] Agnellus LPER 63, 'in Italiae partibus lapidibus preciosis nullam ecclesiam similis ista, eo quod in nocte ut in die pene candescunt', 223. Agnellus more widely displayed pride in the secular power attained by city and bishops – see in particular LPER 42 159.

[41] LPER 59, 'nulla in Italia ecclesia similis est in aedificiis et in mechanicis operibus', 226. Deliyannis interprets 'mechanicis operibus' as a reference to the high quality of the furnishings, see *The Book of Pontiffs of the Church of Ravenna*, 329.

[42] On Agnellus's civic patriotism see Brown, '*Romanitas* and *Campanilismo*'; Deliyannis, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity*, 295–299. For the continuity of the *curia* and other late antique/Byzantine institutions see West-Harling, *Rome, Ravenna, and Venice*, 197. For the evolution of civic patriotic language in the late antique period more generally see Giardina, '*Amor Civicus*'.

'preserved holy Ravenna with his prayers'.[43] John V (726–744) was referred to by Agnellus as *pater patriae*,[44] and John I (477–494) as having interceded with Attila the Hun 'so that he might not see his sons or daughters and the Ravennate citizens cast out and scattered in exile or death' or 'the destruction of the city in the pillage of looters',[45] and having 'blessed his sons, the Ravennate citizens' before he died.[46] The prefatory verses of the 'Minimus Scholastius' which introduced Agnellus' history made a similar point, referring to how 'the kindly archbishop Pertinax, rejoicing, leads the clergy of the Ravennate church and the people, this same bishop, deservedly on the throne of this rich city'.[47] Agnellus thus advocated a model of episcopal leadership which drew on both intellectual and the physical epigraphic remains of the late ancient city, and which was shared by his colleagues. This explicitly civic emphasis on the bishop's role as protector and leader of the city seems in turn to have influenced the LP itself. As Daileader has argued, the papal history began in the ninth century to provide increasingly elaborate and propagandistic accounts of popes' elections, with the bishops of Rome painted in the best late antique fashion as unwilling, supremely virtuous leaders forced into the role by the universal acclaim of their fellow citizens.[48]

Other contemporary accounts echoed these twin views – of bishop as civic leader, and buildings as glorifying the city. The anonymous *Laudes Mediolanensis Civitatis* (*c.* 730–740) spoke of how the city 'shines gloriously, decorated with holy churches, of which the holy one of Laurentius has many precious stones within it and a gold roof, with towers'.[49] The explicit invocation of the value of the contents and fabric of the building, alongside its beauty and grandeur, parallels the LP's frequent emphasis on the weight of silver that successive popes gave – partially a legacy of the register material from which the text was compiled, but also a means of overawing the reader with the financial scale of generosity. Likewise, the *Laudes Veronensis civitatis* (*c.* 796) detailed how the bishop 'covered and encircled the golden tomb with images of cherubim',[50] part of the glorification of city's saintly protectors, and recording the bishop's ornamentation of them for successive future readers. 'Now there is no city in

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[43] LPER 150, 'pertulit pro patria nimias praesul aerumnas', 328; LPER 134, 'tutasti precibus sancta Ravenna tuis', 311. Compare the near-identical epitaph of bishop Marinian (595–602) (LPER 103); see further Deliyannis, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity*, 289–290.

[44] LPER 152, 329.

[45] LPER 37, 'ut non suos filios vel filias Ravennatesque cives in exterminium aut in consummationem videret evelli vel dissipari ... excidium civitatis in direptionem praedantium', 189. The account is an invention based on the LP's story of when Pope Leo I (440-61) met the Hunnic monarch.

[46] LPER 44, 'benedictis filiis suis, Ravennenses cives', 203.

[47] LPER *Prefatory Verses* ll. 25–29, 'archiepiscopus almus ovans Petronacis agitque/ quoque Ravennatis clerum ecclesiae populumque./ alterum ab undecimo quem presbyterumque beavit/ summus is antistis merito sede urbis opimae,' 140.

[48] See Daileader, 'One will, one voice, and equal love'.

[49] *Laudes Mediolanensis Civitas* ll. 22-24, 'gloriose sacris micat ornata ecclesiis,/ ex quibus alma est Laurenti intus alavariis,/ lapidibus auroque tecta, aedita in turribus', 125. The emphasis here and more generally on resplendence may connote the Heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation 21; more generally on decoration see Janes, *God and Gold.*

[50] *Laudes Veronensis civitatis* l. 82, 'tumulum aureum coopertum circumdat centonibus', 185.

Italy more praiseworthy than you, shining, mighty and fragrant from the body of the saints, wealthy alone among a hundred cities in Italy'.[51] Spiritual and material wealth were testaments to the city's glory, while hagiographical texts from this period also display distinctly civic purposes, with the martyr's remains a subject of civic pride.[52]

These two phenomena – churches as civic monuments, and bishops as civic leaders – naturally interacted. Describing the contested election of Bishop Paul II (763–768), the *Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum* attributed Paul's eventual triumph to his programme of public building.[53] 'Because of their connection with the Greeks his fellow-citizens did not want to receive him. But conceiving a plan … taking scarcely two years he constructed many buildings [outside the city].'[54] Building a triclinium and a baptistery outside the city near the church of San Gennaro Fuori le Mura, his demonstration of generosity successfully won round the people and their clerics, and eventually the rest of the potentates. 'The Neapolitan leaders, seeing that the distinguished city was grieved to lack such a pontiff, rejoicing and happily with one counsel and one agreement introduced him into the bishopric of this city'.[55] Proving his credentials as a public builder was, at least in the eyes of the *gesta*'s compiler, the decisive element which enabled Paul to attain his see, suggesting the importance of benefaction as a qualification for authority.[56] In a somewhat similar episode related by Agnellus, the civic body refused to recognise bishop Maximian (546–557) – 'because of their abominable pride the Ravennese did not want to receive their ordained bishop' – until he wooed their leaders with gifts.[57] Indeed, Agnellus ascribed the Ravennates' reluctance to the fact that Maximian was not a native of the city, and remarked that 'I marvel that this one, who came from another see, thus behaved with his sheep, that no-one ever raised up any word against him', the implication being that local

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[51] *Laudes Veronensis civitatis* ll. 91–93, 'iam laudanda non est tibi urbis in Ausonia,/ splendens, pollens et redolens a sanctorum corpore,/ opulenta inter centum sola in Italia', 122. On the *laudes civitatum* poetry see Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica'; Picard, 'Conscience urbaine et culte des saints'; Oldfield, *Urban Panegyric*, 83–84.

[52] Vocino, 'Aegis of the Saints'.

[53] This part of the text probably dates from the 880s or 890s – see Granier, 'La dificile genèse', 266. More widely on the civic and prestige functions of religious building see Ward-Perkins, *Urban Public Building*, 70–84.

[54] *Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum* 41, 'propter Graecorum conexionem noluerunt illum recipere sui concives. Initio tamen consilio … in qua duos ferme annos degens, plura construxit aedificia', 424–425. According to the *Gesta* Paul opposed Constantine V's policy on religious images.

[55] *Gesta Episcoporum Neapolitanorum* 41, 'Neapolitanorum primates cernentes, tam egregiam urbem languidam esse de tanto pontifice, uno consilio unoque consensu laetentes et gaudentes eum in ipsius civitatis episcopatum introduxerat', 425.

[56] Compare the *gesta episcoporum* of Grado, which argued from the fact that bishop Probinus had relocated the martyrs' bodies and church treasure from Aquileia to Grado, and from subsequent episcopal building, that Grado was *Nova Aquileia*. *Chronica Patriarcharum Gradensium* 1, 393; building work *Chronica Patriarcharum Gradensium*, 2–3, 394.

[57] LPER 71, 'in atrocem superbiam Ravennates perdurantes noluissent ordinatum recipere pontificem', 240.

bishops' patriotic feeling was a natural obligation, and contrasting with the corrupt prelates of his own day.[58]

These contemporary accounts attest to vitality of civic sentiment in eighth and ninth century Italy. Was this a continuation of ancient thought, or was it something newly wrought in the early medieval period with little direct connection to antiquity? Several factors militate in favour of the former.[59] For one thing, there is the continuing significance of civic ideas in late antiquity, with Cassiodorus offering abundant evidence of their sixth century vitality.[60] Evidence is thinner on the ground during the seventh century, but even here the historical record suggests a pause in the production of civic texts rather than the complete death of a tradition. Not least, the *Liber Pontificalis* itself was revived and continued in this period, providing a city-focused (if often sparse) narrative of popes' leadership through challenges posed by marauding Lombards and heretical emperors alike.[61] Although explicitly civic language (as opposed to rather more generic concern for 'the poor') was relatively rare in the pre-ninth century LP, hints of it surface in a reference to papal concern 'for the inhabitants of this city' in the life of Pope Sisinnus (708; LP 89), and an acknowledgement of the involvement of the *populus* and the *cives* in the contested elections of Conon (r. 686–687) and Sergius I (r. 687–701), as well as their displeasure with Pope Vigilius (r. 537–555).[62]

Continuity in Ravenna is suggested not only by the early eighth century epitaphs cited by Agnellus, but also by the evidence of the Ravenna Cosmographer.[63] This writer, who composed his work *c.* 650–751, inhabited a recognisably classical *oikoumene*, made of peoples each possessing *patriae* and *civitates*.[64] Though impressively ecumenical in scope, patriotic pride shone through at points: thus the compiler's proud identification of 'most noble Ravenna, in which I the humble expositor of this cosmography with

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[58] LPER 82, 'miror, modo iste, qui ex alterius fuit sede, sic se cum suis disposuit ovibus, quod nullum contra eum sermonem unquam multavit', 249.

[59] More generally on continuities from the Classical period see Oldfield, *Urban Panegyric*, 23–26; Welton, 'The city speaks'. For more pessimistic views emphasising discontinuity see Llewellyn, *Rome in the Dark Ages*, 85–89, 140; Brogiolo, 'Ideas of the town', 123–124.

[60] On civic ideas in Cassiodorus see Bjornlie, *Politics and Tradition Between Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople*; Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civitas Romana*', 31–33 and in this volume.

[61] On the compilation and agenda of the seventh century *Liber Pontificalis* see McKitterick, 'Papacy and Byzantium'.

[62] Vigilius' life was probably composed shortly after the death of Boniface V in 625 – McKitterick, 'Papacy and Byzantium', 249–250. For the LP's account of papal-popular relations see McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 38–54. Compare the LP's satisfied description of how the *cives* of Ravenna were punished (LP 90) by Justinian II after the contumacy of their archbishop, underscoring the text's awareness of links between citizens, cities and bishops.

[63] For a wider argument for continuity at Ravenna through the period and bishops' centrality in civic identity see Herrin, *Ravenna: Capital of Empire*, 388–90. Compare also the *Carmen de Synodo Ticinense* v. 5, 190 dating from shortly after 698.

[64] On dating see Herrin, *Ravenna: Capital of Empire*, 277.

Christ helping was born',[65] which not coincidentally was the place at which he began his *periplous* of Mediterranean cities.[66] Moreover, hagiography is a fruitful source for the civic ideals of these years.[67] Rather than an 'unpolitical' localism which 'provided no motive for communal political activity',[68] disputes over sanctity and episcopal independence drove conflicts between cities in these years.[69] This is not to deny that cities often faced near-existential challenges during this period, nor to suggest that the idea of the ancient city remained unchanged. Yet the idea of the ancient city survived to influence Italian social, spiritual and political life. Early medieval writers were part of a living civic tradition linking them to the ancient world, albeit most closely to the Christian form of the ancient city as it had evolved in late antiquity.[70]

Civic ideas in the ninth century *Liber Pontificalis*

Perhaps surprisingly given the explicit civic valence given to religious buildings in this period by other sources, and their clear role in creating a Christian civic topography, the LP rarely if ever gave them this same treatment.[71] Though such buildings promoted the city's superiority and antiquity compared to Constantinople and other urban centres, the LP tended not to gloss their maintenance in civic terms.[72] In the Life of Leo IV, a biography notable for its relatively heavy use of the rhetoric of *patria*, the LP contrasted his defensive works for 'the safety of Christians' with his patronage of the Roman church, which he undertook 'for his great love of the **heavenly** *patria*' (emphasis added).[73] The life of Gregory IV (r. 828–844), of moderate length by the ninth-century LP's standards at forty-four chapters, may serve as an exemplar of general trends in the presentation of gifts to churches (here referred to as ecclesiastical benefaction).[74] Where the text supplies causes or motives for this benefaction, they

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[65] Anonymus Ravennas, *Cosmographia* 4.31, 'Ravenna nobilissima, in qua licet idiota ego huius cosmographiae expositor Christo adiuvante genitus sum', 68; see further Herrin, *Ravenna: Capital of Empire*, 281.

[66] *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia* 5.1, 83–84.

[67] For late sixth- and early seventh-century examples of hagiography with strongly civic themes see for example *Passio Cethei* 2–4 689–690, 6 691, 16 693, *Passio Apollinaris* 24–35 348–350, and *Vita Eusebii Vercelli* 751D–752B, 754A–C – for translation and comment see Everett, *Patron Saints of Early Medieval Italy*; Maskarinec, *City of Saints*.

[68] Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, 248. Liebeschuetz is discussing Greek hagiography but is remarking on the saint-cults in general.

[69] Particularly Ravennate attempts to gain independence from Rome: compare Agnellus' view that 'if the body of Saint Andrew, the brother of St Peter the prince, was buried here, the Roman pontiffs would never thus have subjugated us' (LPER 76, 244).

[70] Though see the *Laudes Veronensis civitatis*'s acknowledgment of the accomplishments of Verona's pre-Christian inhabitants – *Laudes Veronensis civitatis*, 8.

[71] McKitterick, *Rome and the Invention of the Papacy*, 52–53.

[72] Goodson, *The Rome of Pope Paschal I*, 182–186.

[73] LP 105–106, 'ob salutationem Christianorum ... prae nimio patriae caelestis amore', 133.

[74] With the exception, noted above at n. 7, of the lives of Nicholas I (r. 858–867) and Hadrian II (r. 867–872), which include less or no material from donation registers.

include the pope's concern for his immortal soul (twice),[75] his love of the Virgin Mary (twice),[76] his love for other saints (four times)[77] and most prominently the direct inspiration and protection of God and the pope's own 'divine love' (at least seven times besides instances already cited).[78] Though there is a degree of variation in the lives as to the balance of motivations ascribed to different pontiffs for giving, the broad pattern is fairly clear: ecclesiastical benefaction was normally glossed without explicit civic references to *urbs* or *patria*.[79] This type of benefaction, in turn, forms the large majority of entries in the LP.

Before writing off such activity as entirely un-civic, however, several factors need to be borne in mind. One prominent motive for ecclesiastical giving not yet adduced was repair, and the desire to beautify churches for their own sakes – an ambiguously civic function, given the role allotted to Roman leaders since imperial times of maintaining the urban fabric.[80] At least nine separate entries in Gregory IV's life record the pope's repairs, frequently in laudatory terms.[81] At the outset of his life, the LP presented him as desiring to return the saints and their churches 'with the Lord's protection, to their ancient condition with a new standard'.[82] Care was not limited to churches: the LP recorded how 'concerning the buildings which had been constructed within the palace by the fathers of old but were now destroyed and on point of collapse from great age ... Gregory set up and arranged from their foundations to a new standard of workmanship.'[83] Stressing the continuity with the 'fathers of old' further positioned the popes as curators of an ancient legacy. At times this appeared as a mission to civilise the wilderness, thus building cells and installing monks 'in places which recently seemed to men to be full of brambles and filth'.[84]

This restorative activity, while not glossed in civic terms, clearly spoke to practical urban necessities – the need to prevent ruin and dilapidation and the imperative to maintain the city's sacred topography.[85] Even quite radical rebuilding could thus be framed as a restoration of the past, rather than its erasure.[86] Moreover, it is worth

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[75] LP 103.9, 103.10.

[76] LP 103.32, 103.33, debatably 103.16, 103.23.

[77] LP 103.5, 103.14, 103.20, 103.32, debatably 103.6.

[78] LP 103.6, 103.8, 103.11, 103.18, 103.23 (unusually in this case identifying St Peter as the intercessor), 103.24, 103.34.

[79] For the differing justifications of donation Herbers, *Leo IV.*, 41–45 though he notes that the linguistic registers blur can together, 157.

[80] On the restoration of temples as the reassertion of the civic fabric see Galinski, 'Continuity and change', 74; Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 102–104.

[81] Besides the below see LP 103.8, 103.14, 103.15, 103.23, 103.25, 103.34.

[82] LP 103.5, 'ad statum pristinum novo cultu eas, Domino protegente', 74.

[83] LP 103.36, 'de aedificiis iam dirutis et prae magnitudine temporum pene casuris quae infra palatium ab antiquis patribus videbantur esse constructa ... Gregorius novo cultu et opera a fundamentis erexit atque conposuit', 81.

[84] LP 103.24, 'loca quae nuper ab hominibus videbantur vepribus vel inmunditiis plena'. See further Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 19.

[85] Noble, 'Topography, celebration and power'.

[86] See Martínez Jiménez, this volume.

noting that the civic function even of earlier restorations was frequently implicit. Augustus's claim to have 'rebuilt in the city eighty-two temples of the gods' in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*,[87] while clearly in keeping with Augustus's broader self-portrayal as a civic restorer, was nonetheless not glossed explicitly as *pro patria*.[88] In light of churches' civic valence elsewhere in the LP, and in the context of early medieval Italian civic patriotism, it is reasonable to suggest that Roman readers in the ninth century might have inferred a similarly civic context for their religious buildings as did Romans of antiquity.[89]

At times, however this restoration was more clearly glossed in civic terms.[90] When discussing Leo IV's fortification of Saint Peter's and the surrounding settlement the LP suggested that the decision was taken 'for the defence of the universal mother church'.[91] Nonetheless, the fortification was also framed in response to the demands of the city's notables, who were afraid that the Saracens would cause worse damage 'if the church of Saint Peter the apostle was not speedily fortified with walls on all sides'.[92] Seeing their concern, 'this beloved pontiff began to have great distress for all the Romans, and anxiously think on precisely how he could remove so much sickness and fear from their hearts'.[93] In the LP's portrayal, the fortification of St. Peter's was thus both a civic and an ecclesiastical benefaction – it responded to the concerns and interests of local secular leaders, reflecting papal concern both for the health of the church and the wishes of the urban elite. Moreover, Leo's fortification and restorations of its ornaments and hangings also positioned the pope as the guardian of the ancient city, albeit in its late antique Christian incarnation. Leo's activity thus reflected, if it did not consciously evoke, the close connection between religious cult and Rome's health present from a very early period of Roman history.[94]

Other types of papal benevolence more readily evoke the concern for the city and its inhabitants typical of ancient civic discourse. Repairs to aqueducts entered the papal purview as the papacy gradually came to fill the role vacated by the Byzantine

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[87] *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 20.4, 'duo et octaginta templa deum in urbe consul sex[tu]m ex [auctori]tate senatus refeci', 16.

[88] Temples are occasionally explicitly glossed as civic benefactions – thus Suetonius, *Caesar* 44, *Augustus* 28–29 (on a smaller scale, see Pliny, *Ep.* 3.4, 4.1, 10.8) – but frequently here also it is left implicit.

[89] On this point see Ward-Perkins, *Urban Public Building*, 70–84. In the Byzantine period churches were places for the publication of new legislation (*Novellae Iustiniani* 8, praef.) and bishops played a role in in selecting governors (*Novellae Iustiniani* 149.1) before the eclipse of the civil administration under the Exarchate – on which see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 12–14, 53–56.

[90] The essential assumption necessary to maintain the view of a significant difference between episcopal and ancient building: for an example see Brogiolo, 'Ideas of the town', 122–124.

[91] LP 105.58, 'pro defensione universe matris ecclesiae', 123. Compare also the restoration of the ornaments of the Vatican Basilica at LP 105.32.

[92] LP 105.58, 'nisi ecclesia beati Petri apostoli muris undique munita citius foret', 123.

[93] LP 105.58, 'isdem amabilis pontifex magnam pro Romanis omnibus cepit aberre angustiam et quo modo vel ordine ab eorum cordibus tantum potuisset rancore sive timore auferre anxius cogitare', 123.

[94] On this concern in the Augustan period see Scheid, 'Augustus and Roman religion', 177.

administration, and were from then on tied to the public interest.[95] Matters were no different in the ninth century. 'Considering the poverty of the Romans' Gregory IV repaired the Sabbatina Aqueduct.[96] 'Looking about as a good and pious shepherd' Sergius II (r. 844–847) repaired the Jovian Aqueduct: 'he newly restored it, and such plentiful waters abundantly flowed from it; he satisfied the entire city'.[97] Nicholas I's (r. 858–867) repairs to the Sabbatina were reckoned 'splendidly visible and the beauty of the Leonine City.'[98]

These repairs, however, pale in comparison to the LP's extensive treatment of papal fortification efforts. As suggested above, the defence of the city's churches was tied to the fundamental civic concern for public safety. This was expressed by reference to an idea of Rome as the sacred *patria,* whose territory was St. Peter's personal property.[99] This rhetoric was most on display in the life of Leo IV, aroused no doubt by the doubts occasioned by the sack of St. Peter's by the Saracens.[100] As well as the aforementioned Leonine City, in other instances of fortification the good of the citizens was likewise elevated. When Leo began work on the Aurelianic Walls of the city, it was after 'he began to form a plan with Lord Jesus Christ'.[101] 'Care and concern for the Roman City' was evidently both a devotional and a localist obligation.[102] When Leo constructed towers by the river to stop nautical raiding parties, the LP explained that 'this was done on account of the future danger of Saracens and the safety of the city of Rome'.[103] All in all, the 'newly constructed work also stood pre-eminent in the defence of the city of Rome'.[104]

These defences were augmented by Leo's settlement of Corsican refugees in Portus to defend the river approach from raiders,[105] and refortification of Centumcellae,

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[95] On the early medieval water supply at Rome and papal involvement in its maintenance until the tenth century at least see Coates-Stephens, 'The water supply of early Medieval Rome'; cf. Coates-Stephens, 'Gli aquedotti in epoca tardoantica nel suburbio'. Ward-Perkins argues that the function and form of hydraulic patronage changed from a euergetic focus on popular pleasure to a more limited Christian concern for cleanliness, though these functions do nonetheless seem to have retained a civic valence in the LP, Ward-Perkins, *Urban Public Building*, 135–146. For the Republican view that 'water was meant foremost for the community of citizens' see De Kleijn, *The Water Supply of Ancient Rome*, 95.

[96] LP 103.19, 'dum bonus et verus pastor pro sanctae Dei ecclesiae statum maximam undique curam ac vigilantiam gereret, considerans Romanorum penuriam', 77.

[97] LP (F) 104.21, 'prospiciens sicut benignus et pius pastor, a noviter eam [the Jovian Aqueduct] restauravit; et tanta aqua abundanter praefulsit, qui pene totam civitatem satiavit', 91.

[98] LP 107.66, 'ad decorum Leonianae urbis luculenter conspicitur ac habitur', 164; though contrast the same pope's repair to the Aquae Jovia which was not glossed in such a fashion, LP 107.16, 154.

[99] For papal iteration of this ideology see Bertolini, 'Potere temporale dei papi'; Noble, *Republic of St. Peter*. For an extreme example of this rhetoric see *Codex Carolinus* ep. 10.

[100] Herbers, *Leo IV.*, 132, 158. See LP 103.38 and the analysis below.

[101] LP 105.38, 'coepit cum Iesu Christi domini tractare consultu', 115.

[102] LP 105.39, 'maximam de Romana urbe curam ac sollicitudinem', 115. For the upkeep of the walls and their sacral significance see Dey, *The Aurelian Wall*, 235–239.

[103] LP 105.39, 'hoc propter futurum Saracenorum periculum et salutem Romane urbis factum est', 115.

[104] LP 105.40, 'noviter opus constructum et Romanae urbi defensione prestat', 115.

[105] LP 105.77–81.

whose inhabitants had allegedly been reduced to living like beasts and to whom he reintroduced the benefits of civilisation and security.[106] Leo's dedication of the Leonine walls, meanwhile, emphasises how concerns for the *patria* and the need for divine favour were intimately linked. Leo inaugurated the new fortifications with a procession around the Leonine walls 'that the aforesaid city, which was rightly called Leoniana from its founder, might stand forever firm and strong'.[107] Extracts of Leo's sermons on the occasion preserved in the LP further indicate how integral divine favour was to the enterprise,[108] with the pope proceeding around the walls with the priests and nobles after which he 'honourably sang a Mass for the Safety of the People, for the perpetual security and safety of the city'.[109]

Unsurprisingly, the life of Leo IV saw the most emphasis on these measures – it was in his pontificate that much of the refortification took place, and when the security of Rome was threatened by recurrent Arab raids. Other papal lives, however, saw fortification treated in similar terms. The life of Gregory IV, during which Rome's insecurity became steadily more apparent, also demonstrated a concern to portray that pope as a guardian of the city. His zeal 'was always intent in service of Almighty God, thus it was always diligently solicitous concerning the future safety of the people and the freedom of the fatherland.'[110] He desired 'to help and free the city of Ostia',[111] and thus 'concerning this God gave this plan into his heart, that if he desired to save the people, he ought to construct it anew from its foundations'.[112]

Indeed, Gregory's action was constructed in the best classical terms, for Ostia was subsequently renamed in his honour, a subject to which the LP devoted substantial, perhaps even defensive attention. 'For this city, which had been rebuilt even as if new, this name stands in eternal permanence, so that it may be known by men whether Romans or those of other nations from whose name it properly has, that is by Gregory, by which Gregoriopolis is called. And indeed, it is not undeservedly that it takes this term from the name of its founder'.[113] Preserving the eternal name of one's founder in gratitude as a form of earthly immortality drew on classical precedent of civic

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[106] LP 105.99–103.
[107] LP 105.72, 'ut praedicta civitas, que a proprio a conditori sui nomini Leoniana vocatur, ut perpetualiter firma ac roborata consisteret', 124. On the combination of sacral and civic elements in the dedication of the *Civitas Leoniana* see Welton, 'The city speaks', 30–37.
[108] Herbers, *Leo IV.*, 142–144.
[109] LP 105.74, 'missa pro salute populi, civitatis incolumitate ac stabilitate honorifice perpetua decantavit', 125.
[110] LP 103.38, 'ut quae in Deo erat omnipotentis semper intenta servitio, ita quoque de futura populi saluto et liberatione patriae indifferenter erat sollicita', 81. Cf. LP 103.40, 'iste, Dei omnipotentis auxilio simulque virtutem munitus, pro populi ac liberatione patriae', 82.
[111] LP 103.38, 'civitate Hosti adiuvaret ac liberare', 81.
[112] LP 103.39, 'de hoc dedit in corde consilium ut civitatem ibidem, si populum salvare vellet, a fundamentis noviter construisse debuisset', 81–82.
[113] LP 103.40, 'cui etiam a noviter civitati constructae hoc nomen in sempiternum statuit permanendum, scilicet ut ab hominibus, sive Romanis sive aliis nationibus a proprio quod ei erat nomine, id est Gregorio, Gregoriopolis vocitetur: et revera, nec inmerito hoc a conditoris sui nomine vocabulum sumpsit', 82.

foundation and gratitude for benefaction.[114] When Ostia was refortified by Nicholas I, this was again described in terms of the divinely-guided pontiff concerned for the defence of his flock.[115] While not necessarily the dominant note in the ninth-century LP, then, its early medieval civic patriotic rhetoric was deeply indebted to ancient ideas.

Civic invective and urban history

Civic leaders, however, did not always live up to their fellow-citizens' ideals. Neither were cities always united, harmonious entities. Rome was no exception to this pattern, and though the *Liber Pontificalis* generally sought to portray popes in the best light possible, at times the challenges were simply too great. A fascinating alternative recension of the LP's account of Pope Sergius II (r. 844–847), based on the lost 'Farnesianus' manuscript, provides a clear example of the ways that this civic rhetoric could be turned against the papacy.[116] (I will refer to this alternative recension as the LP (F) for convenience). Sergius, the LP (F) claims, was a gouty invalid who delegated the governance of the city to his corrupt brother Benedict. This latter sought to tyrannically subvert the city by obtaining 'the primacy and lordship of Rome' from the Carolingians.[117] Not only that, he was greedy and rapacious, causing irrevocable damage by his vandalism. 'For at the beginning of his elevation he had destroyed the aforesaid church of San Martino ai Monti, which had been built with work of marvellous antiquity, that under the pretext of its demolition and rebuilding he might more easily despoil the churches and the people.'[118] By contrast, the earlier chapters of the LP (F) had praised the restoration work, suggesting that the criticisms were added to a more complimentary earlier draft.[119] As suggested earlier, churches were themselves seen as civic monuments, particularly those which harked back to Christian antiquity. Benedict, the LP (F) claimed, thus damaged the city's antique fabric by his vainglorious reconstructions and had compounded this evil by using

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[114] For the way in which papal rituals of foundation and rededication reflected earlier Byzantine practices see Marazzi, 'Le "città nuove" pontifice', 257–259.

[115] LP 107.67.

[116] This text survived solely in the *Farnesianus*, collated by Bianchini for his early eighteenth-century edition (reproduced in Migne PL 127). Bianchini's text in turn is the basis for Duchesne's version of the LP (F). On Bianchini's methods and text, particularly his handling of the *Farnesianus*, see Franklin, 'Reading the popes'. We do not know anything for certain about the compiler of this version of the life save that he must have written before the end of the ninth century, and perhaps during the reign of Nicholas I (r. 858–867), for the manuscript contained papal lives up to Benedict III (r. 855–888) see Jasper, 'Die Papstgeschichte des Pseudo-Liudprand', 65–66. Levison suggested that the *Farnesianus* version was indeed the official one, though this seems unlikely given the LP (F)'s strongly critical stance, Levison, 'Die Papstgeschichte des Pseudo-Liudprand', 418–419.

[117] LP (F) 104.41, 'primatum et dominium Romae', 97.

[118] LP (F) 104.41, 'destruxerat namque initio suae exaltationis ecclesiam iamdictam beati Martini, quae fuerat opere mirabili antiquitatis constructa, ut sub praetextu istius deictione ac reaedificationis liberius valeret depraedationes in ecclesiis et in populis peragere', 98.

[119] LP (F) 104.27.

the professed rebuilding simply as a cover to fleece the people of Rome. To cap off its accusations, the LP (F) blamed his encouragement of simony as causing divine wrath against Rome. 'Because the Christians failed to amend their ways, God sent the heathens as his avengers.'[120] Such a sense of the city's dependence on divine favour was another recognisable paradigm inherited from pre-Christian Roman religion.[121]

The LP (F) was not only concerned with the spoliation of churches. The account detailed how both the 'care of the church' and 'the public need ['publicam necessitatem']' was ignored when Benedict began 'the construction of walls and various buildings, so much that he failed neither day nor night to cause incessant trouble and vexation'.[122] Condemning wall-building, so often a source of civic legitimacy for popes in the LP, as inimical to the *publica necessitas* is a particularly striking example of the inversion of papal claims to guardianship of the civic interest. Indeed, such claims had probably formed a feature of Sergius II's/Benedict's rhetoric. Instead, Benedict was remembered as a destroyer. 'For it was unheard of', the LP (F)'s compiler claimed, 'from the earliest of times that someone might solely by his own invention and cunning be able to devastate and despoil this most famous city and all the cities subject to it, and the castles, coastlines and borders, in such a short space of time'.[123] The outraged sense of injustice against *ista famosissima urbs* and its dependent *urbes* further betrays a wounded sense of civic entitlement, belying Duchesne's view that the compiler was primarily interested in Benedict's anti-monastic activities.[124] Indeed, the papacy was notably absent in this account from the leadership of the defence of Rome from the Saracens, with the *Romani* acting essentially without papal supervision.[125] In summary, the LP (F)'s life of Sergius II exhibits most explicitly the civic concerns whose presence can be detected behind the rest of the text – but turned against the papacy, rather than used in support of it.

Civic ideas were used by others who sought to criticise the rapacity of church leaders. Condemning the conduct of pope Stephen II (r. 752–757), who had come to Ravenna and 'was examining the treasures and was bound to swallow all the wealth of the Church',[126] Agnellus detailed both the formation of a plot amongst certain

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[120] LP 104.43, 'quod neglexerunt Christianos emendare, paganos misit Deus ultores', 98. Lothar's capitulary *De expeditione contra Sarracenos facienda* espoused the same view that the sack was the punishment for sin.

[121] See Scheid, 'Le délit religieux dans la Rome tardo-républicaine', 150–151, though differing in what constituted an offence to the divine, how divine preferences could be known and explained and what sorts of divine punishment were possible besides civic disasters.

[122] LP (F) 104.40, 'cum vero esset insulsus et operibus rusticis deditus, curam ecclesiasticam et publicam necessitatem omnia in muriis parietum et aedificiis diversis expendere caepit, in tantum ut diu nocteque incessando laborando et vexando non deficeret', 97.

[123] LP (F) 104.42, 'fuit namque a prisciis temporibus inauditum ut quisquam suo tantum ingenio istum famosissimam urbem et omnes urbes illi subditas et castella et maritima et finitiva illorum in tanto spacio devastare et subdole depraedare potuisset', 98.

[124] For Duchesne's view see LP, 104 n. 32.

[125] LP (F) 104.44-47.

[126] Agnellus LPER 158, 'ipse scrutaretur gazas atque omnes opes ecclesiae deglotire deberet', 336.

civic leaders to kill him, and the unsuccessful pursuit of the papal treasure-cart by Ravenna's indignant citizens.[127] The episode highlights how ecclesiastical wealth could be considered a civic resource, which could be spent (sometimes contentiously) in the pursuit of perceived local interests. Agnellus elsewhere bemoaned the conduct of Ravenna's own bishops, who he accused in various places of despoiling their flock (and in particular himself).[128] Remarking on the virtue of Archbishop Maximian, who had originally come from Pula in Croatia, Agnellus bewailed how 'now we have pastors from among ourselves, after they obtain the see, they want to devour us with their teeth ... they devour the possessions of the church alone' and depopulate it.[129] Others 'accumulate masses of silver and gold from [church possessions] and they give it to princes and the powerful that they might suppress their priests and the whole people'.[130] Agnellus' target was his erstwhile friend Archbishop George (r. 837–846), who had sought to win imperial favour and gain greater autonomy from Rome and whom Agnellus blamed for the loss of much of the church's treasure.[131] Yet although fuelled by a personal grudge, these criticisms reflected expectations about how bishops were meant to use their resources for the benefit or clergy, people and city, which bound the prelates of Ravenna as surely as those of Rome. Likewise, the *gesta* of Grado condemned the 'heretical' Bishop Fortunatus, who had allegedly 'seized' the bishopric and 'denuding the entire metropolitan Church of Grado of gold and clerical vestments and ornaments' fled to the Lombards.[132]

A final example of the link between clerical misbehaviour, fiscal corruption and urban decline comes in the invective *Versus Romae*. This text, a short anonymous poem composed about three decades after the Saracen sack of St. Peter's, put this equation in stark terms.[133] 'Flowering Constantinople is called New Rome: in manners and walls, antique Rome, you are fallen.'[134] While lamenting the city's present decay, the compiler went on to excoriate the *mores* of the modern Romans which prevented it from recovering. Romans' mercenary attitude to the cult of the saints and pilgrimage tourism was a particular target of criticism. 'You chopped up with ruthless wounding the living saints and now you are accustomed to selling their remains. But as long

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[127] Agnellus LPER 158, 'tunc cognitum Ravennensibus civibus ... depopulationem ecclesiae, voluerunt prosequi plaustrum', 337.

[128] In addition to the following see Agnellus LPER 105, 113, 116, 117–118, 123, 143, 163, 166, 171, 173–174.

[129] Agnellus LPER 82, 'modo ex nobis ipsis pastorem habentes, postquam sedes adipiscunt, dentibus devorare volunt ... res ecclesiae soli deglutiunt', 249. A similar contrast is made at LPER 100.

[130] Agnellus LPER 104, 'et faciunt ex illis pondera argenti et auri dabuntque principibus et potestatibus, ut demergant sacerdotes suos, etiam plebem universa', 272

[131] Brown, 'Louis the Pious and the papacy', 306.

[132] *Chronica Patriarcharum Gradensium* 5, 'totam aecclesiam Gradensem metropolitam denudans in auro et vestibus vel ornament', 394.

[133] Granier dates it to ca. 878–882, though the location of its composition is harder to place – Granier, 'À rebours des *Laudes Civitatum*', 134–141.

[134] *Versus Romae* ll., 9–10, 'Constantinopolis florens nova Roma vocatur:/ Moribus et muris, Roma vetusta, cadis', 556. For the theme of 'translatio imperii' in the poem and its antique origins see Stanley, 'Rome, Ἔρως, and the *Versus Romae*'.

as the hungry earth consumes the bones of the living, you will be able to sell false relics'.[135] This stark condemnation of the relic trade underscores the close connections made between civic health and spiritual purity, and illustrates further that supposedly ecclesiastical patronage cannot be sealed off from more general civic concerns. Early medieval civic ideas thus cannot be differentiated from their ancient or late antique predecessors on the grounds of ecclesiastical influence alone.

Conclusion

Ideas of the city inherited from late antiquity and earlier thus continued to inform early medieval Italian writers (and the *Liber Pontificalis* specifically). Most significantly, these writers continued to view the city as an independent focus of personal and political identity. Ecclesiastical institutions and Christian figures from late antiquity added to that ancient legacy, but did not erase it – contrary to some scholarship on the subject.[136] One may thus fairly speak of early medieval texts, including the *Liber Pontificalis*, as displaying a civic consciousness which essentially carried on in its fundamentals from ancient Rome.[137] The second legacy of antiquity was the content of this identity. Here, the precedent was predominately that of the late ancient, Christian city – defined by its churches, martyrs and relationship with Imperial power. Yet these precedents themselves reached back to an earlier legacy – witnessed by the language of *patria* and *libertas*, the connection between the restoration of religious sites and civic health and the foundation of new cities. This legacy evolved, much as it had in antiquity. Bishops and clerics took up roles formerly reserved for emperors and magistrates, and walls and churches acquired pre-eminent status as markers of urbanity in contrast with baths, *fora*, arenas and other buildings.

It was also an object of disputes and opportunities. Bishops certainly sought to portray themselves as continuing an ancient legacy, but their repairs and donations could occasion unrest and unease as well. The conflict over the rebuilding of San Martino ai Monti under Sergius II attests eloquently that local elites often vehemently resented the total rebuilding which offered individual bishops the chance to make their mark on the city and mould its topography. Likewise with civic ideas, bishops who claimed to be preserving the glory, freedoms and safety of the city – as George of Ravenna and Sergius II doubtless did – might be vilified as squandering its wealth, prestige and virtue. The civic inheritance was a double-edged sword for bishops. Indeed, the criticisms of Agnellus and his anonymous contemporaries were perhaps the necessary precondition for the later episcopal-communal conflicts analysed by Martínez Jiménez.[138] Nonetheless, given the enduring power of the civic it could

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[135] *Versus Romae* ll., 21–24, 'truncasti vivos crudeli vulnere sanctos/ Vendere nunc horum membra soles./ Sed dum terra vorax animantum roserit ossa,/ Tu poteris falsas vendere reliquias', 556.

[136] Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, 223–248; Llewellyn, *Rome in the Dark Ages*, 140.

[137] Thus Fasoli, 'La coscienza civica', 295–296.

[138] See Martínez Jiménez, this volume.

hardly be ignored.[139] The popes of the ninth century and their contemporaries thus re-used, re-made and contested ancient civic ideas in the same fashion as they did their cities' physical remains – *a fundamentis noviter.*

Acknowledgements

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In the footnotes I use the abbreviation LP followed by chapter and page number – these page numbers refer to the second volume of Duchesne's edition of the *Liber Pontificalis.* Likewise, LPER for Deliyannis's edition of Agnellus, *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis.*

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[139] West-Harling, *Rome, Ravenna, and Venice*, 484–485.

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Chapter 4

Resilient cities: Renewal after disaster in three late antique towns of the East Mediterranean

Louise Blanke and Alan Walmsley

Archaeological studies have readily embraced the revitalisation of the *longue durée* concept as an effective yet flexible historical tool with which to mix and match, on a level platform, the many relevant fields of research in the natural and social sciences. In this new manifestation of *longue durée*, macrohistory has returned strengthened by the overt validity of the breadth, depth, reliability and often repeatability of diverse data sets, yet also its ability to incorporate microhistories including the contributions of sole actors.[1] Within the flexible boundaries of *longue durée*, crossovers between theoretical tools can be built, in which a rigorous interrogation of the data can occur to reveal and define the otherwise overlooked characteristics and complex structures that customised past societies.[2] Consequently, an unprecedented opportunity now exists to engage with a wide range of theoretic approaches compatible with a *longue durée* approach, such as recent and relevant debates on empirical urban theory,[3] the nature of human perception,[4] social and political commentary in art and design,[5] path dependency in regional economics[6] and resilience theory.[7]

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[1] Tomich, 'Order of historical time', 52–65.
[2] Taylor, 'Visual history', 181–202.
[3] Smith, 'Empirical urban theory'.
[4] The innocent eye, or maybe not. Orlandi, *The Innocent Eye.*
[5] Recalling the V&A Museum's unparalleled exhibition and book (Crowley and Pavitt, *Cold War Modern*), and the inescapable permanency of influence.
[6] Martin and Sunley, 'Path dependence', 395–437; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, *Long Economic and Political Shadow*; Oosterlynck, 'Path dependence', 158–165.
[7] Avoided here is resilience theory outside of archaeology, especially in the realm of social theory where resilience theory has been accused of endorsing neoliberal beliefs; van Breda, 'A critical review of resilience theory', 1–18. The inherent liabilities of using the term 'resilience' to understand the adaptive qualities of individuals, communities and larger societies to survive trauma are discussed in Norris *et al.*, 'Community resilience as a metaphor,' conceding that 'the term is probably here to stay' (128).

Resilience theory, therefore, is one component – albeit a crucial one – in a powerful compendium of interactive theoretical approaches in archaeology with which to comprehend and enlighten past human experiences, and from which informative models drawn from historical successes and failures in past societies can be built. In this paper, we elucidate the principles of resilience theory in urban archaeology and visit three related case studies in the East Mediterranean – the towns of Baysān/Scythopolis, Fiḥl/Pella and Jarash/Gerasa – to present revised case histories as seen through the lens of resilience.

Resilient cities: Urban form and social function

In archaeology, resilience theory serves as a potent companion to a *longue durée* approach,[8] given the ease by which resilience theory, as an explanatory agent of causes and consequences of change in communities and societies, can be applied universally in bridging historical and archaeological research.[9] In breakthrough publications of the early 2000s, Charles Redman championed the role of resilience theory in defining and describing the evolution of cultural landscapes in archaeology,[10] stressing the positive interplay between resilience theory and a *longue durée* approach in historical analysis. Resilience is, as Redman laid out in a 2014 publication, the ability of a system to manage harmful events through change without breaking the essential qualities of that system – 'function, structure, feedback capabilities, and therefore identity' – thereby safeguarding social consensus.[11] Change, when resulting from the application of adaptive strategies, is as normal a state as stability, meaning stability is in no way a 'better' or more 'normal' condition to that of change. Overlapping with landscape studies, resilience theory has become firmly welded to environmental science and, within that, considerations on the ability of social-ecological systems to adapt to sudden and potentially catastrophic events derived from both natural and human causes.[12] There is widespread institutional and grant body support for projects dealing with these issues, as they utilise lessons drawn from the vast body of past experiences to compose resolution strategies applicable to contemporary social problems. Yet there are caveats. While resilience theory has become irreversibly linked to sustainability science, with the two sometimes perceived as compatible in their approach to understanding system dynamics, Redman warns that, despite obvious connections, a merging of these two approaches could lead to potential

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[8] Initial discussion in Walmsley, *Early Islamic Syria*, 11, 146–147.

[9] McGovern, 'Foreword', vii–xii, vii; for details see the web page of the Resilience Alliance, www.resalliance.org/ hosting many publications; also, the Resilience Connections Network at www.resilienceconnections.org/.

[10] Redman, 'Resilience theory in archaeology', 70–77; Redman and Kinzig, 'Resilience of past landscapes'.

[11] Redman, 'Should sustainability and resilience be combined'.

[12] Such as with Cooper and Sheets, *Surviving Sudden Environmental Change*; Henley and Schulte Nordholt, *Environment, Trade and Society in Southeast Asia*; Plieninger and Bieling, *Resilience and the Cultural Landscape.*

contradictions.[13] While the adaptive strategies of resilience bring about change, the process is essentially protective and intended to uphold the essential elements of a system, although often redrafted. By way of contrast, transformation results in a profound, irreversible and often unrecognisable alteration to systems resulting from the abandonment of ineffectual and socially unrewarding cultural, economic and/or ecological structures (Table 4.1).

The relevance of resilience theory and sustainability science to understanding evolutionary processes in cities between antiquity and the Middle Ages is acute and jammed full of research possibilities. Redman, a practiced archaeologist and sustainability expert,[14] has advocated for the intrinsic value of 'past experiences' as revealed in the archaeological record, with the past being nothing less than a vast 'laboratory for innovations'.[15] This ever-expanding laboratory is not only a container for a historical archive of almost limitless human experience, but is also instructional by offering an original deep-history perspective on how to deal with the multifarious challenges of today.[16] Here we see archaeology and the sciences going forward collaboratively, a two-way street of collective experience that illuminates not only the tangible 'hardware' of cities, but also their 'software'; that is, the urban cluster of human capital and the impetus cities can give to creativity and ideation. Yet the opportunity to build dynamic, cross-disciplinary interactions of mutual benefit have not yet eventuated as standard: 'Just as resilience and sustainability practitioners have made poor use of history, those who do focus on the past and other cultures, such as historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists, have poorly framed their knowledge as useful to addressing today's challenges'.[17] Achieving social value outcomes will rest on what questions are asked when change

Table 4.1. Contrasting elements of adaptation and transformation (from C. L. Redman, 'Should sustainability and resilience be combined or remain distinct pursuits?', table 1).

Adaptation	Transformation
Incremental change	Major, potentially fundamental, change
Respond to shock	Action in anticipation of major stresses
Maintain previous order	Create new order, open ended
Build adaptive capacity	Reorder system dynamics
Emergent properties guide trajectory	Build agency, leadership, change agents

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[13] Redman, 'Should sustainability and resilience be combined', 1, as 'fundamental assumptions within each approach differed and even contradicted each other'.

[14] Redman, 'Institutional Website'.

[15] Redman, 'Should sustainability and resilience be combined', 5.

[16] Redman and Kinzig, 'Resilience of past landscapes'.

[17] Redman, 'Should sustainability and resilience be combined', and hence González Ruibal, *Reclaiming Archaeology.*

is considered;[18] not just identifying the causes but also what archaeology might tell us about the mechanisms of community decision making, what these change decisions were, and what alternatives were or could have been considered and why these options were not deemed feasible. From this more inquisitive and interpretive stance, practitioners of history, archaeology, and ecology would be well placed to 'make a well-understood past serve to create a more genuinely sustainable future and increase human resilience in the face of both gradual and sudden change'.[19]

For the study of the East Mediterranean, with its abundance of urban remains and reasonably preserved (but threatened) rural hinterlands, applying resilience theory will instigate a substantial and much overdue rethink of research designs in the region, accompanied by a rephasing of questions previously couched in simplistic opposites of 'continuity and change' and in the hope of annulling undefined and overused buzzwords such as 'continuities', 'transitions' and 'transformations'.[20] The chronic weaknesses that have burdened historiographical studies and the deep-seated, unresolved Anglo-Eurocentric prejudices plaguing archaeology have left intact an intellectual barrier inadequately questioned, let alone confronted.[21] The persistence of multiple obstacles to narrating anew the long history of late antiquity and early Islamic times is tenacious and thoughtless, born of the overly limited intentions of classical and biblical studies only rarely challenged;[22] the ingrained grittiness of these limitations constrain exploration into new areas of study. Archaeological delegations in the east Mediterranean continue to be taken aback and overwhelmed by substantial and often deep occupation levels (colloquially referred to as 'overburden' or 'topsoil') dating to after the arrival of Islam and, no matter what the budget or the science available, too many archaeologists continue to grapple with the seemingly unconquerable task of comprehending and explaining what has been unearthed. More than anything else, projects can, or should, always expect the unexpected, hence the need is even more pressing for flexible research models built on an investigative and open-minded agenda that will embrace, engage with and integrate the unfamiliar. Cases of 'ambush by archaeology' and a frantic rush to, as Hagit Nol puts it, '"historical" text-based events' in search of explanations are abundant,[23] even today, resulting in vacuously unoriginal and futile outcomes. Creating a mutually beneficial alliance between resilience theory and the long-term perspective inherent in archaeology will serve to strengthen the various, and

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[18] An in-depth evaluation of the heritage-archaeology relationship in Jordan by Shatha Abu-Khafajah and Riham Miqdadi tracks an historical shift away from colonial exclusion to a more inclusive participation, but 'guidance' structures continue to subtly restrain wider inclusion at the local level; Abu-Khafajah and Miqdadi, 'Prejudice, military intelligence, and neoliberalism', 92–106.

[19] McGovern, 'Foreword', vii.

[20] Walmsley, 'Achim LICHTENBERGER, Rubina RAJA (Dir.), *Byzantine and Umayyad Jerash Reconsidered*'.

[21] As recounted by Nol, 'Ashkelon 8', 231.

[22] The 'whitewashing' of history spans the material and cognitive realms; note its negativity and dogged persistence as outlined in Brinkmann and Hornbostel, *Bunte Götter*; and the website of Liebieghaus and Brinkmann, 'Gods in Color'.

[23] Nol, 'Ashkelon 8', 231.

at times disconnected, components of multidisciplinary projects by collating and comparing/contrasting data generated by each component which, through this interrogative process of cross referencing, is rigorously tested and made less prone to bias and error. Through this process, an avoidance of simplistic single-answer explanations would ensue with all team voices being heard equally.

Classical cities were the product of cultural and political systems devised by the people who lived in and near them; resilience theory brings us ever closer to an intimate understanding of these community processes in the gestation and long history of those cities. Of universal value, the information generated by resilience theory has the capacity, validity and clarity to identify and evaluate degrees of success or failure in previous attempts to resolve historic social problems in ancient and medieval societies, modelling outcomes which can inform in the planning and implementation of effective behavioural responses in the race to ensure the endurance of the world's socio-ecological systems.[24]

Observing adaptive capacities in three late antique towns: Baysān, Fiḥl and Jarash

Archaeology has been employed to probe widely, if selectively, the evolving urban landscapes of Baysān/Scythopolis, Fiḥl/Pella and Jarash/Gerasa in late antiquity and earlier Islamic times (*c*. fourth to tenth centuries), although often involuntarily during the quest to recover their classical cores (Fig. 4.1). Anglo-European scholars took a keen interest in the reputed role of the 'Classical cities in the East' as expressions in stone of the heart and soul of an urbane Roman-period Decapolis, further seeking in these places hidden insights into Christianity's naissance believed concealed within their ruins deep below an impeding overburden. The late antique 'Byzantine boom', visually expressed in numerous mosaic-adorned churches in towns and villages,[25] was attributed to a raft of earlier reforms enacted by Diocletian at the turn of the fourth century. In those reforms, the Decapolis towns were divided among two new provinces, with the western half going to Palaestina Secunda and the eastern to Provincia Arabia, a move that detached Jarash from Baysān and Fiḥl and resulted in its assignment, along with ʿAmmān/Philadelphia, to Arabia. Yet the maintenance of the cultural and economic ties between the three towns was to ensure an eventual reaffiliation some two and a half centuries later when these three towns were regrouped within one of two *trichōrai* in the military province of the Jund al-Urdunn (Fig. 4.1).[26] Both textural sources and archaeological data reveal that the administrative clustering of

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[24] Bradtmöller *et al.*, 'Resilience theory in archaeological practice', 3–16.

[25] Piccirillo, *Mosaics of Jordan*.

[26] Deducted from abundant numismatic and ceramic evidence; Amitai-Preiss *et al.*, 'The coinage'; Bar-Nathan, 'The pottery assemblage,' 205–214. The second *trichōra*, located north of Fiḥl and Jarash, consisted of Bayt Rās/Capitolias, Jadar/Gadara and Ābil/Abila; see Shoemaker, *Three Christian Martyrdoms*, 33, 43–45. ʿAmmān's allocation to the *Jund Dimashq* resulted from its status as a major stop on the major road between Madinah and Damascus, an action that secured its future.

districts and towns was a reflection of shared community beliefs and practices that transcended a single urban entity, likely based on prevalent pre-Islamic Arab tribal structures in the form of Christian clans.[27]

The former Decapolis towns in eastern Jund al-Urdunn were confronted with recurring social, political, military and environmental challenges in the seventh and eighth centuries, yet few of these challenges – disruptive as they might have been – rose above the calamities faced in earlier centuries, even millennia. More prevalent, however, were repeated bouts of the plague,[28] together with the ruinously powerful earthquakes in 659 and in or around 749, the latter being considerably
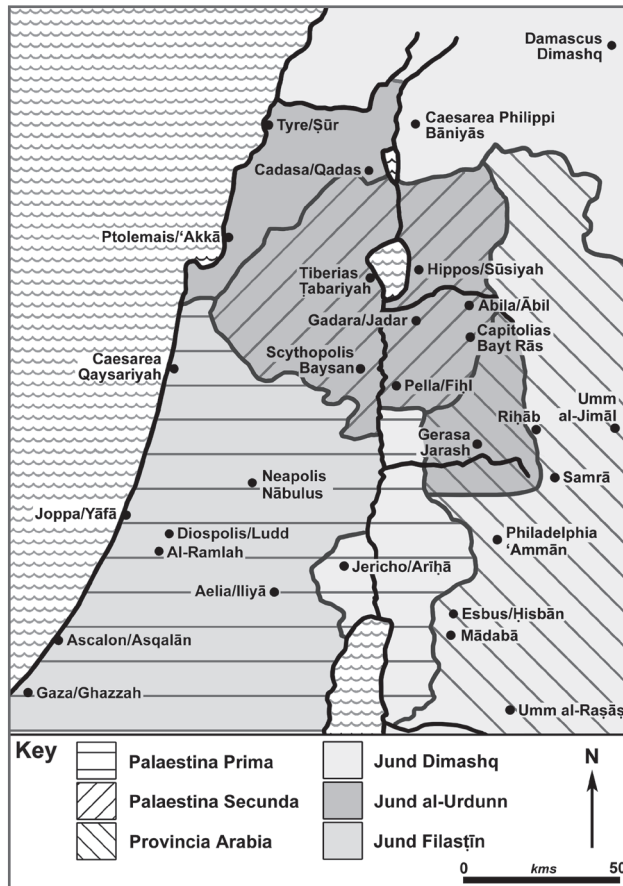
Figure 4.1. Map of the territories around Baysān/Scythopolis, Fiḥl/Pella and Jarash/Gerasa, showing late Roman and early Islamic provincial structures (Alan Walmsley).

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[27] Shboul and Walmsley, 'Identity and self-image', 255–287.

[28] Fisher, 'Emperors, politics, and the plague', 223–237; Little, *Plague and the End of Antiquity*; Mordechai and Eisenberg, 'Rejecting catastrophe', 3–50; Stathakopoulos, 'Death in the countryside', 105–114; and

more destructive. In this paper, we critically interrogate the habitual correlation in earlier scholarship between earthquakes and the absolute, or near-absolute, physical demolition of towns and their supposed abandonment by their surviving and fragmented communities. Rather, we argue that while the frequency, unpredictability and intensity of these disasters would have posed significant social challenges, the archaeology shows that communities adapted variously yet successfully to a new reality, and life went on.[29] Not so, however, in the imaginative minds of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Anglo-European scholars and travellers, who created and lived by an imaginary 'terror of ruination' inflicted on these once stately cities, the merciless fate to which their Roman and Christian citizens had succumbed, and the environmental devastation wittingly imposed on the countryside.[30] In short, it was thought that the urban splendour of these towns had been ended abruptly and vindictively. The conception of a vacuous afterlife of towns desolated by 'absence', 'disintegration' and 'degradation' stemmed from a deepening conviction in late eighteenth-century Europe of the indisputable superiority of western Christian culture and belief in the ordained dominance of white Caucasian races. Met with scholarly complicity, such opinions granted legitimacy to the impetuous removal of obstructionist overburdens otherwise impeding access to the most sought-after archaeological levels.

In this section, we draw on archival and recent evidence from various sources, primarily archaeological, in further support of a contrary view to dark-age negativism still current in some quarters. We favour a more constructive and enlightening long-term approach, here appraised from the perspective of community and social resilience. Our focus is on the *trichōra* of Baysān, Fiḥl and Jarash that spanned, from west to east, the productive and strategic lush north Jordan Valley to the eastern mountains (Jabal ʿAjlūn) of Jordan (Fig. 4.1). Through recalling past work while being cognizant of the pro-imperialist, pro-colonial and pro-racist paradigms then current, and by integrating contemporary approaches and extensive archaeological discoveries, we analyse the adaptive abilities of three 'ordinary' districts noted for their long histories, civic pride, social relevance and traditions of self-sufficiency. In what was a time of heightened social development, their histories present a frank insight into communal resilience strategies and the tangible successes and failures that ensued.

Baysān and Fiḥl before and after AD 749

Baysān and Fiḥl are in direct sight of each other on either side (west and east) of the broad fertile expanse of the north Jordan (Baysān) valley (Fig. 4.2). From antiquity

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a possible pandemic mass burial, Kehrberg and Ostrasz, 'Ancient burials', 189–194. Overall, opinions remain cautious as to the nature, extent and impact of the plague.

[29] On similar community resilience in the fourth to sixth centuries, see Lewit, 'A viewpoint', 44–75.

[30] Popularised in Bell, *The Desert and the Sown* and Macaulay and Beny, *Pleasure of Ruins*; while heavily prejudiced, both remain in demand. For faults in archaeology, see Silberman, 'Thundering hordes', 611–623.

to British Mandate times, these strategically positioned centres were inextricably linked.[31] With a tropical climate, copious water, a rich yet mixed terrain and extensive connections to sea and land, both towns had experienced more than three millennia of urban history, visually encapsulated at each in a dominant ancient *tall* (archaeological mound) before the founding of the Hellenistic to early Islamic period towns; hence, an urban identity was the norm (Fig. 4.3).

Of the two towns Baysān, once called Scythopolis, stood apart due to its long-standing commercial and political advantage, culminating in its appointment as capital of Palaestina Secunda around the turn of the fifth century. Starting in the first to third century, a flurry of civic construction in local stone took place on an unsuitable and unstable topography of an undulating valley south of the pre-existing
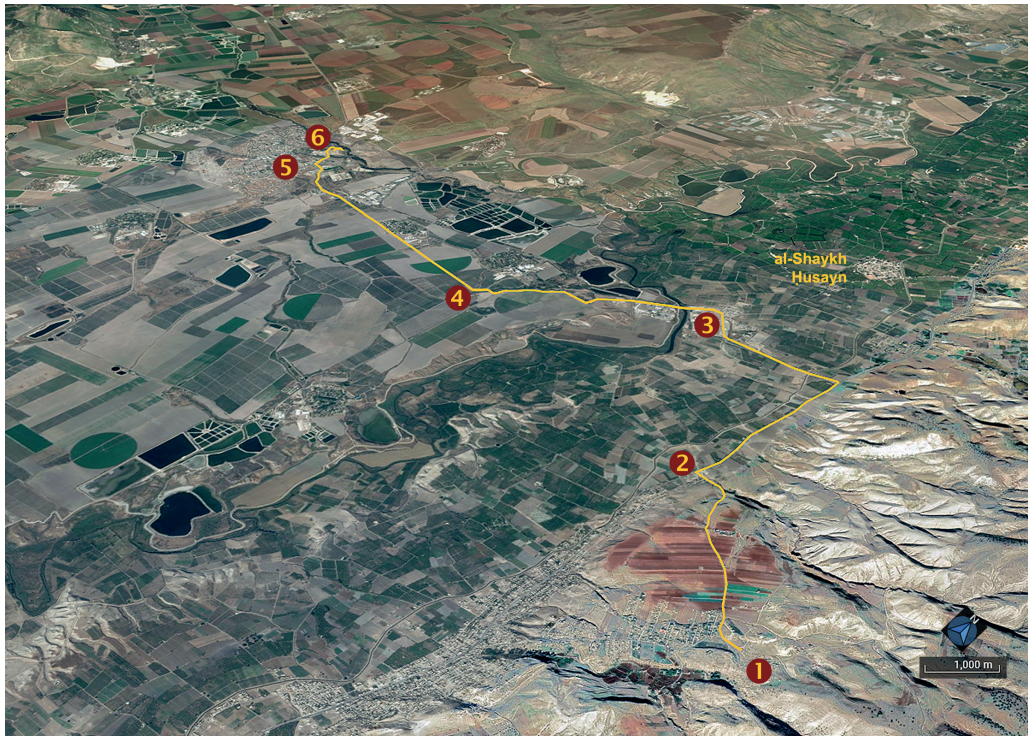
Figure 4.2. Topography between Baysān and Fiḥl showing the land route via al-Shaykh Ḥusayn crossing. Note all height measurements are minus (below sea level). (1) Fiḥl, -39 m (summit of tall); (2) floor of Jordan Valley (al-Ghawr), -202 m; (3) al-Shaykh Ḥusayn crossing, -274 m; (4) Ayn Nimrud, -246 m; (5) modern Baysān, -125 m; (6) Roman and early Islamic town, -151 m (lower town) (Base image: Google Earth, 20 August 2021).

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[31] Graf, 'Hellenisation and the Decapolis', 13. Three Jordan River fords connected the two towns, as recounted in Robinson and Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine 3,* 324–326; rupture came in 1948, Khalidi, 'The Palestinians and 1948', 13–14; Kark and Frantzman, 'Bedouin, Abdul Hamid II, British land settlement, and Zionism', 49.

Figure 4.3. The Wādī al-Jirm, the tall of Fiḥl and the red-earth ṭabaqah beyond, overlooking the north Jordan Valley; Baysān on the left in the distance (Alan Walmsley).

tall, the summit of which had been flattened centuries earlier for the construction of a temple complex dedicated to Zeus Akraios (Fig. 4.4 [21], Fig. 4.5).[32] As the primary Decapolis town, Scythopolis provisioned itself with all the civic trappings needed to create a new and impressive 'classicising' town core, with temples, theatres, an odeum, thermae, a nymphaeum, a basilica, a forum, piazzas and honorific monuments jammed into the space (Fig. 4.6). Rather than a lone, long axial street as at Jarash, four disjointed lengths of paved and colonnaded streets were laid out, creating a staggered sequence of urban vistas dominated by shops and monuments both celebratory and functional. Of these, Palladius Street (Fig. 4.4 [3]), so named by the excavators, formed the primary avenue, axially linking the theatre with temple gateways at the foot of the *tall* while offering an unimpeded straight line of sight to the elevated temple of Zeus Akraios. In addition to creating a public spectacle, the purpose was to provide a focus for commercial life in one place.

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[32] A detailed if dated account of the excavations at Baysān in the 1980s and 1990s can be found in Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 85–146; a succinct and up-to-date account of earlier and recent, narrative-changing, finds is that by Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, 55–71; see also Avni's comparative study '"From Polis to Madina" revisited', 301–329. Also crucial is the detailed account in the final report by Bar-Nathan and Atrash, *Baysān*, chapter 1.

Figure 4.4. Map of central Baysān (from R. Bar-Nathan and W. Atrash, Baysān, *5, plan 1.3).*
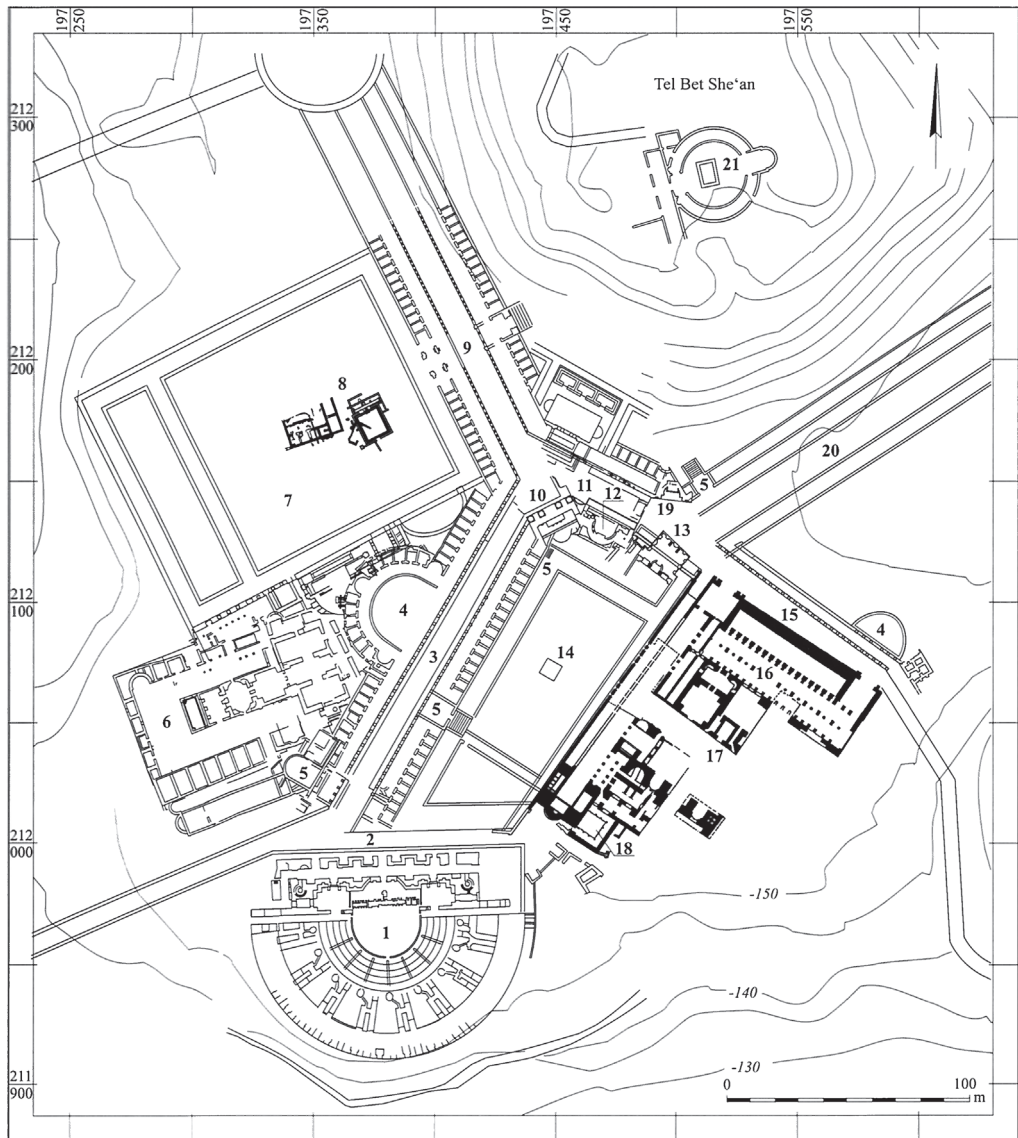
1.	Severan theater	8.	Byzantine building	15.	Silvanus Street
2.	Theater Street	9.	Northern Street	16.	Silvanus basilica
3.	Palladius Street	10.	Roman temple	17.	Eastern thermae
4.	Sigma	11.	Street of Monuments	18.	Eastern thermae latrine
5.	Propylaea	12.	Nymphaeum	19.	Monument of Antonius
6.	Western thermae	13.	Central monument (Roman altar)	20.	Valley Street
7.	Caesareum	14.	Agora	21.	Round church

From the fourth to mid-eighth centuries, a steady sequence of repaired, replaced, repurposed and new buildings refreshed the town's wider assemblage of civic monuments, whereas some contraction and abandonment occurred in other areas. Damage to buildings by twin earthquakes on the same day in 363 hastened an already trending process, most notably the shuttering of temples.[33] Repairs to existing monuments, such as the nymphaeum (Fig. 4.4 [12]), eastern bathhouse (Fig. 4.4 [17]), and a magnificent portico (Fig. 4.4 [16], predating a civic basilica), were limited to necessary buildings that served social, commercial and aesthetic purposes in Baysān's distinctive urban landscape.[34] By way of contrast the unwanted elements were, in time, replaced with new structures that better matched community requirements and facilitated financial gain. For instance, a porticoed agora with shops took the place of the Roman-period forum and secular basilica (Fig. 4.4 [14]), and a propylon court next to an access stairway to the summit

Figure 4.5. The tall *above the lower (monumental) town of Baysān, with the partially restored theatre in the foreground (Alan Walmsley).*

of the *tall* was converted into workshops – a commercial repurposing of disused urban space that became routine at Baysān in later centuries. Outside of the centre, monument replacement also occurred. The hippodrome was converted into an amphitheatre,[35] while what remained of the great temple on the *tall* was reduced to its foundations and replaced by a basilica church in the late fourth to early fifth century.[36] Perhaps then,

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[33] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 108–116, stating 'restorations emphasize the continuity and preservation of the Roman city', 114; Avni correctly sees this event as fostering already existing pressures for change in Baysān's urban morphology, Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, 59, 65. On the earthquake's ferocity see Ambraseys, *Earthquakes*, 148–151; Grigoratos *et al.*, 'An updated parametric catalog', 823 (Mw = 6.5); Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogue*, 264–267; Zohar *et al.*, 'Reappraised list', 798, fig. 3 (Average M = 6.7 'strong').

[34] An appreciation of a town's urban identity characterised an understanding of civic aesthetics into late antiquity, as seen at Umm al-Raṣāṣ; Duval, 'Le rappresentazoni architettoniche', 165–230. In addition, the enormity of the rebuilding task would have imposed keep/abandon decisions on the civic financiers.

[35] The late second-/early third-century Jarash hippodrome underwent a similar redesign following a partial collapse sometime in the fourth century; see Ostrasz, 'The hippodrome of Gerasa', 73.

[36] Fisher, 'The church at Beisan', 171–189; strongly supported in McKenzie, '4.1 Beth Shean (Scythopolis)' and in email exchanges. A heavily redacted version appears in Fitzgerald, *Beth-Shan Excavations 1921–23*, chapter 5 with, inexplicably, no mention of the basilica.

Figure 4.6. Streets and buildings of downtown Baysān (names ascribed by excavators). To right (west), Palladius Street (Fig. 4.4 [3]) foreground, Street of Monuments [11]; centre, Agora [14]; background (south) Severan theatre [1]; to left (east) of Agora, Eastern Baths [17–18]; to hard left, Silvanus Street [15] and Colonnade, later Silvanus Basilica [16]; view from the tall looking south (Alan Walmsley).

but probably later, a new paved road beginning at the northwest corner of the *tall* gave access to a walled ecclesiastical complex on the summit.[37] Sometime later again, likely in the seventh century, the basilica was badly damaged and replaced by a circular church (Fig. 4.4 [21]), into which some surviving walls of the basilica were incorporated.[38]

Other developments in the fifth and sixth centuries had a similar impact by realigning the form, function and fortunes of urban zones, with the primary focus on maintaining and improving the financial health and urban status of the town, or to compensate for losses. In addition to the repair and upgrading of streets and associated shops, new public buildings were commissioned at Baysān, notably a large bathhouse on a street in the western part of the town (Fig. 4.4 [6]) (fifth century, with early sixth century additions) and, next to it, the insertion of a semi-circular plaza with shops in 506–507 (Fig. 4.4 [4]), but at cost to the second-century Odeon.[39] Odeon conversions also happened at Fiḥl and Jarash, with that at Fiḥl potentially compelled by a rising water table in the Wādī al-Jirm where the Odeum, an adjacent bathhouse, a conjectured forum and other civic buildings were centred (Fig. 4.7 [3]).[40] To compensate for the loss of these important civic structures, a reconfigured layout for the central town was undertaken by constructing a grand staircase to access Fiḥl's central church from the west, allowing the insertion of a new marketplace where the once primary northern entrance was located.[41] Yet the most significant growth in both towns occurred in areas away from the centre, such as on the plateau south of the Baysān *tall* where the residential quarter around the hippodrome gained a new street and additional housing. Pointedly, in civic recognition of Baysān's elevated standing as the provincial capital of Palaestina Secunda, work commenced

[37] Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean*, 41–42, citing the laying of the pavers over 'a thick fill or debris dated to the Byzantine period'.

[38] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 109, propose a date of later fifth to early sixth century for the circular church, but this seems unlikely.

[39] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', bathhouse 113, 117, 119, 130–132, plaza 116, 121–122.

[40] Fiḥl: from the early sixth century, stone was salvaged from the odeum and, in the early seventh to eighth centuries, infilling of the *ima cavea* occurred over which an ironmonger's shop was built; Smith and Day, *Pella 2*, 4–8, 28–33; Jarash: the late fifth/early sixth century saw a conversion to non-civic (municipal) functions then the installation of pottery workshops in the seventh and eighth centuries; Clark and Bowsher, 'The Jerash north theatre', 231–247.

[41] Walmsley, 'The social and economic regime at Fihl', 253, turn of the seventh century; Smith and Day, *Pella 2*, 66–68, 79–82, 90–94, early seventh century.
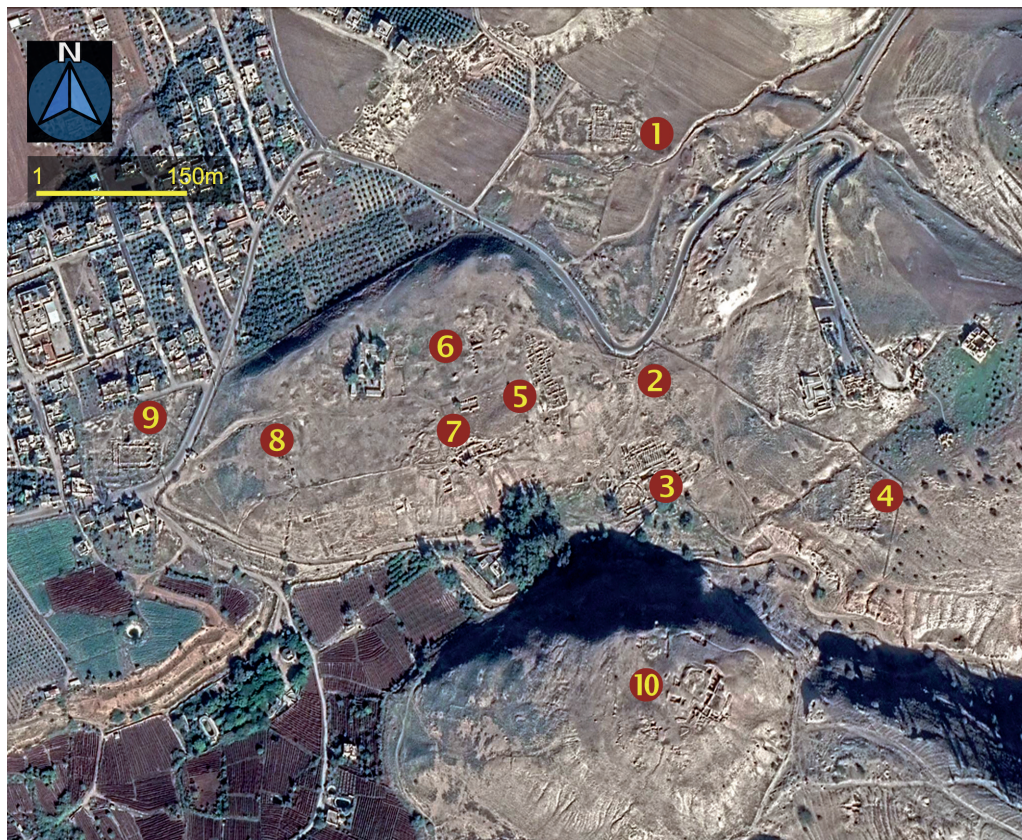
Figure 4.7. Features of pre- and post-749 Islamic Fiḥl. Note all height measurements are minus (below sea level). [1] Early Islamic commercial centre [khan] composed of two compounds, eight to tenth centuries (partially excavated), -44 m; [2] courtyard house, damaged in the 659 earthquake, -43 m; [3] central church and Odeon, -54 m, west (left) of which lies the heavily silted Wādī al-Jirm', -60 m; [4] East church, damaged in the 659 tremor and perhaps destroyed by the 749 earthquake, -20 m; [5] eastern tall residential quarter of the early sixth century, damaged in 659 tremor, destroyed in 749, with evidence for a ninth century rebuilding in the southern part, -42 m; [6] extremely abraded occupation area of surfaces, floors, stone wall stubs and deep refuse pits dating to the eighth/ninth to eleventh centuries, -38 m; [7] buildings with late tenth to eleventh century lustre-decorated glass and, north of the number, a later mosque of probable twelfth century date, -43 m; [8] west residential quarter (excavation back-filled), destroyed in 749, -51 m; [9] West church, evidence for earlier earthquake(s), probably 659, then great damage in 749, -60 m; [10] policing and administrative garrison on the summit of Tall al-Ḥuṣn, destroyed in 659 and not rebuilt, -2 m (Base image: Google Earth, 20 August 2021).

on a 4.8 km long circuit wall to connect up to six stand-alone gateways of Roman date originally built as markers at roads on the urban boundary. Of likely fifth-century date, these walls were repaired or completed in the first half of the sixth century. By that

time, however, the town had already expanded out into extramural 'suburbs' replete with their own churches and synagogues.[42]

In describing Baysān's urban environment after the mid-sixth century, Tsafrir and Foerster comment on a noticeable drop in new architectural projects following the first decades of the sixth century.[43] In resilience theory terms, a pause within a socio-economic system indicates a usually long period of 'conservation' (K-phase), but not 'decline'.[44] Looking through a lens of material and social collapse, Tsafrir and Foerster observed that the monuments suffered from 'concealment' and 'encroachment', and that infrastructure 'deteriorated' and was 'looted' as the supposed former grandeur of the one-time opulent communal-mercantile hub was 'organically' engulfed by unregulated commercial activity, including polluting pottery making and cloth manufacture. Buildings suffered from 'neglect', space was commandeered and municipal systems 'disintegrated' – all compounded by natural disasters.[45] References to Kennedy's exemplary article of 1985 are made in support of this pessimistic view, but Tsafrir and Foerster are not alone in their one-sided comprehension of Kennedy's paper on the reallocation and repurposing space and function in urban environments.[46]

As previously noted, the seventh and eighth centuries were challenging times, yet Baysān and Fiḥl managed to navigate skilfully even the worst of disasters in a mark of significant social accord and financial acumen.[47] Bar-Nathan and Atrash concur that known military activities by Sasanian and Muslim forces early in the seventh century were of low to next-to-no impact on Baysān,[48] as was the case for Fiḥl and most other towns in Arḍ al-Shām.[49] Deleterious to the urban fabric of Baysān and Fiḥl some twenty-five years later was a 'strong' earthquake centred on the Jordan Valley in or around 659.[50] Urban Fiḥl was badly impacted, resulting in further and permanent reconfigurations to the town's layout. Early evidence for this earthquake

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[42] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 100–104.

[43] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 101, 106, 116–118, 135–146.

[44] Bradtmöller *et al.*, 'Resilience theory in archaeological practice'.

[45] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'From Scythopolis to Baysân', 109–115; Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 136–146; it should be noted that Tsafrir and Foerster did not intend to cover the Islamic periods in detail, so defaulting to a prevailing paradigm should not surprise.

[46] Kennedy, 'From *Polis* to *Madina*', 3–27; Kennedy, 'Gerasa and Scythopolis', 199–204. It is the complacent embrace of Kennedy's one-stop retrospective guide to the 'end of classical urbanism' that has rewarded his paper with overwhelming credence. For a revised reading, see Avni, '"From Polis to Madina" revisited'.

[47] Essential is the overview in Bar-Nathan and Atrash, *Baysān*, 1–15, which resets understanding of Baysān in the seventh and eighth centuries. Our dates in this paper may differ, but not the sequence.

[48] Bar-Nathan and Atrash, *Baysān*, 7.

[49] Walmsley, 'Pella/Fiḥl', 143, 146, 148. Historically, one of the earliest contests (likely AD 635) between Byzantine and Muslim allies took place in the Jordan Valley near the towns, with Fiḥl later submitting by treaty; al-Balādhurī transl. Hitti, *The Origins of the Islamic State*, 176–177.

[50] Ambraseys, *Earthquakes*, 221–222; Grigoratos *et al.*, 'An updated parametric catalog', 823 (Mw = 6.2/6, aftershock); Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogue*, 357–358; Zohar *et al.*, 'Reappraised list', 798, fig. 3 (AvM = 6.6 'Strong').

was identified at the eastern end of the main mound in the 1979 to 1982 seasons (Fig. 4.7 [5]), where a residential area suffered a partial collapse of buildings following which an east–west access street was closed off and multi-roomed houses on two levels repaired and equipped with large private courtyards.[51] In the valley below the *tall*, the central church suffered significant damage that resulted in the permanent blocking of the Western portal only decades old and the reinstatement of the main entrance on the northern side (Fig. 4.7 [3]).[52] The colonnade at the top of the church staircase seemingly collapsed at this time. An unwillingness to restore the portico and staircase suggests that the earthquake caused havoc in the valley, with broad evidence for land movement causing architectural slumping and infilling with coarse alluvium and boulders, the remediation of which would have been Sisyphean. Later excavations by Watson on the summit of Tall al-Ḥuṣn (Fig. 4.7 [10]), which commenced in 1988, identified a multi-phase 'policing and administrative garrison' similarly destroyed in 659, a date established by secure ceramic comparisons with the corpus from excavations of the eastern residential area on the main mound.[53] The site, regardless of its commanding view over the Jordan Valley, was not reoccupied. Likewise, work by da Costa in a third location east of the main mound exposed a derelict courtyard house that was not rebuilt after an apparent mid-seventh-century collapse, although evidence of animal butchering reveals continued use of the space (Fig. 4.7 [2]).[54]

The severe impact of the 659 earthquake is more obvious at Baysān, given the extent of excavations there. As at Fiḥl, post-earthquake rebuilding programs focussed on freeing space and enabling civic recovery programs in response to post-earthquake expectations on the rebuilding of urban infrastructure, economic opportunities and the revitalisation of community belonging. One informative case was the complete collapse of the sixth-century civic basilica on Silvanus Street (Fig. 4.4 [16]), and its replacement on the south side of the street by a string of twenty new shops set behind arched colonnades (Fig. 4.8).[55] The discovery of two mosaic inscriptions from a fallen portal in the south colonnade identified construction as commissioned by the Caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–743) and implemented by the governor (*amīr*) of the Jund al-Urdunn.[56] Other public buildings, outdated and weakened by tectonics, lost any remnant of their original function; rather, their value was measured in reusable building stone and as suitable locations for large pottery and linen workshops in need

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[51] Walmsley, 'The social and economic regime at Fihl'. 254–255; Walmsley, 'Households at Pella'. 250–251.

[52] Smith and Day, *Pella 2*, 79–82, 90–94; earthquake damage was likely exacerbated by increased *wādī* wash, commonly allied with a variety of environmental and human causes, Walmsley, 'The village ascendant', 519–520.

[53] Watson and Tidmarsh, 'Pella/Tall al-Husn excavations 1993', 303.

[54] da Costa *et al.*, 'New light on late antique Pella', 518, 525–527.

[55] Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 138–139. Arched street colonnades also feature at early eighth century ʿAnjar, a new foundation in the Biqāʿ valley of Lebanon; Finster, 'Researches in ʿAnjar', 210–212.

[56] Khamis, 'Two wall mosaic inscriptions', 159–176; the south colonnade flanked the back wall of the marketplace and was part of a second building phase; unclear is the structure to which the colonnade and portal faced.

Figure 4.8. Restored colonnade of the arcade of shops on Silvanus Street, commissioned by the Caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 743) (Alan Walmsley).

of easy access and water supplies. In this way the theatre (Fig. 4.4 [1]), east and west baths (Fig. 4.4 [17 and 6]), the agora (Fig. 4.4 [14]) and former Caesarion (Fig. 4.4 [7]) were given new purpose unrelated to their original role. At the same time, market activity along the streets was maintained with new rows of shops reclaiming derelict areas and infilling open zones, for which the uneven stone paving of narrowed streets was resurfaced to favour the hooves and feet of work animals – mules, donkeys, horses, oxen and camels – and to protect the precious cargos they carried.[57] Hence gravel and earth layers over streets were often intentional interventions, not a mark of decline.

Not all disasters and calamities can be attributed solely to earthquakes, it seems. At Baysān, shops opposite the nymphaeum (Fig. 4.4 [12]) were ravaged by fire sometime in the sixth to seventh century, while structures in the vicinity were similarly impacted by fire and abandonment.[58] That same fire could have engulfed the basilica church on the summit of the *tall*, although the intensity of a major disaster – such as the earthquake of 659 – is a more likely reason given the force required.[59] In part, the simplified

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[57] Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, 32, 106, carts and wagons were rare; major role of camels: Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana. Volume 3*, 209–211; restorative surfacing of streets with gravel, earth and plaster is documented at Jarash, Fiḥl and Ṣaffūriyah/Sepphoris; Fihl: Hennessy *et al.*, 'Preliminary report', 299–300. Ṣaffūriyah: Weiss, 'Sepphoris', 202.

[58] Agady *et al.*, 'Byzantine shops', 430–432 and 442–444.

[59] Not credible is the burning of the church during the 529 Samaritan revolts, often evoked as a cause at Baysān, as coins found in the burnt shops postdate that event.

build of the circular church that followed, mirrored at Fiḥl,[60] suggests reconstruction was impaired by shifting loyalties as community-based churches and monasteries in residential areas became the focus of social life and, by association, financial resources during the later sixth into eighth centuries.[61] In these altered circumstances, Baysān's diminished summit church no longer presided over a valley of grand civic monuments, but instead looked away from a landscape of crumbling relics linked to a renounced pagan past that, after some five centuries, were seen only fit to house choking industries and their workers. The functioning heart of municipal Baysān, in the meantime, had moved to the more genial southern plateau, where it was to stay.

The 'Hishām' market at Baysān reveals the deliberate intentions of central and provincial administrations to intervene and maintain economic livelihoods and the communities they sustained after the 659 earthquake.[62] What is not clear, however, is if further plans for urban renewal were in place, the momentum for which was likely anaemic at Baysān given that, earlier in the seventh century, Ṭabariyah had been promoted to the role of provincial capital in the Jund al-Urdunn, thereby benefitting from an increase in prestige and investments.[63] In any case, events were to rapidly overtake any intended plans when just ninety years later, in 749, Baysān suffered catastrophic losses to its urban structure, economic productivity and community well-being due to a violent earthquake, the epicentre of which was situated in the Baysān basin/Lake Tiberias region.[64] The consequences of this irreversible loss of place and forceful disruption to community would have caused profound social and financial pain, further intensified by the damage inflicted on the neighbouring towns of Fiḥl, Jadar, Ṭabariyah, Sūsiyah/Hippos and further afield.[65] Nevertheless, the archaeology shows that Baysān and Fiḥl, although battered communities, emerged from this

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[60] The substandard repairs to the East Church at Fiḥl, likely after the same earthquake, was 'aesthetically appalling' with shorter columns and the nave open to the heavens; see McNicoll, 'The East Church', 160–163.

[61] Weaker church finances due to fiscal reforms: Walmsley, 'Coinage', 27–29; a shift in community church building to residential suburbs and villages, Di Segni, 'Epigraphic documentation', 149–178; Di Segni, 'Late antique inscriptions', 287–320, 609–615.

[62] An arrangement at Baysān not dissimilar in practical terms to that of the prior Byzantine administration; Tsafrir and Foerster, 'Urbanism at Scythopolis', 119–120.

[63] On Ṭabariyah, which expanded rapidly from the eighth century, see Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, index.

[64] This variously dated earthquake is now generally accepted by archaeologists to have occurred on 18 January 749, Tsafrir and Foerster, 'The dating of the 'Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year'', 231–235; Tsafrir, 'Further notes', 111–120. Seismologists disagree: Ambraseys, *Earthquakes*, 230–238, 746; Grigoratos *et al.*, 'An updated parametric catalog', 821–823: 747 (Mw = 7.0). Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogue*, 366–370: 749; Zohar *et al.*, 'Reappraised list', 798, fig. 3: 749/early 750. (AvM = 7.2 'Major' with 'many lives lost'). It remains open as to whether there were two or more earthquakes. Ambraseys is 'inclined to think that ... there should have been at least three sizable earthquakes, if not more, during the period 746–757', *Earthquakes*, 234.

[65] Katz *et al.*, 'Quaternary earthquakes and landslides', 275–294; Marco *et al.*, 'Archaeology, history, and geology', 665–668. Jadar: El Khouri and Omoush, 'The Abbasid occupation at Gadara', 11–25; Vriezen, 'Area I', 14–15.

'severe and sudden' disaster socially intact, asset-rich, networked and motivated to rebuild. Facing an irreversibly altered geophysical and environmental reality, the implementation of a set of pragmatic adaptive strategies not only refurbished a scarred urban landscape, but also managed the trauma and loss felt at the family level, inducing people to stay. The horror of entrapment and gruesome deaths inflicted on victims of the 749 earthquake is graphically documented by the excavation of six multi-storied dwellings at the east end of the main mound at Fiḥl (Fig. 4.7 [5]). Heavy mudbricks from the walls of the upper floor plunged inwards filling the ground floor rooms, in the process trapping animals (from bovines to equids, chickens and cats) and at least five, up to ten, humans, all caught in the panic of nature's dreadful paroxysm.[66] A large section of one house caught fire, carbonising two victims. Later, no appreciable attempt was made to recover the bodies of dead, nor were valuable objects retrieved such as coins in precious metals,[67] and no evidence for digging into the collapse was identified. The lingering reminder of the dead, left entombed in the ruins, would have evoked painful memories, and prolonged feelings of helplessness, loss and an absence of closure among survivors. For some time, maybe decades, these debilitating emotions inhibited resettlement on the Fiḥl *tall,* but settlement did return. In the 1987 excavation season, a deep cesspit was encountered, replete with finds of ceramic, metal, bone, glass and eggshell (Fig. 4.7 [6]), while recently extensive ninth to eleventh century occupational levels have been verified on the *tall* (Fig. 4.7 [7]); these discoveries only touch the edges.[68]

One tangible outcome of the 749 earthquake was a recast urban design for Baysān, the first for some seven centuries, that lasted almost intact until the eleventh century, but of which elements persevered down into Mandate times.[69] The most revealing aspect of this new urban plan was its radical tilt towards what can be termed post-classical modernism. A substantially different concept of what constituted a functional town was embraced, one founded on an urban expectation in support of administrative, military and residential requirements standing dominantly on an enclosed highpoint with additional, and expandable, space for urban, commercial and communal activities below. Out of disaster there emerged a new Baysān, physically transformed yet socially, politically and economically still deeply integrated into its parent province of the Jund al-Urdunn. In this case, the release domain (Ω-phase, often equated with 'collapse') of resilience theory was navigated in one catastrophic

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[66] Walmsley, 'Households at Pella'. On pp. 247–250, the paper touches on other locations with striking evidence of the 749 earthquake at Fiḥl, notably the central church complex and market with victims (Area 9) mentioned earlier, also the west and east churches (Areas 1 and 5), and a second domestic quarter on the main mound (Area 8). On page 250 the words 'robbing' and 'looting' are used; these words are no longer part of Walmsley's archaeological vocabulary.

[67] Walmsley, 'Islamic Coins', 59–60, 147–149.

[68] Edwards *et al.*, 'Preliminary report', 81–86 (pit), O'Hea in da Costa *et al.*, 'New light on late antique Pella', 523–525 on lustre-painted Islamic glass; McPhillips, pers. comm.

[69] Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, 65–68 offers a precise account of Baysān in the mid-eighth to eleventh centuries.
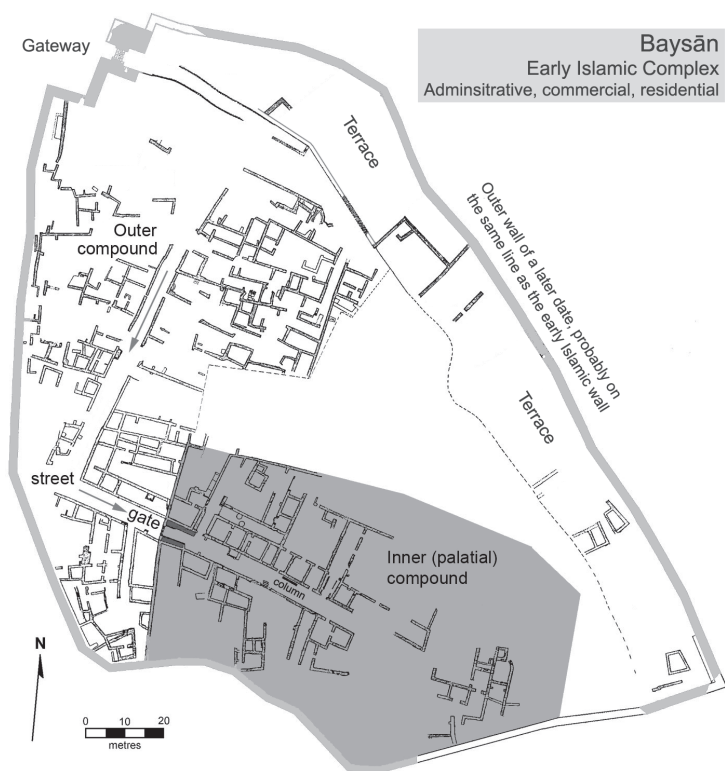
Figure 4.9. Plan of the post-749 earthquake administrative complex at Baysān, c. later eighth to eleventh centuries (based on G. M. Fitzgerald, Beth-Shan Excavations 1921–23. *foldout plan, modified by Alan Walmsley).*

event and its aftermath, the eventual outcomes from which brought Baysān centuries of continuing success.

What were the distinctive urban features of this new Baysān? Arriving at the site for the first season in June 1921, C. S. Fisher noted that '[o]n the summit the traces of the latest fortress are clearly visible',[70] which comprised a stone-built circuit wall and perimeter gate encasing the top of the mound. When interpreting his subsequent excavations, which removed in their entirety the upper levels of the *tall*, Fisher stated that the wall would have enclosed a large building complex set out around a Z-shaped central thoroughfare, somewhat reminiscent of the split streets of the 'downtown' commercial centre (Fig. 4.9). Access was via the same approach road that once reached the churches, terminating at a point where a later gateway now stands.[71] From there, a street headed up a slope towards the south-

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[70] Fisher, 'Dairy [sic] of Beisan Excavations', 6–7.

[71] Mazar argues that the outer circuit wall post-dates earlier Islamic structures, as it butts against the late gateway; Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean*, 44–46. This leaves open the question of a possible earlier outer circuit wall.

east before abruptly turning at a right-angle to the right (south-west) to continue in a straight line upwards towards the summit for more than 80 metres, then took another right-angle turn to the left (south-east), reaching, after 25 metres, a second gate with long seat benches commonly found at reception gateways in early Islamic Arḍ al-Shām. From this gate, and on the same trajectory, a street some 70 metres long ran between at least six intricately decorated courtyard buildings of considerable size, all situated on the highest point of the summit and encased within a circuit wall.

Fisher recognised the complex for what it was: a bipartite administrative centre with commercial and residential quarters culminating in a palace at the high point of the *tall*.[72] An origin in the Umayyad period has been commonly stated, but this convenient assumption does not withstand scrutiny.[73] Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions roughly incised on fallen and later buried monolithic columns from the circular church necessarily predate the building of the bipartite complex but, given the orientation of the inscriptions (lengthwise), they must also postdate the collapse of the church. Of the five inscribed columns, four were found beneath the complex, while one ended up lying prone close to a wall on the axial street of the palace. The latter was the most inscribed column with five written in Arabic and two in Hebrew. One of the Arabic inscriptions records a date of 190 H (AD 806), which is seen as broadly applicable to all the inscriptions given their shared style and histories. Accordingly, the columns require a construction date for the complex between the 749 earthquake and the early ninth century. In addition Mazar, when discussing the construction date of the administrative complex, makes the important observation that 'no clear signs' of an earthquake were observed on the *tall* from either the Pennsylvania Museum or the Hebrew University excavations, further backing a construction date after the 749 destruction of the Round Church.[74] Later architectural modifications to the bipartite complex and a broad range of finds such as pottery, steatite bowls, lamps and metalwork demonstrate a long period of habitation, perhaps into the eleventh century.[75]

As interest in the archaeology of the earlier Islamic periods intensified in the 1980s, attention returned to Baysān and its place in the Jund al-Urdunn. As already noted, renewed excavations on the *tall* by Mazar recovered additional information that strengthened an understanding of Fisher's discoveries.[76] On the south plateau, new discoveries have revealed an active programme of post-earthquake renewal dated

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[72] The complex strongly aligns with the eighth-century palatial installation on the ʿAmmān Citadel; see Northedge, *Studies on Roman and Islamic Amman*, chapters 7, 11.

[73] As concisely articulated in Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, 66–68.

[74] Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean*, 44.

[75] The Beth Sheʾan archives in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology holds a more extensive range of excavated material than the small collection published in Fitzgerald, *Beth-Shan Excavations 1921–23*.

[76] Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean*, 12, table 1.1, 42–44.

by inscriptions of 753 and 794/795, the latter from a congregational mosque.[77] Large residences in continuous use from the mid/late eighth to eleventh centuries along with a possible fortress were uncovered. Around the same time, dwellings were built over buried sections of the former, earthquake devastated, town in the lower valley without reference to the pre-earthquake layout (Fig. 4.10), indicating that the land rights of previous owners no longer applied.[78]

Figure 4.10. Post-749 buildings at Baysān located above the earthquake destruction level of Valley Street (Fig. 4.4 [20]); the underlying destruction level can be seen on the left (Alan Walmsley).

In comparison to Baysān, the extent of community rebuilding at Fiḥl, structurally and socially, after the 749 earthquake is unequally known.[79] Nevertheless, initial work in the 1980s located clear evidence for the implementation of rebuilding strategies intended to regenerate Fiḥl's status as a functioning district town. Convinced that post-749 occupation was likely after encountering 'an extraordinary eighth-century courtyard house' with others between 1979 and 1982,[80] a search commenced for evidence that might question the then prevailing paradigm of site abandonment.[81] 'Abandonment' did not make any sense and passed only as an excuse to ignore centuries of activity. Soundings at stone structures in a broad and accessible valley immediately northeast of the *tall* during the 1985 season, followed by larger seasons in 1988–1990 and 1993, resulted in the partial excavation of two sizeable rectangular compounds separated by a street (Fig. 4.7 [1]).[82] The better-known eastern compound consisted of multiple rooms on four sides of a central courtyard entered from the west, a plan reminiscent of a khan. The likely existence of a second floor is indicated by a wide and gently rising staircase at the junction of the entrance passage and courtyard. There were two main occupational periods, the second identified by a reconfiguration of room space and a shift in activity to glass working. The main product was sleek drinking beakers with pincer-impressed motifs in an Egyptian style widely appreciated during the ninth

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[77] The proactivity represented by the mosque work may be seen as further supporting a late eighth-century date for the construction of the bipartite administrative complex.

[78] Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition*, 65–66.

[79] Interest in the Islamic periods at Fiḥl became less of a priority after the 1980s, despite the advances made in that decade.

[80] Bowes, '*Housing in Late Antiquity* [review]', 385

[81] Johns, 'The *longue durée*', 1–3, 30–31. Some presence was necessary to explain the existence of later eighth- and ninth-century cultural remains; Smith and Day, *Pella 2*, 50–52, 118–119. The once common idea of alien nomads and squatters using (abusing) supposedly abandoned archaeological sites after antiquity is confronted by contemporary questions on origins, ownership and colonial aspirations, a legacy that remains.

[82] Walmsley *et al.*, 'The eleventh and twelfth seasons', 210–231.

to tenth centuries. The glassware, like the pottery, stands out as starkly different in design to that recovered from the mid-eighth century earthquake deposits on the *tall*, an indication of just how far Fiḥl had progressed culturally and economically over the two or more centuries since its near destruction.

Jarash before and after AD 749

Jarash – our third case-study – displays a very different trajectory from Baysān and Fiḥl. Although Jarash continuously reinvented itself based on the needs emerging from religious beliefs, economic strategies and urban priorities, we also detect a high level of un-interrupted continuity spanning more than a millennium of the town's history.[83] Jarash was subject to a number of major disasters, such as plague and earthquakes, but none shook the town (or the scholarly imagination) as much as that of 749. On the following pages, Jarash's urban development is summarised with an emphasis on layout and usage before the earthquake of 749 and the strategies employed by its inhabitants in the rebuilding that followed the disaster.[84]

   Jarash is located some 40 km south-east of Fiḥl in the hilly region of northern Jordan in an area that is rich in natural springs and agricultural potential.[85] Jarash's settlement history can be traced from *c.* 8000 BC, where remains of a Neolithic mega-site have been excavated on Tall Abū Ṣuwwān at the southern extent of the modern city.[86] A Bronze and Iron Age settlement was centred on the southern parts of Jarash, but it has left no traces after the seventh century BC.[87] The archaeological evidence suggests that Jarash's urban history commenced in the second century BC with the foundation of a town called Antioch on the Chrysorrhoas.[88] This settlement was centred on an early incarnation of the Temple of Zeus and the Camp Hill (Fig. 4.11 [25 and south of 22]),[89] and stretched north towards the later south transverse street (also known as the South Decumanus) where a system of streets

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[83] For an analogous case, see Whiting, this volume.

[84] Some of this ground is also covered in Blanke, '(Re)constructing Jarash' and in Rattenborg and Blanke 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages'.

[85] Our understanding of Jarash's history is based almost exclusively on the archaeological remains found in the western part of town. Hardly anything is known about the urban settlement on the eastern side of the river as this part of Jarash has been the focus of the modern occupation.

[86] al-Nahar, 'The Neolithic site'. See also discussion of Jarash's early settlement history in Braemer, 'Two campaigns of excavations'.

[87] Braemer, 'Two campaigns of excavations', 527.

[88] Braemer, 'Two campaigns of excavations'; Kennedy, 'The Identity of Roman Gerasa', 55. The name Gerasa is a Greek version of a Semitic name (Jarash) for the city that was in use continuously throughout its history. For the etymology of Jarash's two ancient names, see Kraeling, 'The history of Gerasa', 27, note 3.

[89] Kraeling, 'The history of Gerasa', 28–34; Uscatescu and Martín Bueno, 'The Macellum of Gerasa', 67; Zayadine, 'The Jarash Project'. Only a few structures that predate the Roman period have been unearthed (mainly near the Temple of Zeus), but excavations on the southwest hilltop in 2017 revealed what may have been a pre-Roman access point to a karstic spring, while also presenting evidence for a Hellenistic-period cemetery. See contributions by Martínez Jiménez and Paparlardo in Blanke

1 Synagogue
2 Church of Bishop Isaiah
3 North Theatre
4 North Tetrapylon
5 North Baths
6 North Gate
7 Prophets Church
8 Church of Bishop Genesius
9 Triple Church Complex
10 Temple of Artemis
11 Church of St Theodore
12 The Cathedral
13 Artemis Stairs
14 Propylaeum Church
15 Eastern Baths
16 Mortuary Church
17 Church of Ss Peter & Paul
18 Umayyad House
19 Congregational mosque
20 Macellum
21 South Tetrakionion
22 House of the Blues
23 Procopius Church
24 South Theatre
25 Temple of Zeus
26 Oval Piazza
27 South Gate
28 Hippodrome
29 Church of Bishop Marianos
30 Hadrian Gate

Gerasa - Jerash -
General plan of archaeological remains
within the modern city

map by Thomas Lepaon 2010. Used with permission.

0   100   500 m

Figure 4.11. Map of Jarash showing the city's main monuments (© Thomas Lepaon).

Figure 4.12. View from the elevated Temple of Zeus towards the north foregrounding the Oval Piazza and Jarash's axial street (author).

that followed Jarash's natural contours and pre-dated the Roman-period street grid have been identified.[90]

Jarash, along with other Decapolis cities, saw an expansive building boom in the first and second centuries AD during which most of the town's famous monuments were constructed. The urban elite invested enormous sums to present Jarash as a Romanised provincial town by building monumental architectural complexes organised along colonnaded thoroughfares that were lined with shops and public fountains and intersected in large open squares (Fig. 4.12). Some of the major building activities that took place at this time included the inauguration of the rebuilt Temple of Zeus in 163 (Fig. 4.11 [25]); a series of fountains on the town's axial street (also known as the Cardo) of which the Nymphaeum (adjacent to [12] on Fig. 4.11) was the most elaborate; as well as the construction of the South and North Theatres (Fig. 4.11 [24 and 3]), the Macellum (Fig. 4.11 [20]), and the East and West Baths (Fig. 4.11

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et al., 'A millennium of unbroken habitation'. See also Seigne, 'Jérash Romaine et Byzantine', on the development of the Temple of Zeus and the Hellenistic-period town.

[90] See summary of the chronology of streets in Jarash's southwest district in Blanke, 'Abbasid Jerash Reconsidered', 47–50. The southern section of the main NS street (running from the Oval Piazza [26] to the South Tetrapylon [21]) is commonly believed to be the earlier section of the Roman-period street grid constructed in the second century and perhaps originating with an earlier version dating to the first century. For studies of the development of Jerash's principal thoroughfares, see Kraeling, 'The history of Gerasa', 42; Parapetti, 'Architectural and urban space in Roman Gerasa', 58–62; Seigne, 'À l'ombre de Zeus et d'Artemis', 186–187; Seigne, 'Jérash Romaine et Byzantine', 185–194; Seigne 'Quelques remarques'.

[22 and 5]).[91] An inscription on the Triumphal Arch at the town's southern entrance commemorates a visit to Jarash by the emperor Hadrian in the winter of 129–130 (Fig. 4.11 [30]).[92] The construction of the adjacent Hippodrome (Fig. 4.11 [28]) may also commemorate this event.[93]

From the fourth to the sixth century, Jarash saw a radical transformation of its usage of urban space in which new religious ideas as well as shifting economic priorities were accommodated within the built environment. The institutionalisation of Christianity and its inauguration as the state religion in the fourth century introduced extensive changes to Jarash, which were manifested in the physical transformation of the urban landscape. The most direct consequence of the rise of Christianity was the gradual abandonment of the two great temples and the construction of more than twenty churches and shrines from the fourth to seventh century – the latest known foundation (611) being recorded in a mosaic in the Church of bishop Genesius (Fig. 4.11 [8]).[94] The use of Jarash's two great temples (for their original purposes) was discontinued. Instead, the Temple of Zeus served as a stone quarry including a stone cutter's workshop, in which building blocks were recut for use elsewhere in town.[95] Other parts of the temple served as a metal workshop and as a dumping ground for waste products from a nearby ceramic kiln.[96]

Other monuments were also diverted from their original purposes. The Hippodrome, for example, saw a multitude of uses after its discontinuation as a racecourse in the fourth or fifth century. The *cavea* that lined the structure on its north, east and west sides were converted for multiple purposes, some serving as tanneries (also found within the former Macellum) and workshops for the manufacture of ceramics.[97]

The transformation of Jarash in the fourth to the sixth century entailed not only the repurposing of existing buildings, but also the reconfiguration of entire urban quarters. The area south-east of the Temple of Artemis, for example, was redeveloped to accommodate the construction of a massive church complex comprising the Cathedral, the church of St. Theodore, the Fountain Court, the Clergy House and a bathhouse constructed in 454–455 by Bishop Placcus.[98] The bathhouse probably replaced an earlier bathing facility located to the east (across the Serapion Passage),

[91] Temple of Zeus: Seigne, 'Le Sanctuaire de Zeus', 287; Fountains and Nymphaeum: Pickett, 'Water after antiquity'; Seigne, 'Remarques préliminaires'; Seigne, 'Fountaines et adductions d'eau à Gerasa'; Macellum: Uscatesco and Martín Bueno, 'The Macellum of Gerasa'; Uscatesco and Martín Bueno, 'Evergetes and restorers'; West Baths: Lepaon, 'Les édifices balnéaires', 52–57.
[92] Seigne, 'Porquoi Hadrian'
[93] Kennedy, 'The Identity of Roman Gerasa', 62.
[94] Crowfoot, 'The Christian churches', 172; Kennedy, *Gerasa and the Decapolis*, 101.
[95] March, 'La réutilisation des éléments d'architecture'; Moralee, 'The stones of St. Theodore'.
[96] Kehrberg-Ostrasz, 'Jerash seen from below. Part two', 120–122. Anne-Michéle Rasson-Seigne and Jacques Seigne have also proposed that the Temple of Zeus was used for monastic purposes from the mid-fifth to the mid-sixth century, 'La céramique de trois ensembles'.
[97] See Bessard, 'The urban economy', 397–406; Kehrberg-Ostrasz, 'Jerash Byzantine potters'.
[98] Crowfoot, 'The Christian churches', 201–226; Fisher 'Buildings of the Christian period'.

which was now used for the manufacture of glass.[99] Another nearby building was repurposed to accommodate the fitting of an industrial-sized stone-saw.[100]

In the north-west and south-west districts, new streets were laid out according to the Roman-period grid system. An 8 metre wide street, for example, has been traced over the course of 300 metres from the triple church of SS Cosmas and Damian, St. George and St. John to the south-west hilltop.[101] In resilience theory terms, the first to the sixth century should be perceived through the lens of 'growth/exploitation' (r-phase) characterised in the case of Jarash by a continuous flow of building activity in which structures and areas were added to the urban fabric and existing, but superfluous buildings were repurposed.[102]

Similar to the development at Baysān/Scythopolis, the turbulent seventh century mainly saw the consolidation of the existent urban fabric rather than the addition of new buildings.[103] Although the Persian and Arab conquests of 602–630 and 634 respectively had no direct negative impact on the physical fabric of the town, the seventh century appears to have been a time in which financial investments into the urban fabric went towards maintenance rather than building anew – in resilience theory terms, these developments signify the implementation of the 'conservation' (K-phase).

The Arab conquest in 634–638 not only brought about a change in rulership, but also the arrival of new religious beliefs. With the consolidation of the Umayyad Caliphate (661–750), the impact of the new governmental and religious agendas began to manifest themselves within the urban centres of the caliphate. The introduction of a new imperial religion had no immediate impact on the material culture of Jarash's Christian communities. On the contrary, evidence of the careful removal of figural representations in the mosaic floors of some (but not all) of Jarash's churches confirm the continuous usage of these religious buildings into the first half of the eighth century.[104] Similarly, the archaeological evidence from elsewhere in town suggests not only a continuation of existing practices but also a renewed investment in the built environment. Artisanal activities, for example, expanded in areas already dedicated to production with the construction of pottery kilns in the Artemis precinct (Fig. 4.11 [10]) and the North Theatre (Fig. 4.11 [3]).[105] Behind the Temple of Artemis, the excavation of structures under refurbishment provides a snapshot of a seemingly residential area in the first half of the eighth century.[106] Together, these examples

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99   Crowfoot, 'The Christian churches', 217.
100   Seigne, 'A sixth century water-powered sawmill at Jerash'.
101   Blanke, 'Abbasid Jerash Reconsidered', 47–49.
102   Bradtmöller *et al.*, 'Resilience theory in archaeological practice', 4.
103   The Church of Bishop Genesius (611) being an exception, see Crowfoot, 'The Christian churches', 172.
104   Sahner, 'The first iconoclasm of Islam', especially 34–42.
105   Artemis precinct: Brizzi *et al.*, 'Italian excavations at Jarash', 357–358; Parapetti *et al.*, 'The Italian activity', 188–192. North Theatre: Clark and Bowsher, 'The Jerash North Theatre', 235–239; Schaefer and Falkner, 'An Umayyad potters' complex'.
106   Lichtenberger *et al.*, 'A newly excavated private house'. Other significant studies of Jarash in the Umayyad period include Bessard, 'The urban economy'; Rattenborg and Blanke, 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages'.

form a picture of early Islamic Jarash as a time of renewed urban investment on both a communal and private scale.

The eighth century also saw the construction of a congregational mosque in the town's commercial centre at the intersection of the north–south axial street and the south transverse street (Fig. 4.13). The mosque replaced a bathhouse, which had been in use from the fourth century until its increasingly advanced state of disrepair led to it being discontinued and the building eventually dismantled to make way for the construction of a mosque. Jarash's congregational mosque was based on the layout of the Great Mosque in Damascus, which was built in the first half of the eighth century in the reign of the caliph al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 705–715). Alan Walmsley has proposed a construction date in the second quarter of the eighth century during the reign of the caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–743).[107] The mosque measured some 43 by 38 metres. It was accessed from the south street through a doorway almost 2 metres wide, which opened onto a porticoed courtyard. The southern third of the mosque was equipped with a roofed prayer hall with a central niche (*miḥrāb*).

In 749, after only a few decades of use, the mosque along with most of Jarash's urban fabric was devastated by one or more massive seismic events.[108] The damage caused by the earthquake and the following discontinuation of structures is well

Figure 4.13. Umayyad/ʿAbbāsid period congregational mosque in the intersection of Jarash's axial and south transverse streets (© Alan Walmsley/Islamic Jarash Project).

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[107] Walmsley and Damgaard, 'The Umayyad congregational mosque of Jarash', 363.
[108] See summary of textual sources pertinent to this earthquake in Ambraseys, *Earthquakes*, 230–238.

documented throughout Jarash and has led scholars to assume a total abandonment of the town – a sentiment that still lingers today.[109] The excavations within north-west Jarash have generally identified a discontinuation after the mid-eighth century. This is evident, for example, in and around the North Theatre, the Artemis precinct and the Propylaeum Church, and further west on the plateau behind the Temple of Artemis and along sections of the south transverse street.[110]

It is worth noting, however, that sporadic evidence of post-earthquake activities has been found throughout the town. Among these are a coin hoard found within the North Theatre which included a Ṭūlūnid dinar dated to 894 as well as ninth- to eleventh-century housing found south-east of the theatre's exterior wall.[111] Some traces of ʿAbbāsid-period occupation of the Macellum adds to the evidence as does pottery finds that suggest some continuous activity in the Temple of Zeus.[112]

Yet the evidence for continuous occupation after 749 is by far the strongest in Jarash's commercial and religious centre at the intersection of the two main thoroughfares and in the south-west district. Recent archaeological investigations in Jarash's south-west district suggests that this area was crucial to maintaining the central functions of urban life and therefore, the financial investment in the restoration of the town and the efforts put towards reconstruction were concentrated here.[113]

After the earthquake of 749, the mosque was rebuilt to its former dimensions, but its main entrance was blocked as was its central *miḥrāb*.[114] Instead, a new entrance was constructed on the axial street on the east side of the mosque, while a smaller doorway was set into the mosque's western wall giving access to the porticoed courtyard with an ablution feature set immediately inside the doorway. The prayer hall was subdivided into two with a smaller section set apart in the western end. A

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[109] Most recently in 2019, Lichtenberger and Raja have questioned the accuracy of the Islamic Jarash Project's interpretation of an extensive ʿAbbāsid-period rebuilding of the mosque. They have also questioned the results of the excavation of the Umayyad House on the north side of the south transverse street, which documented continuous usage into the ninth century. Lichtenberger and Raja states that 'for now, we need to return to the view that the earthquake of 749 indeed had a catastrophic impact on Jerash, and if anything survived, it was only a shadow of the city's former grandeur.' Lichtenberger and Raja, 'Defining borders', 282.

[110] North theatre: Ball *et al*., 'The North Decumanus', 365; Clark and Bowsher, 'The Jerash north theatre'; the Artemis precinct and the Propylaeum Church: Brizzi *et al*., 'Italian excavations at Jarash', 357–358; Plateau behind the Temple of Artemis: see, for example, Lichtenberger and Raja, 'Defining borders'; the south transverse street: Barghouti, 'Urbanization of Palestine and Jordan', 219–221.

[111] Clark and Bowsher, 'The Jerash north theatre', 237–238, 241–243.

[112] Macellum: Uscatescu and Martín Bueno, 'The Macellum of Gerasa', 82–84; Uscatescu and Marot, 'The Ancient Macellum of Gerasa', 297–299; Temple of Zeus: Bessard, 'The urban economy', 411 and fig. 14.

[113] Some of this ground is also covered in Blanke, '(Re)constructing Jarash' and in Rattenborg and Blanke, 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages'. See also Blanke, 'Abbasid Jerash Reconsidered'; Blanke *et al*., 'The 2011 season of the Late Antique Jarash Project'; Blanke *et al*., 'Excavation and magnetic prospection'; Blanke *et al*., 'A millennium of unbroken habitation'; Pappalardo, 'The Late Antique Jerash Project'.

[114] This paragraph is summarised from Walmsley, 'Urbanism at Islamic Jarash', 248–250.

new *miḥrāb* was constructed centrally in the shortened prayer hall, while another was added to the western enclosure. At some point a minaret was added to the north-east interior corner of the courtyard. Following the rebuilding of the mosque, shops were added to its east façade, just south of the new entrance and also across the axial street on its east side. Here, a large building that may have served an administrative purpose was rebuilt using the walls of an earlier building as foundations.[115] The reconfiguration of the mosque marks not only a substantial investment in the built environment after 749, but also allows us to identify a reduction in the importance of the western section of the south transverse street. Instead, the mosque was now accessed from the markets (to the east) and the habitation (to the west).[116]

At a later date, the mosque was reduced in size to utilise only the small enclosure in the western prayer hall. Access was gained from steps leading from an alleyway running north–south along the western side of the mosque, while a second staircase led to the roof, possibly to accommodate the call for prayer.

The 'Umayyad House', which is located across the street from the mosque, on the north side of the south transverse street saw a similar development. The original structure was erected around the middle of the seventh century, and it was used for commercial and artisanal purposes.[117] After the earthquake of 749, the foundation and surviving walls were refurbished and partitioned to create smaller structural units.[118] The final phase of its occupation in the ninth century comprised the construction of several ceramic kilns.[119]

The mosque and the adjacent commercial area were connected to the south-west hilltop through two streets (Fig. 4.14). Continuous occupation of the south transverse street after 749 has been observed beyond the Umayyad House and especially along the southern section of the street, but the main street of the 'Abbāsid-period settlement followed a different course. The pre-Roman street running from south-west towards north-east in Jarash's south-west district saw continuous usage through the centuries and in the 'Abbāsid period, it served as a main thoroughfare connecting the residential area on the hilltop with the settlement's commercial and religious centre. Here – and unlike Baysān and Fiḥl – Jarash displayed a rare example of urban continuity spanning more than a millennium.

The evidence from the residential area on the south-west hilltop confirms that 'substantial efforts, at a private, communal, and public level, must have gone into rebuilding and refurbishing houses, neighbourhoods, and the congregational

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[115] Blanke *et al.*, 'Changing cityscapes in central Jarash'; Rattenborg and Blanke, 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages'.

[116] For the markets, see Simpson, 'Market Buildings at Jarash'. For the habitation, see Rattenborg and Blanke, 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages' and also work by Blanke reporting the usage of the southwest hilltop.

[117] Gawlikowski, 'A residential area', 111.

[118] Gawlikowski, 'A residential area', 114–115.

[119] Gawlikowski, 'A residential area', 117.
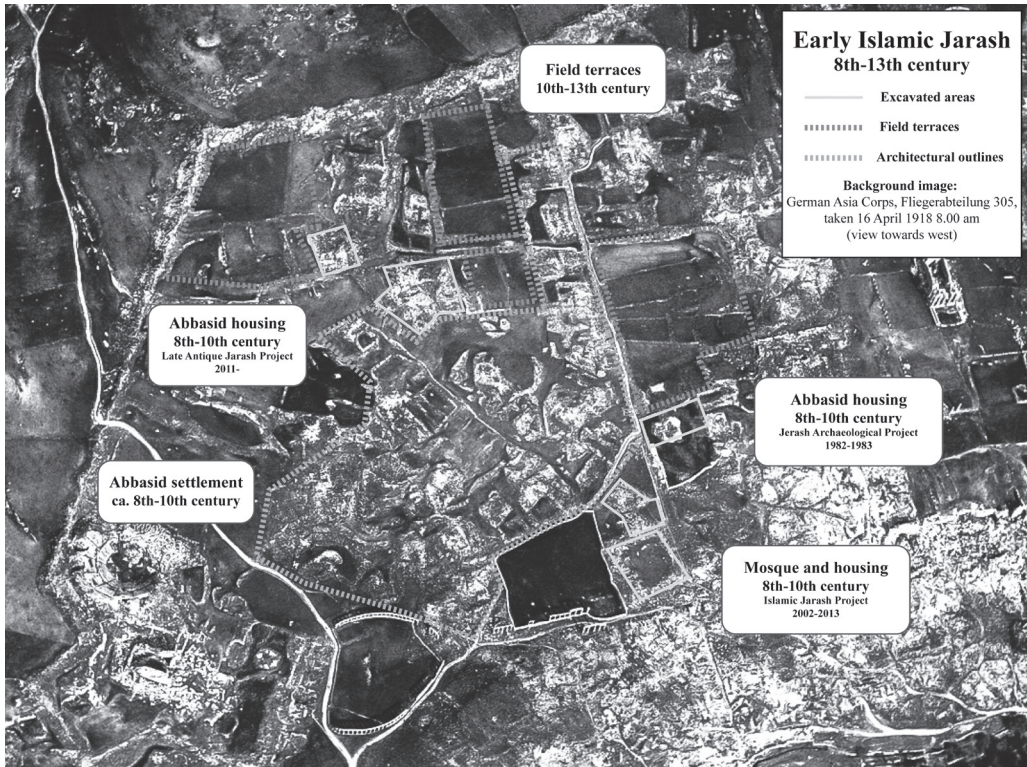
Figure 4.14. Distribution of attested eighth to tenth century occupation and suggested extent of contemporary ʿAbbāsid settlement and later field terraces. Note the concentration of buildings along the south side of the south transverse street and the street running SW–NE from the hilltop towards the mosque (© Rune Rattenborg (background image courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute, Archiv der Zentrale, Nachlass Theodor Wiegand, Luftbild Nr. 452. Used with permission)).

mosque soon after the earthquake of 749'.[120] So far, excavations in nine trenches have documented buildings of a residential nature with cisterns (perhaps reused from previous structures) for the collection of water. The residential structures excavated so far display a wealth of material culture as seen through the range of objects and high-quality ceramic table wares as well as architectural features built from repurposed Proconnesian marble.[121] The rebuilding of the mosque, shops and residential structures in the town centre and on Jarash's south-west hilltop following the earthquake of 749 marks the reorganisation (α-phase) of resilience theory following the release (Ω-phase), here triggered by a sudden destructive event.

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[120] Rattenborg and Blanke, 'Jaraš in the Islamic Ages', 13.
[121] A marble slab was identified as Proconnesian on site by Javier Martínez Jiménez. See also Blanke *et al.*, 'A millennium of unbroken habitation'.

The ceramic evidence, supported by ^{14}C dating, suggests that the hilltop area was abandoned in the ninth or tenth century, probably because of a series of disasters. One house was abandoned after a fire broke out, which caused the roof to collapse. Another house was abandoned after an earthquake. The recovery of large quantities of domestic items confirms that both houses were in use at the time of their collapse.

At this point, the archaeological evidence from the mosque and its adjacent residential structures suggests that the western segment of the town gradually contracted towards its original centre. The mosque remained in use but was reduced in size, while Jarash steadily transitioned from an urban settlement into a village community with an emphasis on intra mural agriculture.[122] We can trace the extent of the agricultural development in aerial photographs (Fig. 4.14) and in the excavations of Asem Barghouti along a north–south running street in Jarash's south-west district.[123] The soil used for these fields did not accumulate naturally but was deliberately deposited for the purpose of farming. A similar picture forms on the excavations on the hilltop, where the stratigraphy shows that up to 50 cm of soil was deposited and levelled to support an agricultural development. Transporting such large quantities of soil into and around the town is an impressive feat requiring a major communal effort and a shared vision for the continuous development of the settlement.

Conclusion: Mapping renewal after disaster in the archaeological record

More than once confronted by sudden and terrifying environmental disasters and human catastrophes, the linked communities of Baysān, Fiḥl and Jarash dug deep and successfully found ways to rebuild infrastructure and renew social networks, and thereby endure. Yet while the three towns responded very differently to the ruinous earthquake of 749, all showed the ability to be responsive, adaptable and inventive to gather their resources (human and financial) to overcome disaster. Baysān is a model of a town in swift recovery, even if nearby Ṭabariyah did much better. The old Baysān was left buried and a new Baysān took its place, but now characterised by a completely reimagined townscape atop the *tall* while keeping and restyling the functional old quarters to the *tall*'s east and south, all within half a century or so. For Fiḥl, the pace of renewal seemingly lagged, yet a khan was commissioned, and further infrastructure built on the *tall*. The quality of objects, artisan production and size of structures point to a focused community located in an urban centre, conceivably with a mosque, on the centre of the *tall*. At Jarash, archaeologists have identified extensive destruction and subsequent disuse resulting from the earthquake in the town's northern quarters, but in the religious and commercial centre, structures were not only replaced like for like, but improved and embellished according to the perceived importance of these

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[122] Blanke *et al.*, 'The 2011 season of the Late Antique Jarash Project'; Lichtenberger and Raja, 'Ǧaraš in the Middle Islamic period'; Lichtenberger and Raja, *Middle Islamic Jerash*.
[123] Barghouti, 'Urbanization of Palestine and Jordan'.

central structures for the continuation of urban life as well as the (not insignificant) budget of its benefactor(s).

This brief history of science appraisal of archaeological research at the three sites of Baysān, Fiḥl and Jarash has exposed the negative influence of entrenched paradigms in interpreting excavation results. In response resilience theory, when partnered with a *longue durée* approach and matched with other theoretical models, has proven to be an effective way to unpick and question previous misconceptions surrounding obtuse concepts of 'decline and abandonment' in urbanism after antiquity. Looking for, interpreting and applying new evidence, while revitalising past work, opens a completely new understanding on how towns, even when traumatised by (in this case) natural disasters, navigated a successful and sustainable path out of late antiquity and well into early Islamic times.

In our study on the *trichōra* of Baysān, Fiḥl and Jarash. we have observed that the underlying principles of urban life were striding towards a significant reset during the first half of the eighth century; that reset came abruptly and comprehensively with the 749 earthquake. What followed was not a cognitive and corporeal vacuum – a flawed belief approaching its centenary – but rather a tangible expression of the new features necessary for ensuring the survival and functionality of these district towns of the Jund al-Urdunn in the ninth and following centuries. Missing the characteristic monumental stone furniture so desired in earlier centuries, these newer expressions in urbanism went unseen, leaving town histories absurdly truncated.

We contend that resilience theory provides a methodological structure to explore ideas more broadly and to compose new and contemporary narratives previously constrained by institutional partiality and academic reserve. It provides an uncompromisingly positive research model with which to produce rigorous results not only for archaeological delegations, but also as the basis of mandatory interaction with other fields of academic research including, but not limited to, environmental studies, urban sustainability, social inequity and economic disadvantage. New eyes, honed with data breadth and sound theory, have challenged old paradigms, and discovered fresh narratives with which to explain the past for the future.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 5

The resilience of the late antique city in southern Gaul during the Romanesque period

Javier Martínez Jiménez

Cities are never finished or perfect; they are always in constant transformation. Nowadays, it is not just busy cities like London and Paris that are under perpetual renovation: even quiet Cambridge (even during the current lockdown) appears to be a never-ending construction site ('Cranebridge'). Already Libanius complained about his dear Antioch in the fourth century: 'There is always building going on in the city: some buildings are up to rooftop height, and some half built, or with foundations just laid, or being excavated'.[1] The phases of construction and reconstruction of buildings are part of the usual rhythm of the city. Despite this, it is difficult to change the perceived image of a city within living memory.[2] Some elements of the communal mental image of the city that are physically gone can remain in the collective memory in many different ways, such as place names (*e.g.*, the King's Cross at King's Cross has not been there since 1845). In this sense, the survival of memories and rituals associated with certain spaces highlights the resilience of the city as an imagined space beyond the construction, reconstruction and substitution of its physical counterparts.

The moments of 'urban renewal' that periodically hit cities as part of political changes are a good example of this development, when new regimes or interested parties try to modify the urban layout to promote a new set of urban ideals through new buildings. The adaptation of western European local communities to Roman urban culture in the first century AD,[3] or the establishment of the Umayyad caliphate over previously Christian territories are just two examples of such politically motivated redevelopment.[4] At the turn of the first millennium, a similar transformation of

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[1] Libanius, *Orationes*, 11.227.
[2] 'But the pithead baths is a supermarket now', sang Max Boyce.
[3] Laurence *et al.*, *The City in the Roman West.*
[4] Martínez Jiménez *et al.*, *The Iberian Peninsula*, 276–300.

ecclesiastical urban monumentality took place in southern Gaul with the dismantling of the last functioning structures of the classical city – the early Christian churches of the fifth and sixth centuries. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the vast majority of these urban relics of the late antique past came to an end. Some were simply abandoned, others were completely rebuilt in the new Romanesque style that imitated Roman buildings (hence its coeval and apt name, *opus romanum*),[5] but none survived this period standing – a stark comparison with the late Roman basilicas of Ravenna or Rome still visible to this day. Furthermore, this was not just the substitution (or deletion) of old Roman buildings in a visibly new and distinctive style; there was also a large-scale re-dedication of these churches, shifting away from the early Christian cults to new medieval ones.

In this chapter, I want to make the case that the early Christian buildings of these cities were part of the late antique milieu, and even if they did no longer belong to the Roman political sphere, their designs and construction techniques were Roman so that, from a medieval perspective, they belonged to the classical past with all the ideological importance this carried.[6] In this sense, the dismantling and reconstruction of the buildings of the Roman pasts (Christian and pagan) in this period was not a rupture with antiquity, but was instead perceived rather as the restoration and preservation (upgrading) of the classical heritage as a result of the urban power struggles that emerged in the eleventh century – even if the deletion of the Roman buildings would seem to us to indicate the opposite. The urban clergy responsible for this constructive phase purposefully underlined its connection with the late antique past through these early Christian links, preserving the rebuilding churches in their imitative *opus romanum* on the same location (preserving the place and its associated collective memories) but introducing new cults that underlined the relevance of the Church as an urban power – especially against the emerging burghers.[7]

For this purpose, I will focus on a selection of cities from southern Gaul (Aix, Arles, Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Narbonne, Nîmes and Toulouse; Fig. 5.1) during the eleventh and the twelfth centuries. These were all ancient foundations, which are well known archaeologically and through the sources. The chapter will first present the transformation of the churches and saints' dedications in this period of the high Middle Ages, introducing the data together with a first chronological assessment. This will be followed by a series of hypotheses trying to explain why these shifts happened, looking from architectural, anthropological and political perspectives. Lastly, there will be a final section giving an overall view on how this can be interpreted as a conscious act of community re-definition where late antiquity was the chosen past of reference in a post-millennium context.

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[5] *Chronicon de Lanercost*, s.a. 1296: 'Ipsa vero basilica <u>opere Romano</u> insignita ... beati Wilfridi ministerio exstitit dedicata' (cf. van der Grinten, *Elements of Art Historiography*, 7).
[6] Cf. Pohl, 'Introduction' and Humphries, 'Cities and the meanings of late Antiquity'.
[7] Cf. Reglero de la Fuente, 'Los obispos y sus sedes', 220–223.
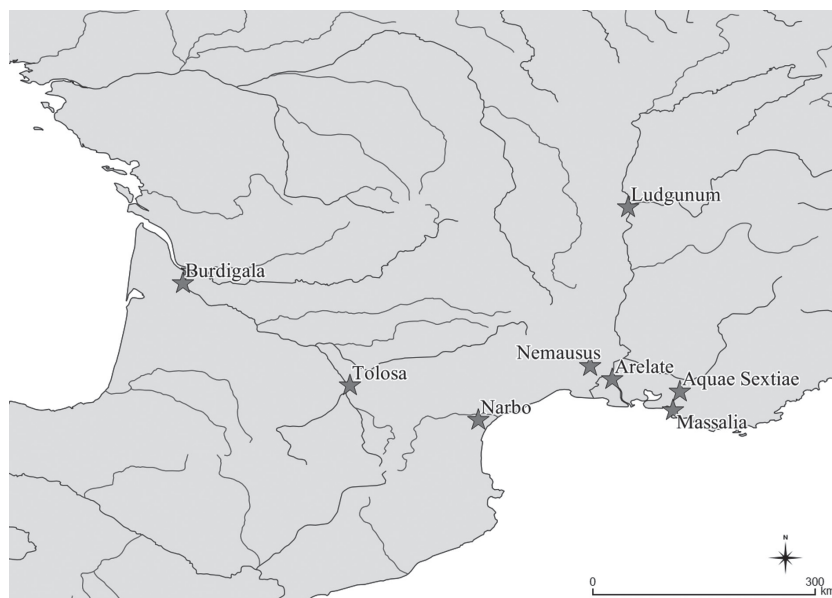
Figure 5.1. Map of southern Gaul showing the location of the cities under study (author).

Late antique and Romanesque churches

The physical Christianisation of cities in Gaul began during the late fourth century, but it was during the fifth and sixth centuries when these became truly monumental and conspicuous within Gallic townscapes. In this way, churches and other Christian buildings were inserted into Roman townscapes as the last monumental phase of the ancient city.[8]

These Roman churches were characterised by their basilical layout, with multiple (one, three, five) naves and an apse, where the sacramental altar was to be found.[9] The first churches were usually *martyria*, or places commemorating the death or the burial of a martyr, which tended to be located outside the cities (Roman law forbade burials inside the *pomerium* or sacred city boundary). The martyrial shrine of Saint Genesius and its associated necropolis, in the Alyscamps of Arles, is a perfect example (Fig. 5.2). This was the general rule, although some other suburban funerary basilicas, like the basilica of Clos de la Lombarde (Narbonne), existed simply as burial areas without a known martyrial connection. During the fifth century, these churches were enlarged or rebuilt, in order to accommodate the growing congregations and the arrival of pilgrims. By the sixth century, new churches appeared inside the walls, away from spots directly connected with martyrial cults. These new churches became the cathedral basilicas, the seats of the bishops, and tended to be larger and more monumental, marking the high civic status of bishops in the late antique

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[8] Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*; Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive.*
[9] For the archaeology or liturgy, see Sastre de Diego, *Los altares.*

urban administration.[10] Sometimes these cathedrals occupied central positions (over or next to the forum) and were very often surrounded by the various buildings that made up episcopal complexes (including auxiliary buildings such as palaces, halls and baptisteries).[11] This topographical connection between the episcopal complex and the forum further highlighted the political role of the bishop and its associated canonical clergy, positioning his base of operations at the traditional location of imperial municipal civic power: legitimation by association.

A total of sixty-nine churches of pre-Romanesque date are known for these eight cities through a combination of archaeology and the written sources (especially Gregory of Tours, Sidonius Apollinaris and Julian of Toledo's *History of King Wamba*, but otherwise compiled in the *Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule* series). The sixty-nine churches are evenly distributed across the case-studies: eight in Aix,[12] ten in Arles,[13] six in Bordeaux,[14] thirteen in Lyons,[15] nine in Marseilles,[16] ten in Narbonne,[17] seven in Nîmes[18] and six in Toulouse.[19] Most of them can be securely dated between the late Roman period and the sixth/seventh centuries, although some later ones which cannot be more accurately dated, have been included (Table 5.1).

These churches remained largely unchanged until the eighth and ninth centuries, when minor elements such as towers and crypts were added – a trend which, in some cases, continued into the tenth century. Until this point, however, all modifications had been additions and expansions, improving or enlarging the late antique buildings,

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[10] Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*, 174–181; Martínez Jiménez *et al.*, *The Iberian Peninsula*, 161–168.

[11] Miller, *The Bishop's Palace*.

[12] Bouet, *Les thermes privés*, 10; Bromwich, *The Roman Remains*, 127; Duval *et al.*, *Provinces ecclésiastiques d'Aix et d'Embrun*, 24–28; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*, 159; Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities*; Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive*, 101–103.

[13] Biarne *et al.*, *Provinces ecclésiastiques de Vienne et d'Arles*, 80–84; Bromwich, *The Roman Remains*; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*; Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive*, 173–179; Rothé and Tréziny, *Marseille*; Heijmans, *Arles*, 262, 295–301.

[14] Barraud and Gaidon, 'Bordeaux'; Barraud and Caillabet-Duloum, 'Burdigala'; Maurin, *Province ecclésiastique de Bordeaux*, 29; Doulan, *Bordeaux*, 57, 181.

[15] Beaujard, *Province ecclésiastique de Lyon*, 22–33; Bonnet and Reynaud, 'Genève et Lyon'; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*, 168, 175; Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities*, 168; Le Mer and Chomer, *Lyon*, 338–344, 403–406, 441–443, 460–467, 506–513, 647–657.

[16] Biarne *et al.*, *Provinces ecclésiastiques de Vienne et d'Arles*, 129–133; Bromwich, *The Roman Remains*, 176; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*, 159; Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive*, 103, 115–125; Rothé and Tréziny, *Marseille*, 423–467, 566–571, 581–597.

[17] Barral i Altet and Fevrier, *Province ecclésiastique de Narbonne*, 20–22; Bromwich, *The Roman Remains*, 88; Delong, *Narbonne et le Narbonnaise*, 395–396; Gayraud, *Narbonne Antique*; Riess, *Narbonne*, 82–121; Sabrié and Sabrié, *Le Clos de la Lombarde*; Solier, *La basilique paléochretienne*.

[18] Barral i Altet and Fevrier, *Province ecclésiastique de Narbonne*, 58–60; Assénat, 'Le rayonnement de la ville'; Grava, 'Les nouveaux équilibres'; Rivet, *Gallia Narbonensis*, 165.

[19] Barral i Altet and Fevrier, *Province ecclésiastique de Narbonne*, 31–32; Boudartchouk and Arramonc, 'Le souvenir du Capitolium'; Caille, *Sainte-Marie «La Daurade»*; de Filipo, 'Aperçus sur l'architecture', 253; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*; Guyon, 'Toulouse', 226.

Figure 5.2. Remains of the late antique necropoleis of Saint Genesius at the Alyscamps in Arles (author).

with very few examples of new constructions in this period.[20] It is only from the eleventh century onwards that we see not just additions to previous structures, but the complete dismantling and subsequent reconstruction of these churches. The Romanesque phases are characterised by the introduction of new techniques (such as the use of newly-quarried stone and the re-introduction of large-scale barrel vaulting), new layouts beyond the three-aisled basilica (with crypts and transepts, plus multiple altars – elements which had already emerged in Carolingian and Ottonian churches) and a new style of decoration (including sculpted monumental frontal arches). These innovations consciously looked back and imitated old Roman patterns and motifs (round arches, Corinthian capitals, ashlar masonry). This southern Romanesque style (Fig. 5.3) is related to that of the Iberian Peninsula, while it also seems to draw influences both from the tenth-century new churches of the Rhineland and the new contemporary buildings from Italy.[21]

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[20] Barral i Altet, 'Le paysage architectural', 178; Brenk, 'The cathedrals of early medieval Italy'; Caillet, 'French cathedrals'; Moreno Martín, 'El sarcófago de Dumio'.

[21] Barral i Altet, *The Romanesque*, 13–24.

Table 5.1. List of churches discussed in the article and their chronological evolution.

	Late antique church	Late antique construction	Early Medieval additions	Destruction	New Romanesque phase	Gothic phase
			Aix			
1	Cathedral [St Mary ?]	c. 500	9th c.		St Saviour (11/12)	Y
2	St Mytrias martyrium	pre-6th c.		11th c. ?	relocation to ND Seds	
3	Saint-Pierre-du-Puy	pre-11th c.		?	?	
4	Saint-Sauveur-du-Puy	pre-11th c.		?	?	
5	St Stephen	pre-11th c.		?	?	
6	St Lawrence	pre-11th c.		18th c.	?	
7	St Andrew	pre-11th c.		14th c.	?	
8	[Notre-Dam-de-la-Seds]	late Roman?			Our Lady (11)	
			Arles			
9	St Genesius	5th c.	poss.		St Honoratus (12)	
10	SS. Peter and Paul [Saint-Pierre-des-Mouleyrès]	6th c.		14th/16th c.		
11	St Martin	pre-9th c.		?	?	
12	Basilica of Apostles	late 5th/early 6th.			St Cross (12?)	
13	Basilica Constantia	pre-450		?	N	
14	St Stephen [cathedral]	mid-5th c.	9th c. phase		St Trophimus (12th)	Y
15	St Peter by Rusticula	7th c.		?	?	
16	Nunnery of St Caesaria [St John]	early 6th c.			[various monastic churches, 12th]	
17	Genesius memorial	5th c.			Saint-Genes-de-la-Colonne	
18	[early cathedral]	early 5th.	poss.		[various monastic churches, 12th]	

Table 5.1. (Continued)

	Late antique church	Late antique construction	Early Medieval additions	Destruction	New Romanesque phase	Gothic phase
Bordeaux						
19	Cathedral (Mary)	5th c.	SS Andrew and Jacob		St Andrew (11)	
20	St Peter in suburb	Pre-580s		?	?	
21	St Martin	6th c.			11th c. ?	
22	St Severinus	5th c.			11th c.	
23	St Stephen	c. 600		18th c.	?	
24	Blessed Mary				Marie de la Place (11/12)	
Lyons						
25	St Stephen [Baptistery]	late 4th c.			St Stephen [baptistery] (11)	
26	Holy Cross	5th/6th c.?			St Cross (11)	
27	St John [Patiens inscr.]	5th c.	St Irenaeus (9)	16th c.		
28	St Justus	4th c.	6th to 7th c.			12th c.
29	St Michael	early 6th c.		1742	St Michael (11)	
30	St Lawrence	6th c.	8th c.	18th c.	St Lawrence (11)	
31	St John [cathedral]	5th c.			St John (12)	
32	St Paul	mid-6th c.	9th c.	732 raid	St Paul (11/12)	
33	St Peter	6th c.				
34	Martyrs	5th c.	10th c.			St Nicetius
35	St Mary	6th c.			St Mary (11)	
36	St Martin	5th c.			St Lupus and Virgin Mary (11/12)	
37	St Eulalia	mid-6th c.	St George (8)			
Marseilles						
38	Alcazar basilica	5th c.		8th c.		
39	St Peter	pre-10th c.		?		
40	St Tyrsus	pre-11th c.		?		

(Continued)

Table 5.1. List of churches discussed in the article and their chronological evolution. (Continued)

	Late antique church	Late antique construction	Early Medieval additions	Destruction	New Romanesque phase	Gothic phase
41	Our Lady [La Major]	5th c.	partial dismantling	1850s	Our Lady [La Major] (12)	
42	Nunnery of St Cassian	6th c.		?	?	
43	Nunnery of St Cyricus	6th c.		?	?	
44	St Stephen	6th c.		?	still present in 11	
45	Rue Malaval basilica	5th c.		8th c.		
46	Basilica apostolorum [St Victor abbey]	5th c. [crypt] 6th c. [basilica]			Virgin Mary (11)	
	Narbonne					
47	Clos de la Lombarde	late 4th c.		6th c.		
48	Cathedral	c. 445	c. 890 repair			SS Justus and Pastor [from 785]
49	St Felix	by 462		?		
50	St Mary	poss. 6th c.			Our Lady (12)	Y
51	St Marcellus	late 5th c.		?		
52	St Vincent	poss. 5th c.			St Lupus	
53	St Stephen	pre-8th.		?		
54	St Quentin	pre-10th c.		?		
55	St Julian	pre-9th c.		?		
56	St Paul	5th c.			St Paul	
	Nîmes					
57	Cathedral (Mary+Baudelius)	pre-9th c.			St Mary and St Castor (11)	
58	Saint Baudelius	pre-6th c.		?		
59	St Julian	7th c.			poss.	
60	St Eugenia	pre-Carolingian		?		
61	St Perpetua	pre-Carolingian		?		
62	St Lawrence	pre-Carolingian		?		
63	St Vincent	pre-Carolingian		?		

Table 5.1. (Continued)

	Late antique church	Late antique construction	Early Medieval additions	Destruction	New Romanesque phase	Gothic phase
			Toulouse			
64	St Saturninus	5th c.	9th c.		11th c.	
65	St Vincent	6th c.		?		
66	St Saturninus [Capitolium]	6th c.		Revolution	SS Peter and Gerard	
67	Saint-Pierre-des-Cuisines	4th to 5th c.			11th c.	
68	St Stephen [cathedral]	5th c.			St Stephen (11)	
69	La Daurade	5th c.	9th c.	18th c.	poss.	

The transition of late antique basilicas into the high Middle Ages can be summarised with the following figures. Of the sixty-nine churches considered in this study, 58 percent were rebuilt in a brand-new Romanesque phase (46 percent certainly, 12 percent possibly) which completely obliterated the preceding late antique building. Seven percent were abandoned before the turn of the millennium, while a further 31 percent were probably abandoned during the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Fig. 5.4a and b). The remaining churches appear to have survived in various shapes or forms into the later Middle Ages, but not beyond the early modern period. This is a major transformation of the monumental townscapes of these cities, as these basilicas represented the last buildings erected within the classical Roman urban tradition – and ones that were used for their original purpose. Only city walls and some temples (like the Pilliers de la Tutelle in Bordeaux, or the Maison Carrée in Nîmes), together with the *arènes* (the spectacle buildings, as in Nîmes, Bordeaux or Arles, Fig. 5.5) appear to have been preserved standing into this period and beyond, largely because they had been given a new function as fortifications or dwellings.

A sizeable proportion of the late antique basilicas abandoned before (7 percent) or during (31 percent) the Romanesque period had originally been funerary basilicas. The basilica of Clos de la Lombarde in Narbonne, built in the fourth century and abandoned by the eighth, is perhaps the best archaeological example,[22] but the basilicas of Rue Malaval and of Alcazar in Marseilles are equally revealing.[23] These are usually known only archaeologically, which suggests that more might have existed. The abandonment of these structures, in any case, indicates a change in burial *habitus*, as from the tenth

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[22] Solier, *La basilique paléochretienne.*
[23] Rothé and Tréziny, *Marseille*, 566–571, 581–597; Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive*, 120–125.

Figure 5.3. Façade of Saint Trophimus of Arles, a characteristic example of Provence Romanesque (author).
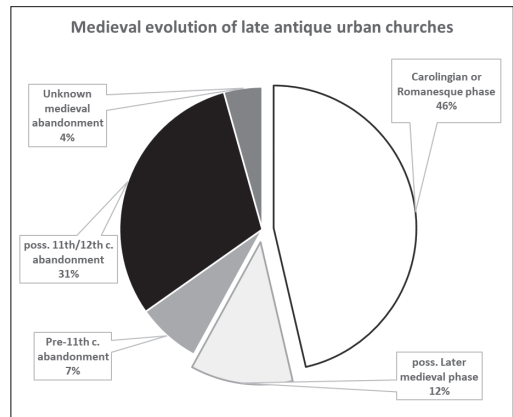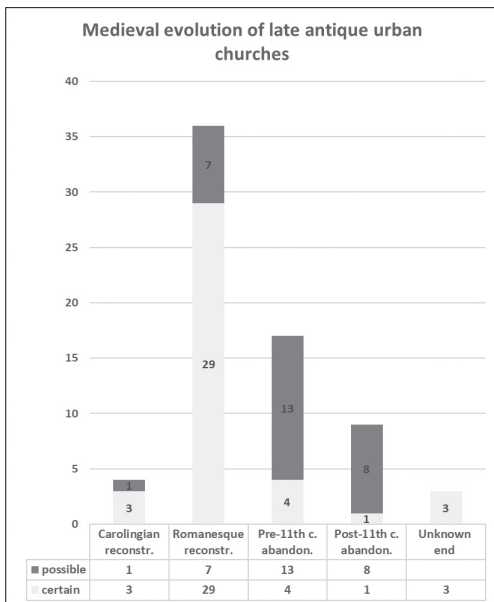
Figure 5.4a-b: Graphs showing the percentage of late antique churches dismantled and rebuilt during the later Middle Ages (author).

Figure 5.5. The Maison Carrée in Nîmes (author).

century burials had largely shifted to organised churchyards, with fewer (and more selective) burials inside churches.[24]

The reconstruction of 58 percent of urban churches in this period can, in part, be explained in terms of changes in rites and liturgy. By the eleventh century, the use of space inside churches (and the rite associated to them) had changed, making the late Roman-style apsed basilicas outdated, if not inadequate. The increasing importance of pilgrimage and the proliferation of multiple altars (for private and simultaneous masses) demanded a more complex internal distribution of the church space with a narthex, a transept, radiating chapels and ambulatories around the apse.[25] This homogenisation was promoted in part as a response to the Gregorian reform, which established the Roman rite as the norm and substituting previous local liturgies.[26] The old Roman-style basilicas could hardly cater for these necessities. While there had been some degree of experimentation with these elements during the early Middle Ages, these had been added to pre-existing buildings, but in order to deploy all of them (accommodating for the liturgical demands of the day) it was more advisable and more politically significant to start a new construction than patching up and

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[24] The abandonment of these old basilicas contrasts sharply with the construction of new, urban parish churches in areas which had not been consecrated ground in Late Antiquity, like Saint Lawrence in Marseilles (still standing) or the churches built in the amphitheatres of Nîmes and Arles (now long gone): Barral i Altet, 'Monuments et espace urbain'; Caille, 'L'élan urbain'. For the shift in burials, see Silva, 'Los sepulcros de los santos' and Zadora-Rio, 'The making of churchyards'.

[25] Brenk, 'The cathedrals of early medieval Italy', 22; Caillet, 'French cathedrals'.

[26] Local liturgies which could be used as strong statements of community definition: Lester, 'Mapping'; cf. Aubert and Goubet, *Romanesque Cathedrals*, 18–23; Chédeville, 'Le phénomène urbain'; Magnou-Nortier, *La société laïque*, 468–472. Cf. Moreno Martín, 'El sarcófago de Dumio' for an updated bibliography.

expanding on pre-existing churches. Saint Trophimus in Arles and Saint Saturninus in Toulouse (both key stations on the road to Santiago and themselves pilgrimage sites on their own right) are the best examples of this (Fig. 5.6).

From our modern perspective, this process of destroying to rebuild would appear to be one of rupture and substitution, even a rejection of the visual reminders of the ancient city but it was, in fact, the opposite. Reconstruction (especially in a style like the Romanesque, which imitated Roman forms) was a direct declaration of continuity.

Reconstruction as continuity

The Romanesque was a 'total style', which is to say that it was a style that expanded beyond architecture, including sculpture and painting, all aiming to extend the Christian doctrine through imagery to the masses. It is perhaps in this spirit of renovation that the Roman Christian monuments of the cities were targeted, in order to bring Christian narratives to the masses visually. However, this does not fully explain why the late antique basilicas were substituted, rather than being repaired and expanded as had been the norm until then.

From a purely architectural point of view, the reconstruction of these churches is understandable, as they were needed to substitute old and probably damaged buildings.

Figure 5.6. Saint Saturninus in Toulouse (author).

The original basilicas had never been built in order to last eternally in the first place (a modern perspective of architecture which we should shed completely),[27] and they were between four and six hundred years old by the eleventh century. These churches, as most other late antique constructions, had been originally built in mortared rubble (*petit appareil*), with recycled materials, and low-quality lime mortar, so they were not as strong or durable as early imperial Roman constructions (characterised by ashlar masonry and pozzolanic 'concrete').[28] They would have been prone to damage, and already in the sixth century Gregory of Tours mentions many late Roman structures collapsing in earthquakes, fires and from simple old age.[29] Bishops from the fifth century onwards appear to have taken over the responsibility of preserving old municipal buildings,[30] and their concern, naturally, extended to churches. For instance, Leidrad, the ninth-century bishop of Lyons, rebuilt the late antique church of the Martyrs, one of the most important churches of the city dedicated to the forty-eight second-century Christians martyred in the city which also served as the resting place for the late antique bishops of the city.[31] In the narratives associated with these instances, there tends to be an underlying rhetoric equating architectural decay with moral decline, so rebuilding and repairing was presented as an opportunity to regenerate the community while highlighting the leading and exemplary role of the builder.

As for *why* the basilicas were rebuilt on the same site, it is clear that building on top of the old structure was, legally, more convenient than looking for a new location, even if simply because of the fact that the plot was already Church property. Moreover, by this period urban areas were densely built, so reusing the same plot perhaps indicates a lack of open areas to build within the city or the lack of resources, powers or will of church-builders to clear housing away. At another level, however, this practice was also a statement of continuity of *functionality* even if it required the levelling of the previous structure, which would appear to be more important and significant than the mundane possession of the land. At least from a liturgical perspective, there was no necessity to keep a church at its location. In classical pagan cults, the sacrality of a temple was linked to its locus because there was a direct connection between the spot and the divinity, but this was not the case with Christian places of cult (God is everywhere, and relics can be moved).[32] This was more complex in the case of martyrial sites, because those churches were commemorating the location of the burial (*e.g.*, Saint Victor in Marseilles or Saint Genesius in Arles) or of the actual martyrdom (Launebode's church to Saint Saturninus in Toulouse). But most other churches (and cathedral complexes and their deliberate central location in particular) had no actual sacred connection with their position.

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[27] The tragic fire of Notre-Dame in Paris in April 2019 serves as a perfect reminder for this point.

[28] Adam, *Roman Building*; Bromwich, *The Roman Remains*; Esmonde Cleary, *The Roman West*.

[29] E.g., Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, 5.6, 5.33, 8.15, 10.18. Archaeologically, this can be seen in the basilica of Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Guyon, 'La basilique'.

[30] Loseby, 'Decline and change'; Martínez Jiménez, 'Reuse, repair and reconstruction'.

[31] This new basilica was, furthermore, re-consecrated to Nicetius, one of the Martyrs of Lyons: Biarne *et al.*, *Provinces ecclésiastiques de Vienne et d'Arles*, 32.

[32] Cf. Lipka, *The Roman Gods*, 15–21, 27–28.

And yet, preserving the location of a church in the same spot was important for the city dwellers, because churches acted as focal points in their cognitive maps. Cognitive maps may be understood as the 'mental images' of how the city functions (or rather, of how it is structured and understood), and are made of emotions and memories associated with certain locations.[33] The places of most interaction generate more associated memories for the community and, therefore, play a more prominent role in understanding the conceptual layout of the city and are essential in bringing the community together. Market squares, places of socialising or buildings linked to communal rituals are 'hot spots' in these perceived maps.[34] Churches fit nicely in these categories as local markers defining shared, communal spaces as places for religious and civil gatherings,[35] and sites where official notices would be posted up.[36] Keeping a church in its physical place reinforced its position within the cognitive map and consolidated its role within the local community. This was an exercise mirrored in the countryside with the extension of reformed monasteries and rural parishes.[37]

To our modern eyes, it is difficult to understand this process of reconstruction as one claiming continuity and restoration, when it is clear that it implied altering and destroying architectural heritage.[38] From a historical perspective, however, the reconstruction of a building was always seen in this 'continuist' light. It was a mnemonic exercise: commemorating and keeping alive the memory of the original building.[39] The visual obliteration and structural discontinuity was conveniently by-passed by the preservation of the location and the claim that it was nothing but a restoration – they were essential markers in communal cognitive maps and the new building respected this constructed social perception. This comes to show that reconstruction was, in the Roman world, seen almost as an upgrade, an improvement;[40] a concept that was preserved through late antiquity (as Wallace-Hadrill demonstrates in his chapter on Cassiodorus in this volume) and the Middle Ages.[41]

Considering that classical and post-classical attitudes understood these substitutions in terms of continuity of the building, highlighting the important resilience of the location within the urban cognitive map, I would be inclined to see the Romanesque phase in similar terms.[42] The rebuilt church as a building underlined and highlighted the continuity of the Church as an institution, making it stand out

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[33] Lalli, 'Urban-related identity'; Smith and Aranha, 'Cognitive mapping'.

[34] Gupta and Ferguson, 'Beyond culture'; Kaymaz, 'Urban landscapes'.

[35] Cf. Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City*, 87–88.

[36] *Novellae Justiniani* 8, praef.

[37] Jaspert, 'La reforma agustiniana'.

[38] Cf. Lambrinou, 'Ancient ruins' and Siwicki, *Architectural Restoration*.

[39] For example, the different iterations of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, 7.138; Tacitus, *Historiae*, 3.72.3), Romulus' hut (Dionysius, *Antiquitates Romanae*, 1.79) or Hadrian's [Agrippa's] pantheon, which preserves the original inscription. In Jewish contexts, the same applies to the successive reconstructions of the Temple of Solomon.

[40] Thomas and Witschel, 'Constructing reconstruction'.

[41] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, 4.51.2.

[42] Bouchard, *Rewriting Saints*, 38–43.

because of its own local origins in late antiquity and its connection to the urban community. Furthermore, considering both the apparent Romanness of the cities of the Midi in visual terms of monumentality (e.g., the *arènes*) and in terms of administration (Roman law through the Visigothic code) and the extensive reuse of Roman carved and decorated stone elements in these reconstructions, it would not be surprising if these Romanesque buildings had been used to claim a restoration of the Roman city as well.[43]

The resilience of the sacred late antique landscape and the will to preserve would seem clear. And yet, a closer look at the dedications of these rebuilt churches reveals that there was a conscious rupture with the past at a different level, as if the physical connection to the Roman past was not enough to consolidate the local primacy of the ecclesiastical elites behind these building projects. Even if for all intents and purposes the new churches were the *same* buildings as the ones they substituted, the new dedications reveal a different attitude towards the ancient urban community.

The cult of new saints

While the destruction of late antique churches and their substitution by new Romanesque ones can be interpreted as a cognitive continuity with and architectural imitation of the classical past and the resilience of the late antique townscape, the fact remains that many of these churches were re-dedicated. The abandonment of old Roman-era saint cults marks a clear and conscious rupture between the late antique and the high medieval urban communities, and one that was led by the same episcopal clergy that promoted the reconstruction. Looking at the figures, a significant proportion (36 percent) of the Romanesque rebuilds were re-consecrated to a different patron (Fig. 5.7, Table 5.2). And, while this leaves 57 percent of the old late antique cults still present in the new builds, considering hose churches that were abandoned during these centuries only a third (33 percent) of the original late antique dedications survived the Middle Ages.[44]

The cult of saints was an essential part in the definition of medieval urban communities.[45] With the Christianisation of the empire during the fourth century, the veneration of specific saints took over pagan civic cults, which were (eventually) abandoned. These first saints had been martyrs or members of the very first local Christian community, whose behaviour (or martyrial example) became both a model to follow and representatives of their city in heaven. While these martyrs were not necessarily a re-formulation of the earlier cults (*i.e.*, a Christian version of a pagan figure), they fulfilled the same role, and can be defined as ancestor or hero cults

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43 Lauranson-Rosaz, 'La romanité du Midi', 52–58, 64; Hartmann-Virnich, 'Remarques sur l'architecture', 37–41.

44 Cf. similar figures from Italy: Brenk, 'The cathedrals of early medieval Italy'.

45 Scheid, *The Gods*, 105; van Andringa, 'Religions and the integration of cities', 86–93; Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, 129–132.

Re-dedication of re-built late antique
churches

☐ Romanesque phase with re-dedication

▪ Romanesque phase that preserves dedication

▪ Romanesque phase with unknown previous dedication
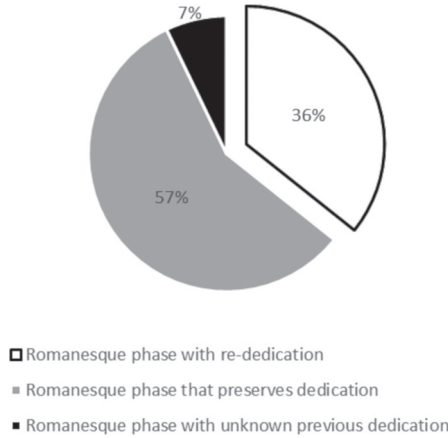
Figure 5.7. Graph depicting the percentages of re-dedicated churches during the Romanesque phase (author).

Table 5.2. List of churches which changed dedication during the Romanesque period.

City	Old dedication	Type	New dedication	Type
Aix	Mary	*Virgin*	Holy Saviour	*Christ*
Aix	Mitrias	*Confessor*	Mary	*Virgin*
Arles	Genesius	*Martyr*	Honoratus	*Bishop*
Arles	Apostles	*Apostles*	Holy Cross	*Christ*
Arles	Stephen	*Martyr*	Trophimus	*Bishop*
Bordeaux	Mary	*Virgin*	Andrew	*Apostle*
Lyons	John	*Apostle*	Irenaeus	*Bishop*
Lyons	Martyrs	*Martyrs*	Nicetius	*Martyr*
Lyons	Martin	*Martyr*	Lupus	*Bishop*
Lyons	Eulalia	*Martyr*	George	*Martyr*
Marseilles	Apostles	*Apostles*	Mary	*Virgin*
Narbonne	Genesius	*Martyr*	Justus and Pastor	*Martyrs*
Narbonne	Vincent	*Martyr*	Lupus	*Bishop*
Nîmes	Baudelius	*Martyr*	Castorius	*Bishop*
Toulouse	Saturninus	*Martyr*	Peter & Gerard	*Apostle & bishop*

because these saints offered a Christian point of reference for the community.[46] In time, these martyrs accumulated more powers, and they commonly appear as protectors of their worshippers. This further reinforced the connection between a saint and his earthly flock.

As we have seen, the majority (57 percent) of the reconstructed Romanesque churches preserved their late antique dedication. However, if we look at these saints more carefully, it will be immediately evident that the late antique cults that continued into the Middle Ages were usually universal figures recognised across Christendom, as they include apostles (John, Peter, Paul, Andrew),[47] the Virgin Mary, archangel Michael or foreign martyrs (Stephen). The universality of these saints resided not only in their antiquity, but also in their very direct connection with Christ as first-hand witnesses. Their stories were known and shared across Christendom since they formed part of the New Testament. This was not necessarily the case for local saints, whose hagiographies might not have been widely distributed or circulated. There were also very few relics from late Roman saints.[48] Because early Christian Gaul had few local saints and martyrs of its own to start with, many had to be 'invented' during the sixth century, or else relics had to be procured and exchanged from abroad. Saint Saturninus in Toulouse and Saint Martin in Tours were notable exceptions, with very strong local connotations.[49] However, by the eleventh and twelfth centuries there were plenty of 'newer' local saints: worthy figures with preserved relics connected to the local clergy like bishops, monks or abbots who came to substitute the earlier martyrs.

If we pay a closer look at our examples (Table 5.2), we clearly see this shift from non-local saints and martyrs (Stephen,[50] Martin,[51] Vincent,[52] Eulalia[53]) to local bishops and universal saints (Trophimus,[54] Lupus[55] and George[56]). The case of Arles is a typical example: the church had been dedicated to Stephen in its late antique phase, but in the 1150s, during its Romanesque reconstruction, Raimon de Montredon, one of the canons, relocated the relics of the semi-mythical first-century bishop Trophimus from the Alyscamps to the newly-built cathedral, changing its dedication. More striking is the substitution of local martyrs. In the case of Toulouse, the shift from Saturninus to Peter and Gerard (the latter a bishop) in the twelfth century, was only the re-dedication of the *locus martyrialis*, as the main cult site (the burial) preserved

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[46] Fortes, 'Pietas in ancestor worship'; Lipka, *The Roman Gods*; Steadman *et al.*, 'The universality of ancestor worship'.
[47] Peter and Paul, of course, had a very strong connection with Rome and the Papacy, which was encouraging their cult to strengthen its control over the Church outside Italy.
[48] Bouchard, *Rewriting Saints*, 2013.
[49] CSLA, S000289; Cf. Hershkowitz, *Prudentius*, 88, esp. ch. 3.
[50] CSLA, S000020.
[51] CSLA, S000050.
[52] CSLA, S000290.
[53] CSLA, S000407.
[54] CSLA, S000607.
[55] CSLA, S002174 (?).
[56] CSLA, S000259.

its original dedication – even to this day.[57] In Arles we find the opposite, the column where Genesius was martyred in 303 preserved its dedication, while his burial was re-dedicated to bishop Honoratus (d. 429).[58] Similarly, in Nîmes, the sixth-century church to the fourth-century local martyr Baudelius was substituted in the eleventh century by the Romanesque church dedicated to local-born bishop Castorius (d. *c.* 420) by bishops Peter Ermengaud and Bertrand de Montredon.[59] Meanwhile in Aix, the *locus* of fifth-century martyr Mitrias was substituted by a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary.[60] Even churches that were not rebuilt in this period were re-dedicated: Leidrad's church of the martyrs in Lyons mentioned above was given to the cult of Saint Nicetius, the sixth-century bishop who had turned it into an episcopal mausoleum.[61] These shifts can only be explained because obscure or minor stories related to the earlier cults were substituted by more modern and powerful saintly figures that better reflected the interests of the episcopal elites.

The cult of these late antique saintly bishops offered a number of advantages that the older and more obscure local saints could not. In some cases, the stories of the pagan-period saints might have been perceived as outdated in terms of context, far removed chronologically or, even, illegible for later compilers, making them less appealing to the masses than later, early medieval saints.[62] The stories of late antique saints were set against a more familiar background of bishops and counts, rather than praetors and circuses. The stories of these bishop saints, moreover, were told for their narrative value (a local bishop protecting his flock) rather than used as examples of Christian life when faced by a pagan majority.[63] In Arles, bishop Honoratus was compelled to ask for martyr Genesius' intercession to save the people attending a procession from falling off a collapsing bridge. For the local church, naturally, this shift towards saintly bishops and abbots of the Roman period was a self-congratulatory pat on their own backs; a way of underlining the role of the ecclesiastical elites within urban communities, presenting former religious and political patrons of the city as sacred protectors in the present. In a period when sanctification was not yet to be confirmed by the Pope,[64] it was very convenient for the bishops of the high Middle Ages to promote to sainthood (or consolidate the cult of) their most illustrious predecessors. The implications of this shift were, of course, that the might of holy bishops justified the secular power of the ecclesiastical elites beyond the scope covered by the Papal-backed Truce of God.

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[57] Boudartchouk and Arramonc, 'Le souvenir du Capitolium'.

[58] Guyon and Heijmans, *L'Antiquité tardive*, 60. Cf. CSLA, S000263 (Genesius) and S000438 (Honoratus).

[59] Grava, 'Les nouveaux équilibres'. Cf. CSLA, S000383.

[60] CSLA, S001288.

[61] Le Mer and Chomer, *Lyon*, 341–343.

[62] Bouchard, *Rewriting Saints*, 54, 213–217; Defries, *Constructing the Past*, 450–457; Diniz, *Christianisation and Religious Identity*, 60.

[63] Bouchard, *Rewriting Saints*, 38–42; Kerrick, 'Heirs to the Apostles'; Lifshitz, 'The politics of historiography'.

[64] Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, 57–59.

By underlining the role of the local church and its clergy (Trophimus, Honoratus, Castorius) in providing for its community in heaven and on Earth already from the Roman period, bishops in the high Middle Ages could alienate any possible claims the lay aristocrats could have on those martyrs who had been local members of the civic community (Baudelius, Genesius, Mitrias) but that had lived outside the structure of the Church. In doing this, the local church could strengthen its position during a time of urban conflict between the nobility, the bishops, and the emerging burghers.[65] And while restoring and updating 'Roman' (*i.e.*, late antique) monuments was a claim to continuity and a legitimising link to the past, the introduction of these new cults of late antique bishops underlined that some pasts were more useful than others.

Re-defining urban powers after the millennium

As we have seen, the widespread building activity of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (including both reconstructions and new builds) was not simply the result of unsound architectural integrity or the change in burial practices. The Romanesque reconstruction of late antique churches represented a new monumental urban phase orchestrated by the episcopal elites, in which the imitation of ancient architecture and the preservation of the functional spaces of late antiquity became a link to the past which helped consolidate their position in municipal issues. But why was it at that precise point that the urban clergy promoted this constructive phase?

Taking the basilica of Saturninus in Toulouse as an example (Fig. 5.6),[66] Bishop Peter Roger already in 1030 decided to set aside funds for a future reconstruction of the late antique martyrial basilica, but tensions between the canons of St. Saturninus and canons of the cathedral (who opposed the construction) postponed the beginning of the works. Both congregations sought internal and external political support: the Pope, the Count of Toulouse and the Duke of Aquitaine were all involved in the confrontation. Eventually in 1074 Bishop Izarn (who had himself been prior of St. Saturninus) launched the construction project, which continued well after the consecration of the church by Pope Urban II in 1096. In this particular case, the reconstruction of the church began as a project to accommodate more pilgrims and abide by the Roman liturgy, but it was also a power move by the canons of St. Saturninus against the canons of the cathedral, which was only one of the many urban conflicts that characterised the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Between the fifth and eleventh centuries, cities had retained the importance as central places and economic hubs, but at a much more reduced scale than what they had had in the earlier Roman period. Civic institutions and municipal administration continued to exist in Visigothic Septimania and the Frankish territories, even if royal officials

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[65] Barton, '"Zealous Anger"'; Boone, 'Medieval Europe', 232–234.

[66] Cazes and Cazes, *Saint-Sernin de Toulouse*.

(counts) and bishops appear to have been the main players in them.[67] It is difficult to assess the political relevance of cities in the subsequent Carolingian period, or how urban communities were organised at that moment, but it seems that bishops and lay aristocrats became the main players in municipal politics. [68]

After the turn of the millennium, the cities of southern Gaul went through a phase of expansion and economic growth as Islamic and Viking raids came to an end.[69] These cities soon became the arena for power struggles between the militarised aristocrats (known as the *caballarii* or *chevaliers*), the counts and the urban clergy (bishops).[70] It is true that the episcopal clergy and the canons were mostly made up of members of the urban elites that fed the ranks of the *caballarii*, but they were part of different orders: the former were the *clerici* and the latter the *plebs militaris,* which occasionally had conflicts of interest. As groups of intermediate rank, they were bound in their opposition to the powerful landed aristocrats, like the counts. The French monarchy took full advantage of these internal conflicts to strengthen its weak position in the southern cities by promoting and supporting the Papally-backed episcopal elites, who could use the Peace and Truce of God to mediate in lay political affairs.[71] This eventually led to reticence amongst the knights and their opposition against the canons, so the bishops, in turn, promoted municipal institutions for the *plebs popularis* or *burgenses* (the burghers) to counter the knights.[72]

In this three-pointed balance, the bishops and their canons were the first to use the ancient city and its monumental remains in their political bids. We have already encountered Raimon de Montredon in 1150s Arles and Peter Ermengaud and Bertrand de Montredon in eleventh-century Nîmes, but more names could be added to this list, like bishop Izarn of Toulouse, who undertook the reconstruction of Saint Saturninus' church in 1074; or dean Richo, who did the same in Lyons in 1064.

With their extensive building programmes, the ecclesiastical elites presented themselves as leaders of their municipal communities in four different ways. Firstly, they legitimised their position by 'preserving' the Roman past by rebuilding late antique churches. The sense of continuity and restoration given by the use of imitative *opus romanum* with its round arches and Corinthian capitals, and the renovation of key sites in the city's sacred landscape underlined the bishops' role as patron of the urban population.[73] Restoring the Roman past, even if from a modern academic perspective it was a late antique one, still had a strong ideological importance in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the urban hot spots that had

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[67] Barbier, *Archives oubliées*; Curchin, 'The role of civic leaders'; Fernández, *Aristocrats and Statehood*, 165–170; Loseby, 'The role of the city'.

[68] Boone, 'Medieval Europe', 221–222.

[69] Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City*, 65; Caille, 'L'élan urbain'.

[70] Aurell i Cardona, 'Le comte'; McHaffie, 'Law and violence'.

[71] Cushing, *Reform and Papacy*; Koziol, *The Peace of God*; Magnou-Nortier, *La société laïque*; Poly, *La Provence et la société féodale*, 172–207 and 524–525, with similar caveats.

[72] Boone, 'Medieval Europe', 222; Débax, 'L'aristocratie méridionale'; Wolfe, *Walled Towns*, 14.

[73] Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City*, 78–89; Patterson, *The World of Troubadours*, 151–154.

coalesced in the late antique period were still relevant five centuries later.[74] Secondly, the restoration of these churches appealed to the sense of continuity and the local identity of city dwellers, but the architectonical language of the Romanesque had a broader, universalising connotation, since it could be related to the reformed Church, a clear sign that the bishops represented both their city and the Roman Church as a whole.[75] Thirdly, the promotion of saints with direct connections to the urban church reminded parishioners about the long-lasting role of bishops as protectors and saviours of their cities, casually side-lining those examples of local figures who had equally performed miracles but that had no connection with the Church. Lastly, the rapid and even competitive spread of church (re)building during the first and second waves of the Romanesque could be interpreted as peer polity interaction between neighbouring cities and competing bishops.[76] To further underline this point, in all but one of our case studies the late antique cathedral was rebuilt and enlarged during the Romanesque (and in Narbonne, the one exception, this was begun later, in the Gothic style, but never completed). But it was not only an architectonical competition: the canons of Arles dedicated the Romanesque cathedral to Trophimus, who had been reportedly sent directly by Peter, and this became the basis of Arles' claim as the primate see of Gaul, a title which had been granted in the eleventh century to Lyons.

By monopolising the public building programme and by the careful selection of which saintly figures to promote, the urban church could claim to benefit the urban population, using in its favour the relevance and validity of the (perceived) Roman past in ways that the urban aristocrats could not compete with. But the other municipal powers did not take long to react.

In Arles, Aix, Toulouse and Narbonne, the local *caballarii* showed their power by building towers, strong houses and urban castles out of Roman city gates or bathhouses, while in Nîmes the *milites arenarum* turned the Visigothic castle of the amphitheatre into their stronghold.[77] The lack of involvement of the knights in the restoration of old Roman/late antique buildings for their original purpose could be explained by the fact that the legitimacy of their status in municipal affairs came from their links (fictitious or real) to Frankish and Visigothic nobility as confirmed by old Carolingian privileges and not to the Roman civic order like the Church could.[78] The burghers would also develop their own architecture with the development of the consulates and the communes, but this would develop later, and usually in Gothic style (still visible in Narbonne and in Arles, Fig. 5.8), and while the secular

[74] Lauranson-Rosaz, 'La romanité du Midi', 65.

[75] Aubert and Goubet, *Romanesque Cathedrals*, 14–23; Barral i Altet, *The Romanesque*, 53–64; Cazes, 'The cathedral of Toulouse.' However, it should be noted that not all clerical patrons collaborated wholeheartedly in these reforms: Wirth, 'Les limites de la réforme' and Barrel i Altet, 'Art monumental'.

[76] Hartmann-Virnich, 'Remarques sur l'architecture'; Renfrew and Cherry, *Peer Polity Interaction*.

[77] Aurell i Cardona, 'La chevalerie urbaine'.

[78] Salarch, 'Els hispani'.

Figure 5.8. Bench for the lay municipal administration in Arles, on the old Roman forum (author).

clergy favoured the Romanesque this was not exclusive.[79] Burghers also tried to make legitimising claims with the past by locating their buildings in 'hot spots' of the communal cognitive maps, as in Nîmes (Maison Carrée) or Arles (forum),[80] although the occupation of these Roman spaces does not seem to have been accompanied by claims to represent or to restore the old Roman civic order.

Conclusions

The newly-built monumental landscape that characterised the busy cities of southern Gaul by the end of the twelfth century was the result of a relatively short and intense period of building activity, during which the last active monuments of the ancient city (late antique churches) were substituted. The dismantling, abandonment and destruction of these late Roman Christian monuments could seem to us like a rupture with late Antiquity, but it was the opposite. This kind of reconstruction was more than substitution: it was perceived as preservation, continuity and improvement. From an anthropological perspective, the important role of these buildings as landmarks in the cognitive maps of urban communities meant that, as far as the function as a church was preserved, it was still the same old Roman church. The fact that it was a completely new building was simply a cosmetic difference. The continuity of the

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[79] Packard, *Twelfth-Century Europe*, 54–58, 265. The same masons and sculptors were working across many sites, after all, and they moved from one site to another. Old Romanesque town halls still exist in La Réole (Gironde) and Saint-Antonin-Noble-Val (Tarn-et-Garonne).

[80] Aurell i Cardona, 'La chevalerie urbaine'; Lesné-Ferret, 'The notariate'.

function and the location is paramount, and it underlines the resilience of the late antique cityscape, as the same foci of cult activity (and associated social interaction) were preserved throughout the Middle Ages and even until today. The Christian component, of course, is the main reason behind it, and the survival of other elements of the Roman past (like the *arènes* or city walls) has more to do with their size and diverse reuse than to an ongoing preservation of ancient functionality.

Rebuilding the churches of antiquity was one of the ways in which the urban clergy could consolidate its local power against the claims of burghers and knights. For one, rebuilding the churches demonstrated their commitment towards the urban community. The use of Romanesque architectural language like round arches, ashlar masonry and 'Corinthian'-like capitals in their constructions, moreover, was a way of claiming the Roman past, with all the legitimation that came associated with it. The Romanesque also underlined the connection between the local churches and the Pope in Rome.

But the Roman past was also claimed by those municipal parties that opposed episcopal control. The *caballarii* entrenched themselves in the amphitheatres and bathhouses, while the burghers established their council houses in Roman temples and fora. In cities where the Roman past was so present, as it was the case of southern Gaul, antiquity could be wielded by many people. That was why many churches were re-dedicated. It was a conscious decision to abandon and sideline the cult of certain martyrs and saints of the early Roman period because they could be claimed by the city as a whole; by choosing to promote sanctified bishops and abbots, the bishops of the eleventh and twelfth centuries chose to elevate one of their own to patron status. Bishops chose to promote the stories of holy members of the clergy because their sacred protection could not be usurped by the laity. In this aspect, the reconstruction of churches resulted in an interesting rupture with the ancient urban community, in which again we find that late antiquity had become the period in the past that best reflected the values of the post-millennium present.

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Chapter 6

Roman planning as a model for urban modernity in Liberal Naples

Sofia Greaves

> Today, this is the *città nuova, la città giovane*, no less than twenty-five centuries have passed since the first inhabitants of Naples named the city (was it an omen?) *Neapolis, città nuova*.[1]

The idea of Greco-Roman Neapolis was essential to renewal in nineteenth-century Naples. This urban past appealed to public health reformers, who believed their ancient city exemplified the qualities of a healthy city; they drew attention to its grid plan and aqueduct in particular – two infrastructures highly coveted by nineteenth-century governments. Paradoxically, reformers argued that by building new infrastructures they would make Naples into Neapolis once more; they saw themselves as reviving this ancient city and restoring Naples to its peak of healthiness. Though the Neapolitans did seek out their Greco-Roman monuments, they engaged most with the idea of the ancient city. This chapter explores how and why this idea was 'restored' by redevelopment. As will become clear, the Roman past was emphasised because it offered a means to situate Naples within a developing Italian context.

Studies of modernisation in nineteenth-century Naples have completely overlooked the importance of Neapolis to urban renewal. This chapter therefore contributes to both the history of Neapolitan modernisation and the history of Naples' classical reception. The latter is especially understudied, a problem the recent volume *Remembering Parthenope* remedied in some measure. In chapters spanning from antiquity to the present day, contributors gave a 'diachronic exploration of how and why the image of classical Naples has been created, enhanced and modelled over the centuries according to agendas'.[2] Their aim was to challenge the continuing paradigm that Naples is the 'poor, crude, subaltern sister' to the

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[1] A play on the name *Neapolis* (new city). Spinazzola, 'Il nome di Napoli', 33.
[2] Hughes and Buongiovanni, *Remembering Parthenope*, 1–3.

north. Herein I take a similar approach by exploring three texts written between the years 1860 and 1914. Each provides a window into a key moment during the modernisation of Naples. The first concerns proposals for reform made by Marino Turchi the Neapolitan hygiene minister immediately after unification. Turchi was inspired by the modernity of Neapolis and proposed that this past offered a model for Naples. He argued that demolitions and new water systems could restore this model. The second text is a monograph written to commemorate the construction of a new aqueduct, which gave the impression that new building programs had reconnected Naples to Neapolis through a water source. Reformers also took this moment to 'restore' the physical ruins of the ancient Aqua Claudia on paper.[3] The ancient and modern aqueducts were tied together in a partnership which accentuated the impression that Naples was newly civilised after centuries of barbarity. As the third and final text shows, this parallel between Naples and Neapolis remained essential to the hygiene minister Orazio Caro in 1914. Caro, faced with instability after failed public health reforms, retold the history of Naples. He also indicated that Neapolis, a healthy city, had been restored in present day. Here the idea of the ancient city was once again invoked to prove that Turchi's proposals had been completed; Naples was ancient and modern, civilised and clean. First, it is essential to situate these texts in an appropriate European context, by establishing the dynamics which drove urban reform in nineteenth-century cities.

Rome, modernity and civility in the nineteenth-century city

Urban health in Western nineteenth-century cities was linked to straight streets and clean water systems. In accordance with miasmatic understandings of disease, good roads were essential for air circulation. New water systems took on an increasing importance after John Snow propagated the theory that cholera generated in water rather than in 'bad air'.[4] Naples, the largest city in Italy, lacked both of these infrastructures. As historian Frank Snowden has discussed, the city suffered continual cholera epidemics.[5] Meanwhile, governments across western Europe safeguarded their cities and demonstrated good governance by responding to medical knowledge, as Thomas Osborne has argued; whereas the eighteenth century government emphasised its commitment to public health through disciplinary codes, the nineteenth 'posed the problem in terms of water and the proper government of towns and cities'.[6] Linking proper government to these infrastructures also set up a framework for classifying and cataloguing cities; therefore to be classified as 'modern', a city needed to have

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[3]   Now known as the Augusta.
[4]   Koch, 'Mapping the Miasma', 15ff. Snow made this argument from 1854. In 1892, Robert Koch proved the theory in Hamburg.
[5]   Snowden, *Naples in the Time of Cholera*, 11–44.
[6]   Osborne, 'Security and vitality', 110. See Hamlin, '"Cholera forcing"' for why good water and drainage come about for non-public health reasons.

water systems and clean roads.[7] Such a city could also be termed 'civilised'. Cities without such systems were logically categorised as the product of bad government, typically imagined to be cities with winding alleys which bred disease. Naples fit into this category and reform was given importance by these perceptions.[8] The city was a contradiction. As one reporter wrote for the *Corriere della Sera*:

> Naples is always a city *sui generis*, characteristically strange and above all beautiful. In many points it is dirty, in very many horribly lurid; the agglomeration of men and stuff in little space is indescribable; the lack of water and its terrible qualities is extremely obvious … nonetheless, the city is always charming, beautiful, seductive and fascinating'.[9]

Reformers faced with such problems sought planning solutions in the cities of the past, which offered both practical models and precedents. They interpreted historic civilisations through their own perceptions of public health and ancient Rome, long held to be the pinnacle of civilisation by the western tradition, emerged as an extremely civilised model. For the engineers, architects and medics who belonged to a bourgeois elite instructed in the classics, the Roman roads, water and sewage systems offered a remarkable indication of modernity in antiquity.[10] By upholding the ideas contained in Greco-Roman texts, whilst projecting onto the Roman civilisation an industry and commerce which mirrored their own, these men celebrated 'the whiteness' and cleanliness of antiquity; they chose to ignore other qualities, most notably impractical or religious aspects of ancient culture.[11] Modern understandings of urban health therefore shaped the writing of historic cities and civilisations. Some appeared 'more civilised' than others, and the idea of Rome achieved a degree of synonymity with the modern city.

Paris, a city the Neapolitans idealised, took Rome as a model for modernisation.[12] It is essential to briefly examine the dynamics of Parisian reform if we are to create an appropriate context for Naples. Emperor Napoleon III and Baron Eugène Haussmann transformed Paris between 1853 and 1870.[13] Both men wished Paris to be both a 'space of magnificence' and 'space of Hygiene', as Richard Etlin has written.[14] In the Parisian tradition Rome epitomised these values and had already provided a succession of monarchs with an urban model; hence Haussmann argued that 'the degree of perfection attained in [Roman] customs and morals' placed the 'Roman nation' at the

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[7] See Sutcliffe, *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning*, for development of town planning 1860–1914.

[8] Johnson-Laird, 'Mental models'.

[9] 'Un Giorno a Napoli', *Corriere della Sera*, 13–14 August 1884.

[10] Malatesta, *Professionisti e Gentiluomini*. Penelope Davies' 'Pollution' has provided much useful evidence to dispel this myth that the Republican Roman city was a hygienic paradise.

[11] Race played an important role in this understanding. See Bond, 'Whitewashing ancient statues' and Bond, 'Why we need to start seeing'.

[12] Paris had been important as a modern model for Naples from the seventeenth century. My thanks to Melissa Calaresu for her comments here.

[13] Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*.

[14] Etlin, *Symbolic Space*, 10; Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 263–267.

pinnacle of 'not only the ancient populations, but also all the modern populations'.[15] Parisian infrastructure was linked symbolically to Imperial Rome; the *boulevards*, built specifically to manage cholera and surveillance from 1783, simultaneously sanitised and classicised the city with straight lines in the image of the Emperor.[16] Similarly, the aqueducts and sewers made Paris the 'modern Rome'. It is key to note that before Haussmann, aqueducts had not been a requirement for Paris to 'be Rome', as David Pinkney has shown.[17] The Parisians drank water from the Seine, but Haussmann was mindful of the new criteria linking clean water to civility and the model Rome could offer in this regard.[18] He and his engineer Eugène Belgrand, who produced a five-volume study of the Parisian water systems and sources, redefined Rome as a city with 'roads and aqueducts and sewers' by quoting passages from Strabo.[19] As Haussmann argued, it followed that Paris could only claim to be 'the Rome of the present century', if the city obtained a spring source, via an aqueduct, from extremely far away.[20] This contrast between Rome and Paris leveraged change; the Dhuis aqueduct (1865) was the first aqueduct to bring spring water to Paris and the Vanne followed in 1870.[21]

Crucially, Parisian modernity was styled upon the idea of Rome and not the local Roman past of Lutetia.[22] Lutetia was entirely forgotten from this episode. Whilst the very act of clean water provision might have signaled the glorious resurgence of water practices in Paris – because Lutetia did have an aqueduct – neither Haussmann nor Belgrand argued that this 'return to Roman ideas' connected Paris to her Roman past.[23] Indeed, Lutetia was destroyed during modernisation, as the archaeologist Colin Jones has shown.[24] Perhaps the Parisian origin story was not something which a modern city wished to reference or restore; in Strabo's account, the name Lutetia was said to have derived from *lutum* for mud, as befitted the city site. This dangerously reflected the contemporary criticism of smelly and muddy Paris as a 'sick city', 'Paris malade', with metaphorical 'swellings'.[25] Moreover, Strabo described the Parisii as one of the peoples who were 'living in a state of tranquility and are submissive to the Romans'.[26] This did not fit with the Parisian aspirations. Lutetia was 'forgotten'; this past was at odds with

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[15] Haussmann, *Second Mémoire sur les eaux de Paris*, 4.

[16] For Parisian straight street planning in a historic and European context: Hall, *Planning Europe's Capital Cities*, 29.

[17] Pinkney, *Napoleon III*, 220.

[18] In particular Edwin Chadwick's *Public Health Act* (1848). Haussmann sent his engineer A. Mille, to study British water supplies and established the *Service des Eaux et Égouts,* which was based on British systems. Haussmann, *Mémoire sur Les Eaux de Paris,* 23.

[19] For sources, Belgrand, *Les travauz souterrains de Paris, vol. 1.* Strabo, *Geography*, 5.3.8, quoted by Belgrand, *Les travaux souterrains de Paris, vol. 2*, 14. For Belgrand, see Atkinson, 'Eugène Belgrand 1810–1878'.

[20] Haussmann, *Second Mémoire sur les eaux de Paris*, 11, 22.

[21] Pinkney, *Napoleon III*, 121–123.

[22] Pinkney, *Napoleon III.*

[23] Belgrand, *Les travaux souterrains de Paris, vol. 2*, 2.

[24] See Jones, 'Theodore Vacquer and the Archaeology of Modernity in Haussmann's Paris'.

[25] Kudlick, *Cholera in post-Revolutionary Paris*, 13–15, 36–38.

[26] Strabo, *Geography*, 4.3. Cf. Caesar, *Gallic Wars*, 6.3, 7.57.

the clean, civilised and Imperial city which Haussmann and Napoleon wished Paris to be.[27] The new infrastructures made Paris 'Rome' as the government defined it; thus one medical guide stated, 'the '*île fangeuse* ... which the Parisii inhabited ... has made way for the superb and luxurious Paris we have come to visit ... not without enormous commotion. But Paris was not built in a day'.[28] This episode illustrates two points of particular importance for the Neapolitan case study. Paris showed how a modern, clean, beautiful and monumental city could model itself upon the idea of Rome; its infrastructures were given greater prestige by their symbolic link to this civilisation. Second, Paris did not link these infrastructures to the local Roman past. Neapolis, conversely, loomed large in the proposals for Neapolitan renewal, to which we will turn.

Marino Turchi and proposals for reform

Renewal in the decades which followed unification was pioneered by Marino Turchi (1808–1890). He was hailed at the time as the father of the Neapolitan hygiene movement and his work is now recognised as the foundation for subsequent reforms, though none have appraised the more symbolic elements of his proposals.[29] Turchi conducted several major studies of the city whilst assisting the Commission for Public Works as member of the Municipal Commission for Hygiene. Though he was not a Neapolitan, he made Naples his adoptive city and was elected as a deputy in parliament in 1848. Turchi was a nationalist liberal who supported the expulsion of the Bourbons in the War of Independence. He was engaged in political life and made one of thirty decurions in the same year that he founded the Institute of Hygiene and became Professor for Hygiene at the University of Naples. From 1860, Turchi actively instated reforms, one example being the working-class housing in Capodimonte.[30] The first of his written works, *Sulla Igiene della città di Napoli* (1862), is a survey of the city and its shortcomings, written at a time when reform seemed subordinate to solving heavy Risorgimento debts and attaining general order.[31] Turchi intended to incentivise the municipal powers to assume responsibility for a city-wide renewal. He stated his objective was to make Naples 'worthy of a place amongst the most distinguished cities in civilised Europe'.[32]

Nineteenth-century Naples was not counted amongst the cities in civilised Europe. As Nelson Moe has shown, Naples had long been located within 'an imaginary geography' of 'the south'. This divide built what Moe dubs a 'negative ideological charge' against

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[27] See Duval, *De Lutèce oppidum à Paris capitale de la France.*

[28] Meding, *Paris médical*, 38.

[29] Turchi is mentioned by Parisi and Zilli, 'Acqua, aria, terra, fuoco', 120.

[30] Marino Turchi (31 May 1808–3 March 1890) was born in Gessopalena, Chieti. He studied natural sciences and medicine. Turchi, *Della Italia Igienica*, 137. Garibaldi read Turchi's work, Olivari, *La Biblioteca di Garibaldi.*

[31] For economic debt and liberal reform programs, Quine, *Italy's Social Revolution*, 36ff. For a source book on unification, Mack Smith, *The Making of Italy.*

[32] Turchi, *Della Italia Igienica*, 78.

the city.[33] Although the Bourbon dynasty had done much to promote industrial progress, education and sanitation in Naples, both Italians and foreigners argued that the Neapolitans had been turned into barbarians by continual bad government. Naples was not Italian; Naples was African, as the first Piedmontese governor of the south wrote to Camillo Cavour, 'What Barbarism! This is not Italy! This is Africa: compared to these peasants, the Bedouins are the pinnacle of civilisation'.[34] This 'barbarism' was also linked to racial and climactic factors; in 1886, the British traveler Samuel Russell Forbes described the Neapolitan man as 'a blending of the Oriental and the Greek', in order to characterise him as an outsider to the modern world. For Forbes, this exotic mixture produced 'ignorance and superstition [as] the chief characteristics of the mind'.[35] Exhibiting 'Greekness' could therefore carry negative connotations. Ronald Meek discussed, for example, in his social study of savagery, how the ancient Greeks appeared too close to the Tahitians to be considered civilised.[36] To examine what the Neapolitans thought of their Greek identity is beyond the reach of this paper, but this anxiety about 'Greekness' and 'Italianness' likely shaped the desire to look back to Neapolis in the Roman period. For example, the Neapolitan politician Alberto Marghieri (1852–1937) emphasised how Naples, though 'Greek, did not have any of those defects which later on, came to be linked to the name of its founders'.[37]

Rome held mixed connotations in the Neapolitan intellectual tradition. In the eighteenth century, as Melissa Calaresu has shown, Neapolitan historiography interpreted the Roman invasion as a moment which ushered in centuries of oppressive rule. Historians argued that prior to the Romans, Naples had been independent.[38] After the Romans, the city had been successively ruled by the Goths, the Normans, the Angevins, the Aragonese and Spanish Viceroys. The Roman invasion represented a foreign interference which brought the demise of good government; historians therefore denigrated Rome and looked back to the Samnites as an autonomous model for political and economic renewal.[39] This interpretation of Neapolitan history reflected contemporary anti-papal politics and supported the new, Bourbon monarchy. However, the same monarchy later sought prestige in the Greco-Roman past by excavating in Pompeii and Herculaneum, which inserted Naples into the Grand Tour

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[33] Moe, *The View from Vesuvius*, 164; Lupo, 'Storia del Mezzogiorno'; Snowden, *Naples in the Time of Cholera*, 40; MacMaster, *Racism in Europe*. For an intersectional critique, see Giuliani, *Race, Nation and Gender*, 31–38.

[34] Letter written from Luigi Carlo Farini to Cavour, 27 October 1860. Quoted in Moe, *The View from Vesuvius*, 165. Similarly, Giovanni Lanza, president of Piedmontese Parliament claimed, 'The Neapolitans, accustomed for centuries to suffer a cynical, immobile and corrupt government, lack all sense of public spirit … it is the arduous mission of the Italians of the north to civilly and politically regenerate the Italians of the south'. Quoted in Moe, *The View from Vesuvius*, 153.

[35] Russell Forbes, *Rambles in Naples*, 28.

[36] Meek, *Social Science*, 217.

[37] Marghieri, *Napoli nel suo avvenire economico e intellettuale*, 24.

[38] In antiquity, after its foundation as a Greek city by the Cumaeans in the sixth century BC, Naples was conquered and inhabited by the Samnites.

[39] Calaresu, 'Images of ancient Rome', 642–643.

itinerary.[40] When the Kingdom of Italy was declared, it remained advantageous to emphasise the local ancient past, which had symbolic capital in both the European and national context. Historians continued to emphasise the idea of Neapolis, even if its material remains above ground were few.

The image of Neapolis was reconstructed in two nineteenth-century texts written by the scholar Bartolommeo Capasso. Before Capasso, a bishop, Domenico Romanelli, had searched 'with the most exact diligence in all the most hidden corners' but struggled to compile a thorough study of the ancient city which included material remains.[41] Both men worked primarily from literary sources, which had been reinterpreted over the centuries by Neapolitan intellectuals. Capasso published widely on Neapolitan history, both medieval and ancient. His study, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli* (1855), sought to locate the city's origins and was followed by *Napoli Greco-Romana* (1905), published posthumously by Giulio De Petra, which offered a much fuller imagining of Neapolis and its cultural life. This study contained the first archaeological plan of Neapolis to be produced by a Neapolitan, to which we will return later.

> Located up on high, this city had the port beneath it and was defended by the most solid walls, which, according to one historian, showed the ancient power of the people who founded her. We will not speak of the magnificent buildings which adorned the city, so as not to digress; we wish only to mention that Cicero (Pro. Rab. Post. C. X.) named her 'celeberrium oppidum' and later, Julian, (Misopog.) called her 'popolossissima', and we note therefore, that this was not such a small city [at the time of the Romans], as many wish to suggest.[42]

In 1855, Capasso glossed over the lack of monumental evidence in Naples by stating he 'will not mention the magnificent buildings which adorned the city, so as not to digress'. Naples did have ancient monuments which had been subsumed by other structures (Fig. 6.1). Of the Temple to the Dioscuri only two columns survived; these formed part of the church of St. Paul. Nearby, brick walls and the probable remains of the theatre in the Anticaglia also indicated the presence of a Roman city.[43] Capasso also described how an aqueduct was visible at Ponti Rossi.[44] Understood to be the Aqua Claudia, in antiquity this drew from the Serino spring near Avellino, running an impressive 89 kilometres to Naples.[45] It was no longer functional, but in antiquity the aqueduct also supplied the Piscina Mirabilis, a cistern built by Augustus for the Imperial fleet at Misenum.[46] These remains are also foregrounded in city guides, and were widely understood in relation

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[40] From 1748. This resulted in Naples receiving the first railway line in Italy, in 1839. My thanks to the peer reviewer. Moormann, 'Guides in the Vesuvius area'.

[41] Romanelli, *Antica Topografia Istorica*.

[42] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 12. Capasso referred to Cicero, *For Rabirius Postumus* and Julian, *Misopogon*.

[43] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 4-5.

[44] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 22–23.

[45] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 22–25. Italo Sgobbo and Olga Elia correctly attributed the construction to Augustus in the fascist period. Sgobbo, 'L'acquedotto romano della Campania', 75–97.

[46] For the most recent study of this aqueduct, Esposito, *Il sottosuolo di Napoli.*

Fig. I. Costruzione romana all' Anticaglia

Figure 6.1. 'Remains of the Roman theatre' in B. Capasso, Napoli Greco-Romana Esposta nella Topografia e Nella Vita Opera Postuma di Bartolommeo Capasso. Edita a cura della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria *(Naples, 1905), plate 1.*

to sites beyond the city, which fortified the 'antiquity' of the city site.[47]

Reformers looked back to this image of Neapolis because the links between Italy, civility and Rome made the Roman period an ideal and relevant past. We can explore this further by returning to Turchi and his proposals for reform. Turchi argued that Naples could present herself as a civilised and modern European city by redeveloping Neapolis. He argued that Neapolis should be remade by rebuilding Naples from scratch. This paradox was characteristic of modernist projects, which were shaped by 'dialectics of chaos and (new) order, despair and hope, decadence and renewal, destruction and creation', as Roger Griffin has described.[48] However, before turning to Neapolis, Turchi discussed Paris – a city which offered a splendid and recent model. He was sent to Paris as a delegate in 1855 and attended the Universal Exposition, 'to study the principal sanitary reforms carried out in that extremely civilised metropolis'.[49] As he explained in his chapter on 'Fate of other cities in Europe, our fate', Turchi believed that Naples should follow Paris' example.[50] Paris was

a city with sewers and straight roads, where aqueducts were about to be constructed. This set the standard for good hygiene; he claimed that 'only in one European city is renewal so urgent and grandiose, that it seems a miracle'.[51] Paris also emblematised urban renewal under strong autonomous government. He marveled that a tourist would find the Paris of the Bourbons gone; he would find a new Paris, the city of Napoleon Bonaparte, the 'Magno Imperatore'. A tourist would 'infinitely praise the wisdom, power and noble inspirations of the Municipio', and Napoleon, 'the name

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[47] Nobile, *Un Mese a Napoli*; Moormann, 'Guides in the Vesuvius area'.

[48] Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, 54, 97.

[49] *Rivista Internazionale d'Igiene*, April 1890. Quoted in Turchi, *Della Italia Igienica*, 137.

[50] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, xv, 122.

[51] Aqueducts were 'currently being seriously thought about in Paris'. Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 36.

of the century'.[52] Such a transformation indicated that Naples could also draw a line under Bourbon rule by demolishing the city and redeveloping on a 'Roman' template.

However, unlike Haussmann, Turchi proposed that Naples should be dismantled and rebuilt in the image of its local Roman past. As he implied in his 'Description of Naples in that [ancient] time', Neapolis was compatible with the idea of 'the modern city'; its name even seemed to foretell this relationship. As Turchi claimed, 'for the second time, and with no less reason than the first, [Naples] will be called nuova (new), and even *nuovissima*'.[53] He referred to the alleged re-founding of the city in antiquity; as Capasso described, the 'Cumaeans were afflicted by a horrible pestilence and, at the oracle's command, liberated themselves from that scourge by rebuilding the city once more; thus the city was given the name Napoli, that is – new city'.[54] This account offered a nice parable for the present day in a city plagued by cholera. Turchi also accentuated the cultural flourishing of Naples after the *foedus aequanum* (326 BC), a treaty between Rome and Naples which later allowed Naples to retain semi-independence into the Imperial period, when Naples was awarded colonial status. His chapter, 'Naples, provincial city and capital no more', gave a well-versed account of an ancient city where Virgil composed the Aeneid; Neapolis had been favoured as the 'seat of urbanity and elegance', 'for reasons of health and studies'.[55] The literary record naturally drew attention to these elements because it was predominantly Latin, as recently analysed by Lorenzo Miletti. Latin writers made clear that Naples had a hyphenated Greco-Roman identity and highlighted that the city was a site for elite *otium*.[56] For Turchi this was advantageous because health and studies were increasingly dominant as combined motives for elite travel in the nineteenth century.[57] Thus he told of 'the Patricians and Roman senators' who had visited Neapolis in antiquity.

The idea of Neapolis as a monumental, populous and cultured city which was complimentary to Rome offered a means to define the Neapolitan future. Naples occupied a precarious position within a new nation dominated by northern powers; therefore, to call attention to its good hygiene and relationship with Rome in the past was advantageous. It proved that Naples was a part of civilised Italy, immediately after the city had not received one of the medals bestowed by the king for patriotic actions in the Risorgimento.[58] We can compare, for example, how the politician and professor Marghieri also invoked Neapolis to situate Naples within Italy:

> What mission is reserved for a people, which has no days of barbarism in its existence,
> which has the most distant origins, owing to the people which holds the greatest and most

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[52] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 127.

[53] A play on the meaning of *Nea-polis*. Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 126.

[54] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 3. Cf. overview of sources in Miletti, 'Setting the agenda', 33.

[55] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 205. The same reasons were repeated by Marghieri, *Napoli nel suo avvenire economico e intellettuale*, 24–25.

[56] Miletti, 'Setting the agenda'. Livy, *History of Rome*, 8.25.5–26.7; Strabo, *Geography*, 5.4.7, 6.1.2; Masden 'Looking in from the outside', 38.

[57] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 205; Gyr 'The history of tourism'.

[58] Royal Decree n. 395, 4th September, 1898. Nisco, *Napoli nella storia dell'Italia nuova*, 5.

efficacious part in the history of thought and intellectualism ...? ... We will again be able to be completely worthy of our civic origins, and just as Rome found in Naples, in its time, the most secure ally and the wisest council for its conduct towards the other southern cities, Italy will find one day a powerful economic and intellectual force which, united with that of its other parts, will entrust it to the destinies to which god calls it.*59*

At this conference on 'The Economic and Intellectual future of Naples', Marghieri specifically excluded the possibility of a barbarian past to present the city as kindred to Rome. His reference to Naples as 'secure ally', reminded his contemporaries that Naples accepted Roman citizenship in the Social Wars (91–87 BC), which brought the Roman unification of Italy. Here partnership between Rome and Naples 'in its time' framed a role for Naples as counsel in the south, after the dissolution of its kingdom, thus, Neapolis was praised because this past offered a means to situate Naples within modern Italy. As Turchi asked, 'who does not anticipate the splendid future?'[60]

Ultimately, the glorification of Neapolis set up a contrast with contemporary Naples which prompted change. If Haussmann contrasted Paris with Rome, here the contrast between Naples and Roman Neapolis was key. Turchi concluded his proposals by indicating that Naples could only be Neapolis if the city was drastically remade. He referred to the fire of Rome in AD 64, allegedly begun by Emperor Nero, which offered him a useful example. As Turchi told it, Neapolis had been a healthy city because Emperor Nero did not burn it to the ground. Indeed, 'Nero would not have specially selected Naples as the location for his artistic glory', if this city had been unhealthy.[61] However, Nero would certainly burn Naples now; the city no longer resembled this ideal. Naples was just like the city which Nero had destroyed, where the 'deformity of the old buildings, and the narrow, winding roads' offended him.[62] Turchi was able to recast the fire of Rome as a necessary remedy for decline; his Nero responded to conditions in Rome with 'a certain taste for the arts, a sense of aesthetics'. He also identified 'the need to render the city cleaner and healthier'.[63] The fire was a means to establish 'a well-ordered plan, with better rules and proportions'.[64] This interpretation obviously marked a departure from the figure who in Suetonius, stood entranced by the flames singing in a theatre costume.[65] Thus by idealising Neapolis Turchi found

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[59] Marghieri, *Napoli nel suo avvenire economico e intellettuale*, 38–39.

[60] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 203.

[61] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 126.

[62] Turchi quoted the Latin, 'offensus deformitate veterum aedificiorum, et angustiis, flessurisque viarum incendit urbem': Suetonius, *Nero*, 6.1. Turchi, *Della Italia Igienica*, 78.

[63] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 128. Perhaps this reading was reinforced by Tacitus' account that the fire provided 'a clear tract of ground and an open horizon'. Tacitus, *Annals*, 15.40.1. Trans. Jackson.

[64] Attilio Profumo would later reassess the Fire of Nero. He discussed the difference between the ancient methods of redevelopment and the modern idea of expropriation. Profumo noted how Romans disliked the new width of the roads after the fire of Nero (Tacitus, *Annales*, 15.43). Profumo, *Le fonti ed i tempi dell'incendio Neroniano.*

[65] In Suetonius, Nero used the deformity of the city as a pretext for clearing land next to his golden palace, the Domus Aurea on the Oppian Hill. Whilst Rome burned, the people took refuge within

a justification for demolition and a logic for new infrastructures. Modern Naples would be a new and autonomous city once more – Neapolis – from the layout to the water systems.[66]

> Scholarship has failed to connect Turchi's emphasis on Neapolis to the changes made in Naples over the following decades. The city was given clean water systems and large areas were redeveloped on the grid plan (Fig. 6.2). This period, named the *Risanamento*, was Italy's first state sponsored sanitation campaign (*c.* 1884–1910). At the time, it was certainly understood to be a continuation of Turchi's ideas.[67] The engineer responsible for the Neapolitan plumbing system described the *Proposte* as the foundation for all subsequent studies, 'revealing in him the precursor to the *Risanamento* of our city'.[68] We should therefore understand the *Risanamento* as part of a broader cultural context and timeline; certainly, these initiatives followed the Parisian example, as Carla Giovannini, Adolfo Gambardella and Rossella Rossi have all raised.[69] But the idea of the ancient city drove and framed reform; it also gave change a local and symbolic meaning. The following section turns to the Serino aqueduct to give further context to these ideas. The Serino similarly signaled the 'resurgence' of Neapolis.

The Neapolitan aqueduct

> Therefore, the result of these long discussions will be a hydraulic system, complete in all its parts, *perfettissimo* for the abundance and excellence of its waters, and for the means they are conveyed, incomparably useful for its effects, and glorious for the monumental restoration which will be its basis and foundation.[70]

Turchi's proposals for clean water were contained most fully in his *Sulle Acque e Cloache* (1863).[71] Here he drew from the work of amateur archaeologist and engineer Felice Abate, who had campaigned since 1840 for the ancient Aqua Claudia to be restored.[72] Abate was financed by the Municipal Council to excavate and examine the ancient structure; he concluded that 41 kilometres could be used along the Montuoro plain. Sixteen kilometres could be repaired.[73] It was his opinion that Naples should 'adapt the Roman wisdom, that is to derive water from rich springs, from places far off, without vagaries and

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monuments and watched their city disappear. Suetonius' account gave prominence to the erasure of memories kept in 'the houses of leaders of old'. As in Suetonius, *Nero*, 20.2, 38.1–2.

[66] Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 203.

[67] A direct consequence of the severe cholera epidemic in 1884. Snowden, *Naples in the Time of Cholera*, 184.

[68] Melisurgo, in Turchi, *Della Italia Igienica*, xiv.

[69] Giovannini, *Risanare le città*. Gambardella, 'Napoli, Città Moderna'. Rossi, 'Il Risanamento di Napoli'.

[70] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 52.

[71] Spoken before the Municipal Council, 27 July 1863.

[72] Re-proposed in 1864 before the Municipal Council, which authorised 4000 ducati to Abate to study the Claudio, to work out the quantity of water available, and to value the buildings in the Sabato valley (1861). Abate, *Delle acque pubbliche della Città di Napoli*; Abate, 'Sulla quistione delle nuove acque potabili per la città di Napoli'; Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*. Turchi spoke of Abate in his proposals. Turchi, *Sulla igiene pubblica della città di Napoli*, 36.

[73] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 31–33.

Figure 6.2. 'Detail, Piano di Risanamento, showing redevelopments (dark) to be built over Naples' in A. Marghieri, Il Risanamento di Napoli. Conferenza al Circolo Filologico del Prof. Alberto Marghieri, assessore comunale. Aggiuntovi, Lo studio storico, Sul vero sito di Napoli e Palepoli di Bartolommeo Capasso. Con una tavola illustrativa *(Naples, 1889).*

without hesitation', a phrase he adapted from the Parisian proposals which he and Turchi frequently referenced.[74] The Neapolitan aqueduct project had its own long history; this scheme had been proposed by both the Bourbons and the Spanish to no avail.[75] It was by no means obvious that Naples should renew this idea, which had proved so difficult for previous governments. However, for this same reason the opportunity to 'restore' the Claudia was advantageous. As Abate argued, the Municipal Council could complete 'its civilizing work, cancelling out the ignorance and shame of past ages which neglected the great Roman aqueduct, whilst the city rotted in stink and unhealthiness'.[76]

Abate continued a narrative tradition which John Santore has termed 'The Tragic Centuries'. Neapolitan historians of different periods identified 'one brilliant past', whilst casting the intermediary periods as 'deterioration'.[77] As told by Abate, 'With the fall of the Roman Empire, and with this the extinction of every civilisation, the aqueducts were subjected in their exterior parts to barbarian devastations and the injustices of time'.[78]

In Naples this coincided with a period of foreign rule which had caused barbarity; thus 'old ignorance and bad government brought about the worst conditions in Naples,

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[74] Abate used Belgrand's phrase, stating 'the Municipio in Paris paid homage to the Roman wisdom'. Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 73–74.

[75] Pietro Antonio Lettieri conducted his study in 1560 for Spanish Viceroy Don Pedro de Toledo. As listed by the *Società*, the first study was made by Colonello del Genio Lavega and the Engineer de Bottis. The second, under engineer Giuliano de Fazio and the Accademia Ercolanese di Archeologia (1824), concluded that the ancient aqueduct existed, and it would be useful to restore it.

[76] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 52. This was untrue; for urban maintenance and water provision under the French and Spanish see Russo, 'La Cura del Patrimonio Costruito'.

[77] Santore, *Modern Naples*, xxxi.

[78] In Naples this was partly true – the general Belisarius had invaded via the aqueduct in 537. Procopius, *Gothic Wars*, 5.10.14–16. Also given in Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 80–81.

owing to the lack of drinking water.'[79] Abate linked the barbarity of the Neapolitans to their water source and system: a 'barbarous system of wells', '[il] barbaro sistema dei pozzi'.[80] Forced to drink from 'dirty rivers', the Neapolitan citizens 'descended to the depths of misery'.[81] Hence the fall of Rome and the loss of an aqueduct caused Neapolitan barbarity. The reconstruction of this ancient system would indicate good governance and a 'return' to civility.

Abate's proposals were put aside because the literal restoration of the Aqua Claudia was impractical.[82] However, the government continued to emphasise the symbolic restoration of the Serino water source, inventing a relationship between the ancient and modern structure which we can examine by turning to a second text: the monograph produced to commemorate the Serino. *L'Acquedotto di Napoli* was published in 1883 to celebrate the Serino aqueduct, which was to be inaugurated in 1885. Unlike the *Proposte*, this monograph was intended for an audience outside the city and was produced for the Turin Exhibition of 1883. Naples had not appeared at the Milan Expo two years previously, an occasion reviewed by the *Estafette* in Paris, as 'one of the greatest events of the new Italy'.[83] The official guide concluded therefore that Neapolitans had been left by the Bourbons 'educated in diffidence and in indifference towards everything new'.[84] This monograph was evidence to the contrary; it proved that Naples had opted for the Roman model taken in modern cities like Paris.[85] Parading this aqueduct before the Piedmontese at the national exhibition illustrated that Naples was ahead of Milan and Turin.[86]

This text was officially authored by the *Società Veneta*, an anonymous cooperative responsible for constructing the aqueduct.[87] Although the monograph is the main

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[79] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 10. This was the standard history of the Roman city, one consolidated by the Renaissance, which emphasised that the centuries after the Gothic invasions were characterised by 'forgetting' the ancient city and its hydraulic practices in particular. For early medieval water systems in Rome and the contestation of this narrative, Coates-Stephens 'The water supply of early medieval Rome'.

[80] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 3.

[81] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 10.

[82] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 26–27.

[83] Anonymous, 'L'Esposizione giudicata all'estero', 150–151.

[84] De Cesare, 'Il Mezzo Giorno all'Esposizione', 258–259.

[85] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 56.

[86] Giovannini, *Risanare le città*.

[87] The story of the aqueduct construction is very complex. It was built by the Italians but the water itself was owned by the French. The contract was granted to the engineers Mamby and Roberti, on 28 June 1873, whose firm was replaced by General Credit and Discount in April 1878. General Credit and Discount passed the contract to the Compagnie Generale des Eaux pour L'Etranger, Paris. On 30 April 1878, it founded The Naples Water Works Company Limited, which was actually French. The Company was then established in Italy as the Società Anonima pei Lavori Idraulici della Citta di Napoli, on 30 January 1881. It was responsible for the technical plans. The Società Veneta actually built the Neapolitan aqueduct. This company was founded in 1872 in Padua by Vincenzo Stefano Breda. In Naples, Breda directed the team of engineers who constructed the aqueduct between 1881–1885. Construction was overseen by the Neapolitan engineers Gaetano Bruno and Francesco Verneau. Verneau, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, gives the most complete account.

source material for many subsequent studies, none have determined its author. Two contributors are certain; the first is Abate, whose excavations are referenced. I propose that the second author is the Venetian nationalist Paolo Fambri (1827–1897). Fambri supported unification and became a prominent leader of the right-wing in Venice in the 1870s. Francesco Verneau, an engineer responsible for overseeing the construction works, credited him as the author in a footnote within his own construction report.[88] Fambri was also a journalist, who directed *La Patria* in Naples and founded *La Stampa* in Turin, alongside anti-Bourbon exile Ruggiero Bonghi. He published two further articles on the aqueduct in the nationalist *Rassegna Nazionale*, praising the 'colossal monograph' therein.[89] If Fambri is the author, it is likely that his perspective on the Neapolitan aqueduct was coloured by his own colonial understanding that the ideas and concepts of Rome, Italy and civility were interlinked. As we shall see, the aqueduct was glorified as a symbol of these characteristics at the expense of other pasts.

L'Acquedotto di Napoli began with an account of the Aqua Claudia. The modern aqueduct had nothing to do with this ancient structure in literal terms; it ran along a different course in pipes under pressure. This made it 'all but identical' to the 'Parthenopean aqueduct', as Uberto Potenza has emphasised.[90] However, the history of the Claudia gave the modern aqueduct greater meaning; the author could certify – as Abate had already argued – that Naples had 'restored' an element of the ancient city. The decision to put these two histories together is comparable to events in Paris, where Belgrand, Haussmann's engineer, also commenced his history of Parisian water provision with a history of Roman aqueducts. Belgrand had also declared, Paris was about to 'return to Roman methods' thus 'it appears natural to me to commence a history of the sanitation works in Paris with a study of the sanitation systems in ancient cities and Rome in particular'.[91] As in Paris, in Naples the history of Roman water methods promoted the city's status by mere comparison. However, in Naples, the idea that the city had revived both a practice and a water source also created the impression of a glorious resurgence: Neapolis in a new, improved iteration.

Ultimately, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli* gave Naples further evidence of a prestigious Roman past. It was a restoration in itself; the monograph justified its account of the Claudia because this monument had apparently received *no* appropriate scholarly attention. This was untrue; Capasso discussed the aqueduct only recently.[92] Here, the aqueduct had already been discussed alongside the various proposals to restore it.[93] Nevertheless,

[88] Verneau, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 44.

[89] Fambri, 'Le acque di Serino'; Fambri, 'L'acquedotto di Napoli'. Fambri also published prolifically on the links between science, physical education and human character. Publications included, *Il carattere* (1879); *Dei nessi tra l'idealità e la moralità* (1879), *Volgarizzamento delle scienze* (1886); *I criteri del bene* (1890); *Il positivismo nella scienza e nella vita e sulla fisica sociale* (1892) and *La ginnastica bellica* (1895). Treccani gives a bibliography online, Labanca, 'Paolo Fambri'.

[90] Potenza, 'l'acqua di Serino e l'acquedotto Augusteo', 1–7. See also Montuono, 'L'Acquedotto Romano del Serino', where this distinction is less clear.

[91] Belgrand, *Les Travaux Souterrains de Paris, vol. 2.*, 3.

[92] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 22–24.

[93] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*.

the author took it upon himself to provide information on a subject, 'about which nobody, strange to say, has to this day taken the care to write'.[94] There is 'not a single word, in Frontinus, Vitruvius, Pliny, Favretti, Pleni, Belidor, Montucla, Bossut, Libri, Lanciani, none in the infinite scholarly dictionaries or even in conversation'.[95] As he argued, the Claudia did not even appear in the Encyclopedia Britannica, which considered Rome before moving 'directly on to Roman structures outside of Italy, without a word on the Claudian aqueduct, as if it had nothing to do with anything'.[96] Such indignance was characteristic of Neapolitan thinking; in another new history, *Napoli nella storia dell'Italia nuova*, Nicola Nisco complained 'how in general our history is painfully forgotten'.[97] These writers retold the history of Neapolis to disprove historians like Ferdinand Gregorovius, who had written that in comparison to Rome Naples was 'in the last degree devoid of form and monument'. Gregorovius, who visited Naples in 1854, wrote that this situation reflected the 'instability and change of its transitory dynasties', and the 'passivity' of the Neapolitan people.[98] The monograph provided a monument. The writer reconstructed Neapolis, asserting 'here we must remake, stronger than ever, all the marvels ... because memories fade, and ruins disappear.'[99]

To create a link between Roman Neapolis and Naples, the author first had to prove that the Claudia actually *was* Roman.[100] He worked to discredit two possibilities; first, how 'the great work is often attributed, without any historic reason, to the Lombards', which would place it in the sixth century AD. Second, that the aqueduct was Samnite, an argument made both by Capasso and an eighteenth-century historian named Francesco Crescitelli.[101] Crescitelli became the author's adversary. Crescitelli, who was writing at a time when the Samnites offered an appealing political model, had rejected 'those who want to attribute absolutely every magnificence to the Romans alone'.[102] Presumably he referenced Pontanus, who attributed the aqueduct to Claudius – using fistulae which did not link Claudius to the construction. Or Boccaccio, who proffered Nero as an alternative, based on a vague quotation from Suetonius mentioning the Piscina Mirabilis.[103] There was no real evidence in favour of either emperor in the

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94 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 2.
95 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 2.
96 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 2.
97 Nisco, *Napoli nella storia dell'Italia nuova.*
98 Gregorovius, *Siciliana*, 53.
99 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 2.
100 One of its sections was clearly older than the other. This portion was referred to as the 'Samnite' portion. The upper section was restored in the third century, accounting for the difference. The aqueduct was built in the first century AD. Colucci, 'Fontis Augustei Aquaeductus', 141.
101 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 3.
102 La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 9.
103 The author later cited the artist Paolo Antonio Paoli, whose text actually emphasised how, 'neither of these two opinions is acceptable; one because it is not based on any reason; the other because it is based on too weak a reason. These tubes could pertain to any water works, have substituted old ones, or in some manner been more modern.' Cited as '*Siciliarum Heirusalem Regi ... Fausto Connubii tempore cum M. Carolina Lothar. Austriaca ...*', La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 18.

nineteenth century. In the monograph, the author accepted this evidence and made his argument in favour of Rome by applying the prejudices of his own time. Departing from the assumption that the Samnites were a nomadic tribe and therefore unable to observe proper hygiene, he deduced that they had no need for an aqueduct. The dirty Sabato waters were 'completely drinkable, for the first Samnites who were half barbarians'.[104] He insisted therefore that the aqueduct had been built by a Roman Emperor and emphasised that Naples was dominated by Rome.[105]

> Under either Claudius Augustus, or Claudius Nero, Rome dominated us, and how greatly! That in any one moment of its dominion Rome should have ordered this division of the Serino waters, when it had reason and interests to provide for her villas and subjects, quarrelsome or not, is natural and just.[106]

Reimagining Naples under the rule of either emperor resulted in a positive image. Surely this reflected the contemporary political context where links to Rome offered a future. Whilst under the Bourbons, the Samnites were deemed to be the most attractive political model for the Neapolitans; in the nineteenth century they no longer presented such a model.[107] For this reason, Crescitelli's enthusiasm for the Samnites is deemed 'strangely proud and passionate' and the author refused to accept his theory, 'let us respect it nonetheless'.[108] This may also explain why the author overlooked Capasso, who had discounted the evidence outlined above and suggested that the structure 'predated the Roman conquest'.[109] The monograph overwrote these interpretations and freshly linked Neapolis to Naples and into a nexus of images which conferred cultural prestige upon the city: Pompeii and the Imperial fleet in particular (Fig. 6.3).[110]

> From the most remote antiquity ... Naples, strong with Roman omnipotence, also channelled [the waters] through the Claudian aqueduct, which it now restores with this new aqueduct, certainly not inferior in grandeur and much superior in capacity.[111]

The history segued seamlessly into an account of the modern aqueduct, creating a timeline which gave greater credence to the Neapolitan evolution and 'transformation'. The new aqueduct proved, as Abate had written, that the art of providing clean water 'has been revived in our times, and to an even greater height than in antiquity, because it is enriched by the conquests of the mind and modern civilisation'.[112] The history, by applauding the Roman construction as a 'work of stupendous tenacity' which traversed

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[104] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 11.
[105] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 11.
[106] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 10–11.
[107] Calaresu, 'Images of ancient Rome'.
[108] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 9.
[109] Capasso, *Sull'antico sito di Napoli e Palepoli*, 23.
[110] The 'Lapide di Serino', clarified that Pompeii was not provided by the Aqua Augusta. Sgobbo, 'L'acquedotto romano della Campania'.
[111] La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 2.
[112] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 5.

INTERNO DELLA PISCINA MIRABILE.
FIG. 23.

Figure 6.3. Interior of the Piscina Mirabilis. Società Veneta (1883) 20. British School at Rome Library, Special Collections, 689.NAP.F.11.

mountains with tonnes of lead, foreshadowed its eclipse by the new aqueduct, with its siphons, dynamite and iron piping (Fig. 6.4).[113]

Fambri similarly claimed that the Serino 'far from being restored to live its Roman life once again, ended up being put aside, for a third aqueduct demonstrably more rational and economic, and an even greater provider of water'.[114] This one-upmanship was common amongst the engineers; Verneau also believed that the Romans had been thwarted, but were due 'no small share in the glory'.[115] Antonio d'Amelio asserted that 'The aqueduct and the sewage systems have no reason to envy the ancient Roman constructions, neither in solidity nor in quality'.[116] In sum, even if the new aqueduct 'had nothing in common with the Roman aqueduct' because it channeled the Urciuoli springs through a new tunnel (Fig. 6.5), the idea remained that Neapolis was 'being restored' in an 'evolved' iteration.[117] We should be aware that studies of Neapolis

[113] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 52.
[114] Fambri, 'Le acque di Serino', 473.
[115] Verneau, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 38.
[116] D'Amelio, 'L'Esposizione d'igiene,' 105.
[117] The Claudia drew from the Acquaro and Pelosi springs; the Urciuoli waters came from different spring, nearby. La Società Veneta, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 21. Some even questioned whether the Serino
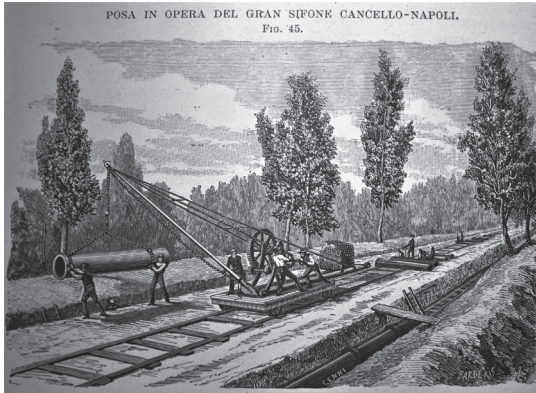
Figure 6.4. Introduction of the 'arte moderna'. La Società Veneta (1883) 74. BSR Library, Special Collections, 689. NAP.F.11.

also recorded this new, desired partnership without question. Franz Cangiano, in his *Napoli Antica*, wrote of how 'it is true that today this proud work has been renewed, and that after many centuries Naples drinks the clear waters of Serino once more'.[118]

In sum, the ancient aqueduct was given fresh emphasis by the construction of a new system, to which it became inextricably tied. The publicity given to the Serino aqueduct made its story well known. Over two million people came to Naples for this event; fifty thousand of them gathered in the Piazza del Plebiscito on roofs and balconies to see the king and queen of Italy. When Queen Margherita waved her handkerchief, the fountain in the centre of the piazza gave a jet of water 33 metres into the air to the sound of cannon fire. On the via Toledo, a balcony spot for three cost fifty francs, the modern equivalent of roughly three hundred and fifty pounds.[119] King Umberto proclaimed exclaimed '[m]y expectation was great, but this very *Roman* work has surpassed it'.[120] Abroad, news of the aqueduct reached the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which reported that the city was newly 'fed from the source which anciently supplied the Julian Aqueduct, extending from Serino (as the old Sabatia is now called) to Naples and Misenum'.[121] The *Herald* declared that the water would thankfully abolish the old proverb, 'See Naples, and then die'. Its misinterpretation of this proverb, which intended that one could only die satisfied after seeing Naples, gives an indication as to the power that clean water held to characterise the city. As Fambri concluded in his article for the *Rassegna*, 'The figures speak very vigorously and eloquently for themselves. Having visited this work in the country and in the city, Giuseppe Giusti[122] would no longer call us 'the little gnomes from the boot'. We strongly feel ourselves to be, even technically speaking, real men. I would say, athletic men'.[123]

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springs had been obtained at all. Verneau, *L'Acquedotto di Napoli*, 98.

[118] Cangiano, *Napoli Antica*, 82.

[119] 'I Sovrani a Napoli', *Corriere della Sera*, 11 May 1885. Conversion using price of gold obtained from www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html.

[120] 'I Sovrani a Napoli', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 12 May 1885.

[121] 'Our Rome Letter', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 27 June 1885.

[122] Giuseppe Giusti (1809–1850). Northern Italian satirist.

[123] Fambri, 'L'acquedotto di Napoli', 110.

Figure 6.5. Comparison between the modern aqueduct course (top) and the ancient aqueduct course (bottom). La Società Veneta (1883) Fig. 28. BSR Library, Special Collections, 689.NAP.F.11.

Orazio Caro and the hygienic evolution of Naples

> The water which Naples drank in its good ancient time, is the same which has finally been procured after many centuries, with innumerable sacrifices and in-depth studies. The Roman genius, shining with as much civil wisdom as military valour, knew how to collect the beautiful, fresh and clear waters of Serino, in a magnificent aqueduct, whose remains even today reveal the varied and complex wisdom of our fathers.[124]

The decades which followed the inauguration of the aqueduct, labelled the *Risanamento*, concentrated on 'raising the street level, constructing wide roads, new buildings, expanding the city and engineering a complete reconstruction of the plumbing system'.[125] The Neapolitan Hygiene Exhibition, the first of its kind in Italy, projected Naples as the model of urban transformation.[126] Historian Frank Snowden has shown in his recent study how the administration gave citizens psychological security by building up this 'sanitary arsenal' of infrastructures. He overlooked that the idea that Neapolis had

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[124] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 6.
[125] Marghieri, *Il Risanamento di Napoli*, 3; Fusco, *Sul Risanamento di Napoli*. For histories of the Risanamento, Russo-Maugeri, *Napoli: contributi allo studio della città*, vols. 1, 2; Alisio, *Napoli e il Risanamento*.
[126] Parisi, 'Verso una città salubre'; Anonymous *Catalogo Ufficiale*.

been restored was crucial to asserting these new infrastructures were effective. They were instead problematic; despite this massive capital investment and destruction the *Risanamento* did very little for the inhabitants of Naples themselves, causing social unrest and political instability.[127] The aqueduct exemplified these problems; it was reported in the *Corriere* that 'The Serino aqueduct has become a real calamity for Naples'; in one of many cases, 'The infiltration of water caused a frying shop in via Tribunali to collapse, dragging the owner with it'.[128] When cholera struck again in 1910, the new government and Hygiene minister Orazio Caro attempted to conceal this epidemic and argued that the *Risanamento* had been a success.[129]

Caro wrote his *Evoluzione Igienica* in 1914, with the aim to record 'all the works of hygienic renewal in modern Naples'.[130] Snowden has summarised the impact of this work as 'a great falsehood that has misled all discussions of the subject ever since', which is evident, given the major study of the *Risanamento* relied upon Caro's account.[131] Snowden focused on the statistics and overlooked the three histories which Caro wrote to frame them; the histories show us once more how the idea that Neapolis had been redeveloped was essential to political events. Caro began an image of *Napoli Greco-Romana* (1905), researched by Capasso, and published posthumously.[132] This history discussed Naples from antiquity to the present day, and was followed by a history of the *Risanamento*. The third and final history concluded the 'Hygienic Evolution' of Naples by discussing the Serino aqueduct. Together, these narratives indicated that Turchi's vision had been realised: Neapolis had been restored.

Caro's image of Neapolis was based upon a text produced because modernisation was destroying the ancient city. As explained by Giulio De Petra, a Neapolitan archaeologist who published Capasso's study:

> When the transformation of Naples began with the Risanamento works, Bartolommeo Capasso was pleased by the hygienic, economic, aesthetic improvements which that grandiose work brought to his city; however, he could not, without deep sadness, think of the many memories which would be cancelled out and destroyed. Thus, before the demolishing pickaxe could take everything away, he proposed to revive [*ravvivare*] the memories of the past in a series of monographs, in which he speaks of the roads, buildings and monuments.[133]

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[127] Rossi, 'Il Risanamento di Napoli', 99–101 for brief overview. For a contemporary account of the Risanamento failures, Serao, *Il Ventre di Napoli*. For fountains destroyed, Schiatarella, *Immagine di una città*.

[128] 'Notizie Sanitarie della provincia di Napoli e della Sicilia', *Corriere della Sera,* 19 September 1887.

[129] Snowden, *Naples in the Time of Cholera*, 295–296.

[130] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*.

[131] Snowden, *Naples in the Time of Cholera*, 250. The major study of the Risanamento completed by Russo followed Caro.

[132] Capasso wrote the text but died before its completion. It was revised and published posthumously by the archaeologist Giulio de Petra, who also produced the map of Neapolis.

[133] Giulio De Petra, in Capasso, *Napoli Greco-Romana*, pref.

Figure 6.6. 'Napoli Greco-Romana', the first archaeological plan of Neapolis, produced by Giulio De Petra to accompany B. Capasso's Napoli Greco-Romana Esposta nella Topografia e Nella Vita Opera Postuma di Bartolommeo Capasso. Edita a cura della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria *(Naples, 1905).*

Caro subsequently adapted this study of ancient Naples to reinforce the *Risanamento* and its objectives. His history underwrote change because it presented Neapolis and Naples as the same city; this naturally indicated that the *Risanamento* had restored Naples to her glorious Roman health. First, he collapsed any distinctions between the ancient and modern city. As he wrote, thanks to Capasso's study 'we can now live with the ancient inhabitants of our city and participate in their very life … in the heart and in the extremities of the city, beating as one with its various fortunes in time and in space'.[134] Caro next described Neapolis as if it had been planned with the same intentions as modern Naples; he looked at the ancient grid and saw an 'aesthetic, hygienic, strategic' plan, where houses were 'not tall but fresh, roomy, and comfortable'.[135] As he concluded, 'It's no surprise therefore that a city built and laid out like this, was not only an aesthetic, but also a hygienic construction' (Fig. 6.6).[136]

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[134] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 2.
[135] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 2.
[136] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 2.

It is key to note that the plan of Neapolis, produced by De Petra, was itself a highly regularised fabrication influenced by modern urban planning. Mario Napoli has shown that De Petra invented the perimeter of this city as if it had been built with no respect for the terrain – just like a nineteenth-century city.[137] Moreover, De Petra was able to produce his plan because *Risanamento* demolitions had uncovered parts of the ancient city; as De Petra wrote, 'the Risanamento, which led to the demolition of so many works, both recent and of an unimportant historical period, promised to be a great help to the study of ancient, Greco-Roman Naples'.[138] In sum, the destruction caused by the *Risanamento* was enabled by the idea that Naples should be rebuilt in the image of Neapolis. This same destruction gave rise to the archaeological reconstruction of Neapolis. The simultaneity of these two processes reinforced parallels between the ancient and modern city which the modernists, and perhaps even the archaeologists, desired. As stated by the archaeologist Vittorio Spinazzola:

> Today, this is the *città nuova, la città giovane*, no less than twenty-five centuries have passed since the first inhabitants of Naples named the city (was it an omen?) *Neapolis, città nuova*.[139]

In the *Evoluzione*, Caro contrasted Neapolis and Naples by providing his own reasons for the destruction of the ideal city. In his view, religious rule brought barbarity and backwardness. For Caro the 'tragic centuries' began after the Romans, when the church and 'religious prejudices distanced life from gymnastic exercises, frequent ablutions, the cultivation of beauty in forms and lines ... reducing life to the most anti-hygienic conditions that could possibly be imagined'.[140] This change in everyday regime produced a city of 'tight, narrow, tortuous streets deprived of light and symmetry'.[141] Therefore Naples, 'having lost the ancient health, was an easy target for infectious diseases and epidemics'.[142] Caro's interpretation reflected a general, but not uniform, anticlericalism amongst public health reformers, who sought to abolish religious practices.[143] Such prejudices were likely reflected in the *Risanamento* processes, which ear marked sixty-three churches to be demolished, as both Capasso and Giancarlo Alisio have discussed.[144] Caro was unwilling to see the religious aspects of ancient culture, and he used this point of difference to explain a 'decline'. By applying 'decadence' as a narrative framework, Caro was able to cast religious fabric as less worthy of preservation – an argument which justified *Risanamento* objectives and the role of medical theory in bringing about this

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[137] Napoli, *Napoli Greco-Romana.*
[138] Giulio De Petra, in Capasso, *Napoli Greco-Romana*, x.
[139] Spinazzola, 'Il nome di Napoli', 33.
[140] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 8.
[141] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 9.
[142] Arthur (*From Roman Town to City-State*) has done much to analyse the material record for medieval Naples. As Arthur explains, archaeological contexts indicate that urban spaces were abandoned and social services declined in the medieval period.
[143] See De Giorgi 'Batteri e l'Acqua Santa'.
[144] Alisio, *Napoli e il Risanamento*, 94.
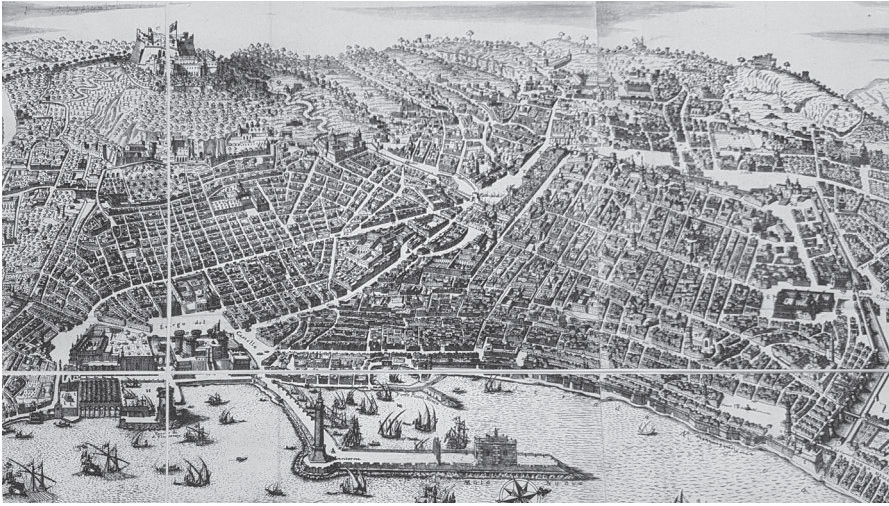
Figure 6.7. Detail from Pianta ed Alzata della Città di Napoli. Paolo Petrini, 1748. British Library, 24045.(13.).

change.[145] Meanwhile, others produced their own monographs to preserve within the collective memory the material being destroyed.[146]

Moreover, Caro indicated that Neapolis had never recovered from this state of barbarism until the present day. He was able, therefore, to dismiss all urban planning initiatives executed after the Roman period, many of which were similar to those enacted over the previous decades, as unimportant and worthy of cancellation. For example, in the sixteenth century, the Spanish Viceroy Don Pedro de Toledo introduced a monumental road and a military grid strikingly similar to the initiatives taken in the *Risanamento*. These are visible on a map of Naples produced by Paolo Petrini in 1748 (Fig. 6.7).[147] The Spanish quarters in the west appear to mirror the ancient grid plan in the east, creating a butterfly effect.

Caro refused to accept that the Spanish had planned with hygiene and the public interest at heart. He dismissed the literary account as a 'nice rosy picture' painted by the official historiographer Domenico Parrino.[148] Likewise, in his view, improvements made under the Bourbons were a necessary consequence of their vainglorious building programs, rather than their support for public hygiene. Caro cast the Bourbon city

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[145] See Morley, 'Decadence as a theory of history'. Turchi similarly championed the medic as a professional figure, Turchi, *Importanza Estensione Belleze*.

[146] Halbwachs, 'Space and the collective memory'; D'Ambra, *Napoli Antica Illustrata*.

[147] Paolo Petrini (1670–1722) was a publisher and map seller in Naples. For Petrini and his contribution to the image of Naples, Valerio 'Representation and Self-Perception'.

[148] Domenico Parrino (1642–1716) was a Neapolitan editor and writer. The *Teatro eroico, e politico de' governi de' viceré del Regno di Napoli dal tempo del re Ferdinando il Cattolico fin'all'anno 1683*, was published in three volumes, from 1692–1694, and republished in 1730, 1770 and 1875. Parrino and Petrini published together in the 18th century.

as the last woeful misinterpretation of the Neapolitans' needs. Unsurprisingly he believed that decline and oppression in Naples had ended with the *Risanamento.* Here the contentious demolitions were presented as the return of good, rather than 'barbarian' government.[149] The return to civility lost after Neapolis overwrote urban the planning initiatives made by previous governments who had similarly modernised whilst connecting to this Greco-Roman past. We might compare how Abate indicated that clean water would 'cancel out the ignorance and shame of past ages … whilst the city rotted in stink and unhealthiness'.[150]

Retelling the history of Naples established a relationship between two ideals: that of the ancient city and the modern city. The comparison between them guaranteed the efficacy of the *Risanamento* methods when cholera threatened government stability once more. Hence in the *Evoluzione*, Caro argued that the aqueduct had defended the city.[151] The structure completed by the Romans 'with a powerful and magnificent mindset', 'with marvelous wisdom and technique', with a 'truly Latin firmness', had been built today 'in a manner worthy of ancient men'.[152] The water was also quasi-talismanic; drunk by the ancients it also 'saved the ancient city of the Siren from so many diseases, and so many epidemics'.[153] He concluded that the plumbing works, the aqueduct and the *Risanamento* 'have reinstated the ancient traditional health of Naples'.[154] Neapolis and Naples were the same; this idea underwrote modernisation and indicated that Naples was a healthy city, when the opposite was true. Caro's history therefore shows us a continual thread in thinking about the ancient city from Turchi in 1860 through to 1914; the idea of Neapolis was revived by, and tied to, the modernisation of Naples.

Conclusions

This paper demonstrates that the memory of Neapolis in the Roman period was revived by public health concerns in nineteenth-century Naples. Inspired by this past, reformers drew parallels between the ancient and modern city to promote practical reform. The importance of the Roman past was determined in part by their interpretive framework. Western standards, already mediated through Greco-Roman texts, made Rome and civility synonymous. The Neapolitans did look for a modern model in Paris, a city which demonstrated that Rome provided a suitable rhetoric for modernisation. However, they shaped a unique response relative to their local problems by claiming that their own ancient city was being restored to its Roman glory. The contemporary centrality of Rome shaped this choice, by

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[149] Marghieri had likewise claimed '[w]hat came before, was just building works. Ours is also a social endeavour'. Marghieri, *Il Risanamento di Napoli*, 16.

[150] Abate, *Studii sull'acquidotto Claudio*, 52. This was untrue; for urban maintenance and water provision under the French and Spanish see Russo, 'La Cura del Patrimonio Costruito'.

[151] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 164. See Greaves, 'Cholera, the Roman aqueduct and urban renewal'.

[152] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 76.

[153] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 76.

[154] Caro, *L'Evoluzione Igienica di Napoli*, 100.

providing a situation in which remembering the Roman past was natural and appropriate. By glorifying Neapolis these three histories were able to reflect upon and project Naples' role within the new Italy. These texts are instances of Griffin's palingenetic modernism, 'personal projects and collective movements to establish a healthier social and ethical basis for society'.[155] They were based on the ancient past or, at least, certain projections of it. As I have shown, reforms in Naples were not just presented as the acquisition of an urban skeleton which was essential for the modern city. Proposals claimed that recreating this environment would guarantee the Neapolitan future. For these writers, engaging with the ancient past was not a nostalgic or passive act of praise; it had a 'use value' and became part of a forwards and symbolic trajectory. In sum, we cannot understand the construction of Neapolitan modernity without also discussing the ancient city of Neapolis.

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[155] Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, 54–55.

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Chapter 7

Prousa to Bursa: The reinvention of an Ottoman capital

Suna Çağaptay

For Alessandra Ricci

'What is the city? How did it come into existence? What processes does it further: what functions does it perform: what processes does it fulfill?'[1]

Throughout its history, Bursa was constantly remodelled and rebuilt in the wake of fires, earthquakes and military sacks, all of which did immeasurable damage to its urban fabric and material culture. Two catastrophic events stand out: the earthquake in 1855, after which restoration attempts radically changed the urban characteristics of the built environment,[2] and the fire of 1958, which demolished much of the commercial quarters in the lower town of Bursa. Herein, I focus on planning and historic preservation in the city of Bursa, the first capital city of the Ottomans, following the 1958 fire. In the aftermath of the fire, a master plan was proposed by Luigi Piccinato, an Italian architect and urban planner, who attempted to maintain the spirit of historic Bursa through his careful redevelopment. Like many projects before it, it was only partially realised due to economic and political setbacks. Although Piccinato's plan was never actuated in its entirety, it was notable as a moment when the ancient city(ies) of Bursa were remembered and acknowledged and there was a desire to preserve the city in its total context. In this chapter I will first look at how previous planning attempts, such as those proposed by Carl Lörcher in 1924 or Henri Prost in 1938–1940,[3] set the

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[1] Mumford, *City in History*, 3.

[2] Denny, 'Quotations in and out of context', 219–230. For the restorations after the 1855 earthquake, Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 131–137; Ersoy, 'Architecture and the search for Ottoman origins', 123, 137–139; St. Laurent, 'Léon Parvillée', 247–282; St. Laurent, 'Un amateur de théâtre', 103. For an overview of the period, Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 96–98.

[3] Dostoğlu and Vural, 'Lörcher, Prost ve Piccinato'nun', 122–126; Dostoğlu and Vural, 'The role of Western planners', 239–245; Çakıcı Alp, 'A century of transformation', 15–34. For the garden-city inspired model by Lörcher, Bozdoğan and Akcan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 28–29.

stage for Piccinato's work, and I will discuss how he perceived and imagined Bursa in the context of catastrophic events, ill-advised restoration and planning attempts and unforeseen changes in demography and economics. The Greco-Roman city will be almost absent in my discussion due to physical and ideological factors; in its stead, the early Ottoman city will be remembered as the 'ancient' city.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the concepts of urban planning and urban renewal became new tools in the production of 'modern' cities, used to solve the problems posed by industrial growth.[4] Town planning and urban renewal were not only seen as ways to shape and organise the built environment but also as ways to modernise.[5] Alongside these ideas, an ethos of conservation and preservation arose. As Michele Lamprakos has discussed, there was an interest in art-historical interpretations of the 'age value' of monuments. This term was originally coined by the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl in his 1903 legislative document titled 'The modern cult of the monuments: its character and origin'.[6] It implied that not only were the buildings considered but also the context in which they were built, their surroundings and the cultural and historical landscapes.[7] While this scholarly focus helped protect various historic contexts from being demolished, it turned 'much of the landscape of a city into a monument'.[8] Aiming to offer a legislative proposal for the protection of cultural heritage in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Riegl became the first figure to suggest cultural heritage values and theories of preservation.[9]

In 2001, leading French architectural historian Françoise Choay elaborated on the Rieglian theory of 'age value' in *The Invention of the Historic Monument.* First published in 1992 as *L'allégorie du patrimoine*, this work deals with defining the term 'heritage' under the term patrimony and how heritage has been discussed in the disciplines of art history and archaeology. The methods of studying the past described by Choay are primarily classification, categorisation and the describing of objects of the Enlightenment period.[10] Choay also discusses how the 'historic city' was conceived in contrast to the modern city, the modern city being the result of destruction taking place in the historic city to accommodate growth. This invention of the 'historic city' revolved around attempts at modernisation, including episodes of destruction, and hence the old core was challenged by technological improvements and lifestyle changes. What we call the 'historic city' was, for many centuries, the heart of vibrant urban societies and the theatre of civic and social life.[11] It is the reinvention of the historic city in Bursa that I focus on in this paper.

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[4] Akpınar, 'The rebuilding of İstanbul revisited', 62.

[5] Akpınar, 'The rebuilding of İstanbul revisited'.

[6] Riegl, 'Der Moderne Denkmaltus' also see the translation by Forster and Ghirardo 'The modern cult of monuments', 21–51.

[7] Lamprakos, 'The idea of the historic city', 9.

[8] Lamprakos, 'The idea of the historic city'.

[9] Jokilehto, *A History of Conservation*, 215.

[10] Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, 50–55.

[11] For an overview of Choay's *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, see Lamprakos, 'The idea of the historic city', 13 and 27.

Framing the city: Bursa's urban fabric

Bursa grew out of the ancient city of Prousa, which was set in the foothills of Mount Olympus. Founded by Prousias I in the third century BC, Prousa's vertiginous natural and man-made acropolis was praised by the fifth-century historian Paulus Orosius as the 'most fortified city' ('munitissima civitas').[12] Its walls were originally built in the Hellenistic period (late third to early second century BC) and were constantly rebuilt thereafter, as indicated by inscriptions dating to the first or second century AD as well as the seventh and thirteenth centuries. The ancient *decumanus maximus* running from east to west has survived moderately well to the present day.[13] The city's urban development in the Roman period is made visible to us by letters and speeches written by two prominent figures: Pliny the Younger and Dio. Pliny the Younger, who was appointed as the governor of Bithynia and Pontus from AD 113–115, exchanged letters with Emperor Trajan (r. AD 98–117) that report on the conditions of the bathhouses and temples, although he is not explicit about the locations of the buildings. The orator and philosopher golden-mouthed Dio (*c.* AD 40–115), a Prousa native, wished to construct a colonnaded street to enhance the city and rival Antioch in the Roman east; this created tensions around supplanting the old urban fabric. Dio wanted to build fortifications, a colonnaded street, workshops, shipyards and harbours, extending the urban spectrum outside the city walls as far as the sea of Marmara, 25 kilometres to its north.[14] During this time period, the epigraphic evidence also indicates the presence of *agoranomos* and *gymnasiarch*, or people in charge of organising festivals and sports events.[15] From the third century onwards, Prousa's therapeutic waters were often visited by the Byzantine emperors. And its monasteries on Mount Olympus housed Iconophiles fleeing the Iconoclastic Controversy (726–787 and 814–842).[16]

Once a city with thriving urban life outside the city walls, the city became confined within the walls of the acropolis due to the rising incursions of the Ottomans in the late thirteenth century. Despite these defences, the Ottomans conquered the city after a ten-year-long siege in 1326 (Fig. 7.1). During Orhan's reign (r. 1324–1361), much of the Byzantine urban fabric situated atop the classical Prousa was repurposed. For example, Orhan converted a monastic complex to the mausolea for his father, Osman, the eponymous founder of the Ottomans, and eventually himself. Another segment from the same complex was converted to function as the first Friday mosque in the city, in accordance with the Ottoman practice of conquest.[17] Within the same round

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[12] Paulus Orosius, *Historiae adversus Paganos*, 6.2.23.

[13] Originally cited in Bekker–Nielsen, *Urban Life*, 53. For an analysis of the city walls and their transformations and remodellings as well as the pre-Ottoman urban fabric, Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 25–46.

[14] Bekker-Nielsen, *Urban Life*, 21–22, 119–145, 268–269. For an overview of the previous scholarship on Greco-Roman Prousa, Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 14–15, 30–33, 104–105.

[15] For a discussion on the epigraphic attestations of those figures, Pitt, 'Cities on the periphery', 29–30, 125.

[16] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 14–15 and 31.

[17] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 34–46.

Figure 7.1. Siting of the Ottoman socio-religious complexes (külliyes) *from left to right: (1) Murad I; (2) Murad II (aka Muradiye); (3) Old City with the Mausolea of Osman and Orhan, as well as the Palace and the other fourteenth century monuments; (4) Grand Mosque (aka Ulu Cami) of Bayezid I; (5) Orhan; (6) Mehmed I (aka Green); (7) Bayezid I (Google-Earth-generated image by the author).*

of conversion, the complex within the inner citadel corresponding to the palace or administrative quarters in a typical late Byzantine city was reused, as well as the bathhouses located outside the acropolis.[18] Orhan also began utilising the area outside the city walls to further his architectural patronage, including building a *külliye* (comprised of sultanic socio-religious and commercial functions centred around a convent-masjid). Murad I (r. 1361–1389) moved west of the urban centre, to where the abovementioned hot springs abounded, famed since the classical period. Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402) moved east of the city to make his personal and dynastic imprint on Bursa's landscape by building his *külliye* in an area that previously had large plots of gardens and orchards.[19] Following the urban development clinging onto the foothills of Mount Olympus, two more *külliye* complexes were built in the aftermath of the Timurid sack in 1402: Mehmed I (r. 1413–1421) built the Green Complex (also known as Yeşil in the Turkish scholarship, named after its *cuerda seca* tiles in turquoise), and Murad II (r. 1421–1444; 1446–1451) built a complex, named after him, situated on the plain to the northwest of the acropolis. Although Edirne (Adrianople) replaced Bursa as the official capital in the 1360s, following its conquest by Murad I, Bursa remained the memorial capital, whose image was revived under the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Ottoman sultans.[20]

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[18] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 30–33.

[19] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital.*

[20] Kuran, 'Three Ottoman capitals', 114–131, especially 114–118; Pancaroğlu, 'Architecture, landscape, and the patronage', especially 40, 41–42, and 45; for a further discussion on the urban transformation in the early Ottoman Bursa, Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 79–95.

Figure 7.2. An aerial view into the old city, the suburbs and the plain (The Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa).

Topographical reality required promoting urban development on an east–west axis; each of the aforementioned sultans exploited this topography to leave their sultanic and dynastic legacy on the landscape, while also emphasising the historical connection between the acropolis surrounded by the walls and the plain. The siting of each complex exploited the landscape in a way that recalled the siting strategies of classical and late antique cities (Fig. 7.2). Being perched on hilltops or built around slightly elevated areas, each of the sultanic complexes created a version of Prousa's acropolis with its siting and urban framework. The buildings constructed anew in the *külliyes* in the acropolis and outside of it, with the exception of the convent-masjids of Bayezid and Mehmed I, used alternating brick-and-stone construction and decorative details, a technique that was embedded in the local Byzantine workshop practices, adding another layer to the archaising attitude.[21]

Just as early Ottoman Bursa arose around the reused fabric of Byzantine Prousa, the new sultanic neighbourhoods made use of the immediate surroundings of the Byzantine city to present the past in the present. It can be seen, then, that the loss of the Greco-Roman city from the fabric of the early Ottoman city (and from more recent city versions) was a result of centuries-old urban accumulation, transformation and intervention. Hence Bursa has been seen as the original Ottoman city, wherein Bursa's reinventors Ottomanised the past as they built their capital city, which represents one of the richest assemblages of early Ottoman architecture. Indeed, Bursa was the first capital where the imperial imprint was struck onto the landscape. After the 1855 earthquake, Keçecizade Fuad Paşa, the foreign minister to the reigning sultan, Abdülmecid I (r. 1839–1861), reportedly said, 'Alas, the Ottoman *dîbâce* [lit. the beginning, or the *incipit*] is destroyed'.[22] This indicates how the Bursa that arose from the pre-existing classical and Byzantine fabric was seen as the 'ancient' city within

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[21] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 92–94.
[22] Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 18.

the genealogy of the Ottoman cities. It is this 'ancestral' quality that replaces what was Prousan in the early Ottoman context of Bursa.

Before Piccinato: Earlier planning attempts in Bursa

Despite suffering many sieges, fires and earthquakes, Bursa almost always maintained its unique urban fabric that enmeshed the Ottomanised past with the Ottoman present. That is, until the 1855 earthquake that levelled most of the acropolis and the other neighbourhoods developed in the early Ottoman period.[23] As a result of this earthquake, when Ahmed Vefik Paşa was the Governor of Bursa, the first city plan of Bursa before the Republic was drawn by Suphi Bey in 1862.

Ahmed Vefik had previously served as an ambassador of the Ottoman court to Paris, where he encountered Baron Haussmann's urban planning ideals working for Napoleon III.[24] Ahmed Vefik took advantage of the 1855 earthquake to realise his dream of creating a modern city following Haussmannian ideals. He ordered the opening of two streets to link the commercial and religious core of the city with the administrative and civil core. A few years later, his planning attempts were given a sultanic intervention when Sultan Abdülaziz, visiting the city in 1861, ordered the widening and improvement of several roads leading into the city.[25] These attempts in a way helped to clearly differentiate the old from the new. Because the old was often associated with disease and an unhygienic lifestyle and there was an emerging need for efficiently running car traffic,[26] new neighbourhoods were formed around the historic centre while the old ones were disembowelled (*eventrement*).

Ahmed Vefik also invited Leon Parvillée, a French architect trained under Viollet-le-Duc, to assist with remodelling, renovations and planning. Parvillée restored the mausolea of Osman and Orhan, the founders of the Ottoman state, as well as the Green Complex of Mehmed I. Parvillée was instrumental in bringing together the drawings and elevations of the buildings in order to present the Ottoman architectural heritage to learned European circles through his *Architecture et decoration turques au XV siècle*, published in 1874.[27] Thus, Bursa became a pioneer of this type of early planning effort in the Ottoman Empire.

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[23] This list only includes major fires in the city. For a complete list, Baykal, *Tarihte Bursa Yangınları*, *passim*. For a list of earthquakes where the epicentre was in Bursa, Ambraseys and Finkel, *The Seismicity of Turkey and Adjacent Areas*, *passim*.

[24] Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 131–137; Ersoy 'Architecture and the search for Ottoman origins', 123, 137–139; St. Laurent, 'Léon Parvillée', 247–82; St. Laurent, 'Un amateur de théâtre', 103; Choay, *The Modern City*, 10–11, 16; Kostof, *The City Assembled*, 57–59, 156. For an overview of the period, Picon, *Architects and Engineers*.

[25] St. Laurent, 'Un amateur de théâtre', 103.

[26] Zucconi, *La città contesa*, 30–35; Kostof, *The City Assembled*, 266. On the importance of hygiene in nineteenth-century urban reform, see also Greaves in this volume.

[27] Parvillée has also played an important role in the preparation of *Usul-u Mi'mari-i Osmani* or *L'architecture ottomane* commissioned by the Ottoman government on the occasion of the 1873 Vienna Exposition. For further discussion Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 131–137.

It was not only Bursa that went through a major urban transformation in the final century of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the declaration of the Tanzimat reforms in 1839, many other cities underwent similar changes. The purpose of the reforms was twofold. One aim was to preserve and protect the rights of all citizens of the empire, irrespective of their religion or ethnic background. The second was to introduce a series of regulations affecting urban issues and municipal administration.[28] The political character of these reforms was based on reasserting power over the imperial boundaries, relying especially on cities' roles as urban nodes to have efficient control over the ruled. The purpose of the legislation on urban issues, such as widening the streets or prohibiting cul-de-sacs, was to avoid the spread of fires in cities such as Istanbul and Thessaloniki, and it was also enacted simply for renewal purposes, as cities in the peripheries of the Empire such as Damascus and Cairo well display.[29]

In 1924, as part of a new wave of planning, Bursa received its first master plan, along with other cities such as Ankara, the new capital of the burgeoning Turkish Republic. In the case of Bursa, a German architect and planner named Carl Lörcher drew plans of the walled old city and the main axial roads and cross streets utilising the concept of the 'garden-city model'.[30] This model aimed to preserve and highlight the acropolis that the Ottomans conquered in 1326 as a museum piece and let the rest of the city grow around it.[31]

Between 1938 and 1944, the French architect and city planner Henri Prost was invited to Bursa to revive the east–west axial planning established in the nineteenth century.[32] Prost had previously worked offering conservation and planning strategies for cities in Turkey, Istanbul and İzmir being the most notable.[33] His plan in Bursa followed 'linear planning', unlike in Istanbul where he aimed to conserve not only the individual buildings but also the complete historic neighbourhoods. In Istanbul, Prost followed five principles: conserving the old monuments, improving and maintaining the infrastructure, enlarging and integrating existing road networks, implementing zoning and preserving the urban characteristics of the city.[34] In Bursa, however, his approach towards preserving the historic fabric was more selective.

Prost chose three complexes on the east side of the city to be conserved, namely the Green Mausoleum (located within Mehmed I's *külliye*, Fig. 7.3), Bayezid I's *külliye*

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[28] Tekeli, 'Nineteenth-century transformation of İstanbul area', 38; Yerasimos, 'İstanbul and its westernization process', 48–53.

[29] Arnaud, 'Modernization of the cities', 957–981.

[30] On the garden-city model, Howard, *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, 50–57.

[31] See n. 2 and 3 above.

[32] Ibid.

[33] For prospective planning agendas in Istanbul by Prost and further bibliography, Tekeli, *The Development of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area*, 172–176; Tekeli, 'Nineteenth-century transformation of İstanbul area', 33–47; Akpınar, 'The rebuilding of İstanbul revisited', 78–89; Bilsel and Pinon, *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City*, 15–47; Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, 98–106; for İzmir, Bilsel, 'Ideology and urbanism', 13–60.

[34] Tekeli, *The Development of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area*.

Figure 7.3. An aerial view of the Green Mausoleum and the Green Complex (The Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa).

and the Mosque of Emir Sultan. He demarcated the perimeters of the city in four directions, kept the industrial areas and railway routes away from the residential areas and suggested preserving the bath complexes and converting them into spa hotels.[35] According to Tülin Vural, Prost's urban renewal plan for Bursa received mixed criticism. On the one hand, his aim to preserve the historic buildings and separate residential and industrial areas was applauded. But his decision to widen streets to allow more room for car traffic destroyed examples of vernacular architecture and historic buildings, leaving an irreversible impact.[36]

Piccinato's training as an urban planner

The aforementioned early planning attempts led to the work of Luigi Piccinato,[37] who was invited to offer planning advice following the 1958 fire (Fig. 7.4) that destroyed nearly the whole commercial centre in the lower city. Luigi Piccinato (1899–1983) was an architect and urban planner by training. In his earlier career, his urban planning work included historically important Italian cities such as Brescia, Matera, Naples and Rome. He wrote several key works on urban planning and historic preservation, including

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[35] See n. 2 and 3 above.

[36] Vural, 'Bursa'nın kentsel gelişimi', 96–97.

[37] For Luigi Piccinato's other urban planning and architectural design projects, focusing on the medieval city of Florence, the railway station in Naples, the stadium in Pescara, as well as road planning in Rome, De Sessa, *Luigi Piccinato, architetto*, 23, 25, 167 and 171; Malusardi, *Luigi Piccinato e l'urbanistica moderna*, 110–114.

Urbanistica medioevale (Medieval Urban Planning) (1943); *La strada come strumento di progettazione urbanistica* (The Road as an Urban Planning Tool) (1960); and *La progettazione urbanistica, la città come organismo* (Urban Planning and the City as an Organism) (1988), which trained generations of architects and urban planners. His work in Bursa utilised his theories and perspectives on urban planning as discussed in *Urbanistica medioevale*.

Piccinato trained under Gustavo Giovanonni (1873–1947), a pioneer in the

Figure 7.4. The commercial quarters after the 1958 fire (The Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa).

study of historic buildings, city centres, urban growth and functional reorganisation. Giovannoni was a crucial figure in the fields of architecture and historic preservation. With degrees in civil engineering and urban hygiene as well as in art history, Giovannoni was able to wear different hats as an urbanist and academic. He studied buildings in their natural settings and suggested a site-specific approach to preserving cities, and his efforts in the drafting of the 1931 Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments made him known beyond his home country. From 1927–1935, he taught classes on the restoration of monuments at the University of La Sapienza in Rome.[38]

It is possible to see the echoes of Giovanonni's influence in Piccinato's attitude toward secondary building types. Secondary buildings, as opposed to monumental ones, include examples of vernacular architecture that are built with less durable materials. For Giovannoni, there was the need to widen the scope of architectural restoration by extending the practice to the broader urban scale. Giovanonni was not primarily concerned with individual buildings, churches or monasteries, instead focusing on the relationship between buildings and the urban space enveloping them.[39] In his writings, Giovanonni emphasises understanding the built environment and its relation to its historic setting and conserving this through scientific methods. He also refutes the practices of singling out monuments (*isolement* and *dégagement* in the French scholarship) and stylistic homogeneity. He believed that with the removal of the accretions (*superfetazioni*), historic environments would be enhanced, resulting in aesthetically pleasing environments.[40] Giovannoni's approach to understanding that each city's historic qualities may be incompatible with
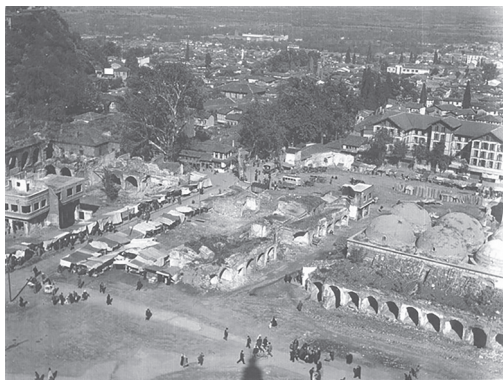
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[38] For a more recent overview of Giovannoni's career, Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni', 76–91; Gascón, 'Gustavo Giovanonni on planning in historic towns', 29–31; Semes, 'New design in old cities', 212–233; Kallis, 'The third Rome of Fascism', 40–79; Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 184–191; Gurrieri, *Teoria e cultura del restauro*, *passim*. For a key sample of his publications, Giovannoni, 'Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova', 449–472; Giovannoni, *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova*, ch. 10.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni', 76–91, especially 88 and footnote 23 for further discussion.

the character of the new city shaped Piccinato's thinking and is reflected in his planning works, Bursa among them.

Giovanonni was also a leading figure in historic preservation terminology. He borrowed the term *diradamento edilizio* (thinning out) from forestry terminology, a term also used by his contemporary Camillo Sitte.[41] He applied it to mean that an old city could be modified in minimal ways to accommodate the needs of modern life. An old city was not considered suitable for industrial areas as it would not have the required wide spaces and potential for planned urban expansion that could be realised in new areas of a city or its peripheries. Rather, the old city needed to be the focus of daily life and social exchange. In this way, the old city would be preserved and the new city added around to frame the old. His acknowledgement of ambient, functional, traditional and aesthetic values in a historic setting evolved a new kind of urbanist which he called the 'integral architect' ('architetto integrale') – someone who would bring about this fusion of 'art and technique for the realisation of the built environment'.[42]

Giovanonni was keen to observe and preserve the fragments of the past, which for him retained use value as well as heritage value (he was credited with coining the term 'urban heritage') and could be integrated into the cultural preservation program as crucial elements of a larger contemporary urbanisation.[43] This principle of seeing the urban heritage as a coherent whole, coming from the past and composed of buildings and the natural setting, formed the heart of Piccinato's understanding that each historic monument, whether monumental or vernacular, and its cultural and natural setting deserved equal attention and care.

Piccinato's deep understanding of the historical layers of a city allowed him to work with the intricate urban fabrics seen in the cities of his home country. He received the *Premio Nazionale Olivetti per l'Urbanistica* (Olivetti National Award for Urban Planning) in 1954, motivated among other things by the 'fruitful balance' with which he was able to grasp 'the historical-problematic and creative-practical aspects of urban planning'.[44] His work also received attention from outside Italy. His career included a series of major urban planning projects and masterplans in three different periods: 1925–1932, 1954–1968 and 1978–1981.[45] His time in Turkey corresponded with

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[41] On the 'diradamento edilizio' theory, Giovannoni, Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova, ch. 10. Giovannoni's approach follows the 'culturalist' principles of Camillo Sitte (1843–1903), as discussed by Choay, *The Modern City*, 42–44 and 115–120 which aimed to integrate history into urban planning.

[42] For a historical background to the integration of aesthetic, functional and ambiental preservation and conservation, Choay, *The Modern City*, 15–26; Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, 84–94, 117–37; for a more recent overview, Lamprakos, 'The idea of the historic city', 8–38.

[43] For the attribution of the term 'urban heritage' to Giovanonni, Bandarin and van Oers, *The Historic Urban Landscape*, 14, citing from Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, as well as Kallis, 'The third Rome of Fascism', 52–53 quoting from Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni: Vecchie città', 57–70; Semes, 'New design in old cities', 215–221.

[44] For historical value-related discussions in Giovannoni's work, Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni: Vecchie città', 57–70; Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni', 76–91; Semes, 'New design in old cities', 214–217; Kallis, 'The third Rome of Fascism', 40–79.

[45] Malusardi, *Luigi Piccinato e l'urbanistica moderna*, 110–114.

the second period, which is often regarded as Piccinato's most productive time from both a practical and theoretical perspective.[46]

Bursa through the eyes of Piccinato

'...And I hear, from your voice, the invisible reasons which makes cities live, through which perhaps, once dead, they will come to life again'.[47]

Before Piccinato arrived in Bursa, he spent time working on planning in Istanbul. In Istanbul, he worked with Prost following a revival of Prost's plan for the city. He then was invited to create a plan for Bursa after the 1958 fire. In the early 1950s, only two decades after the urban clearance projects in Italy, Bursa and Istanbul were going through similar urban transformations. With the election of Adnan Menderes, who served as Prime Minister from 1950 to 1960, new urban clearance projects concerning these two cities were on the way. By demolishing chunks of historical buildings to open up straight-lined avenues, boulevards and open spaces, the new government aimed to take Istanbul back to its glory days. The goal was to emphasise the Ottoman heritage of the city of Istanbul, which had lost its former identity as the capital city of the Ottoman Empire with the proclamation of Ankara as the capital of the Republic of Turkey. It was only possible to achieve this through decluttering the sides of the boulevards, opening main avenues and creating many public spaces (*espaces libres*). Inviting non-Turkish urbanists was Menderes' way of legitimising the demolition projects he had in mind to make Istanbul glorious and beautiful again.[48]

Prost lived in Istanbul from 1936 to 1950. His agenda involved demolishing historical buildings to accommodate large boulevards, zoning and ample open spaces.[49] Until 1950, his plans for Istanbul were carried out. After the Democrat Party won in local elections with an overwhelming majority, a new, nationalist atmosphere led to Prost being labelled a foreigner in the city and criticised for not knowing its dynamics well enough, as well as for not engaging in collaborations with native urbanists and architects. The members of the Istanbul Municipality City Council decided to only partially apply his plans on the grounds that they were 'false and utopian assumptions'. As a result, Prost's contract was terminated in 1950.[50]

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[46] For his career in Italy, n. 35 and n. 36 in this piece. Prior to his work in Turkey from 1925–1932, Piccinato worked in Tripoli, Bengazi and Tobruk in Libya, as well as in Abruzzo, Brescia and Foggia. From 1978 to 1981 he worked in Algeria and Israel. For further bibliography: Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 184–191; Godoli and Giacomelli, *Architetti e ingegneri italiani*, 288–292; Hatuka and Kallus, 'The myth of informal place-making', 147–164.

[47] Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 135–136.

[48] Tekeli, *The Development of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area*, 122 and 135; Tekeli, 'Nineteenth-century transformation of İstanbul area', 33–47; Akpınar, 'The rebuilding of İstanbul revisited', 78 and 87, footnote 90; Bilsel, 'Les transformations d'Istanbul', 100–116; Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, 140–171.

[49] Ibid.

[50] N. 31 and n. 80 and for the reasons why Prost's plan failed to be implemented, Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, 134–136.

From 1950 to 1956, Prost's plans for Istanbul were examined and revised by a group of Turkish officials and experts. The new law of expropriation passed in 1956 allowed the Menderes-ruled government to broaden urban planning actions, extending into other cities such as Ankara, İzmir and Bursa. Hence, with the changes in urban development regulations, in 1957 Adnan Menderes re-invited Henri Prost, along with Piccinato and Högg, to go over his plans for Istanbul.[51] Piccinato was appointed to supervise the planning activities in the metropolitan area in Istanbul in matters related to urban expansion and transportation,[52] while Högg was to be the town planning counsellor working for the Istanbul governorship. The aim was to revise Prost's urban renewal plan and start urban reconstruction following up on urban demolitions that had started six months earlier. While Prost was busy trying to persuade the circles of politicians, planners and architects of this plan, Piccinato's urban planning ideas came to be recognised in the same circles.[53]

Piccinato's urban planning ideas for Istanbul from 1956 to 1960 included a reading of the city from the suburbs into the historic city(ies) of Istanbul, the first one including the historic peninsula and the second located in Üsküdar. Surrounded by highways and ongoing urban planning attempts, Piccinato felt the beauty of these two locations was shattered as the new was superimposed on the old, hence the resulting demolitions and tearing down of the historic fabric in the city.[54] One gets a sense of how Piccinato saw some of the demolitions in Istanbul as inevitable. Moreover, he praised Menderes' agenda on urban redevelopment works, saying it had 'awakened a sleeping city'.[55] The political environment took a severe turn in 1960 when Menderes faced bribery charges for his involvement in the expropriation actions; he was found guilty and subsequently executed.[56] Only a year later, Piccinato took a stand against the policies of Adnan Menderes, which he had supported liberally, and argued that one has to adopt a policy that understands the preservation and maintenance of traditional urban fabric rather than one that follows the destructive aspects of modernism.[57] While Istanbul was going through this series of transformations, first by Prost from 1936 to 1950 and then by Högg and Piccinato from 1957 to 1960, Bursa's master plan was mainly in the hands of Prost until the fire of 1958. Piccinato then took over the planning effort in Bursa beginning in 1960.

Observing the city, Piccinato wrote an article about his own experience as an urbanist contemplating the ways to plan Bursa:

> Bursa has numerous monumental, architectural and natural values at a time where very few cities in the world can boast the same. Their conservation and development should be the

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[51] Tekeli, *The Development of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area*, 171, 176–177 and 181–190; Tekeli, 'Nineteenth-century transformation of İstanbul area', 33–47; Bilsel, 'Les transformations d'Istanbul', 100–116; Akpınar, 'The rebuilding of İstanbul revisited', 78; Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, ch. 6.

[52] For his work in İstanbul, Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 189.

[53] See n. 48 above.

[54] Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 189.

[55] Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, 94.

[56] Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*.

[57] Gül, *The Emergence of Modern İstanbul*, 125–126 and 128.
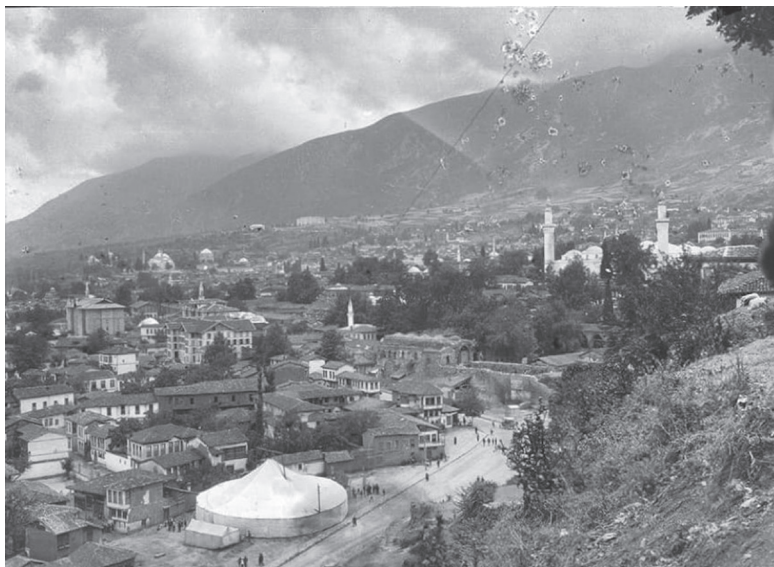
Figure 7.5. A view into the lower city from the old city in the late 1950s (The Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa).

> first concern of the general plan. We have to note that not only the individual monuments taken one by one should be conserved, but rather the whole environment in which they live ... the houses, the gardens, the big trees, the views; these things are the essential elements that give the scale itself to the monumental works.[58]

It was not only the built environment that left Piccinato in admiration but also the captivating views the city had to offer: 'It must indeed maintain in the strongest terms: the landscape views ... and only agricultural use of the large valley at the foot of Bursa, which constitutes the essential element of the city, its main source of wealth and the basic reason of its beauty.'[59]

Based on Piccinato's past experiences working on cities with historically important fabrics, he stated at the outset that, 'Until the first half of the 1800s, the centre of the city was flawless with its square commercial quarters surrounded by a jumble of irregularly aligned roads around it'.[60] In the poetic lines of Piccinato, one gets to appreciate Bursa's city centre 'with its sea of dark roofs punctuated by infinite domes, all hidden by the spectacular vegetation of immense cypress trees and gigantic plane trees forming the orchards, the streets, the courtyards, the cemeteries protected Green Bursa from the sun' (Fig. 7.5).[61] These lines emphasise Piccinato's appreciation for the city's architectural legacy, including the classical, Byzantine and early Ottoman layers.

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[58] Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 184–186.
[59] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 113. All translations are mine.
[60] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 112.
[61] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa'.

Piccinato carefully inventoried and built an understanding of the visible remains (or lack thereof) on the ground. For example, in his writings he speaks of the Byzantine period and, after reminding us about the Greek and Roman ideals of what a city should look like, then questions how the city might have looked in the Greek and Roman periods. He asks: '[d]id it have a regular plan, suggesting the schematism of pre-Hippodamian rationalism, or did it carry out some post-Hippodamian urban theme with agoras and stoas? And the temples and sacred places, where were they?'[62] He also developed a model of how the Ottoman capital rose from the urban remains of the Byzantine period. The Byzantine city, and even more the Turkish city, grandiosely exemplified the phenomenon of the duplication of a city and the subsequent devaluation of the ancient one. Accommodating or reusing the urban fabric of the previous periods, the Ottomans had been able to 'create a new city next to the old: their new city'.[63]

Piccinato saw the importance of understanding the impact of the multi-layered historical fabric and thought it a mistake to ignore the less-durable and less-monumental for the sake of making the more-monumental visible. As mentioned earlier, he criticised earlier nineteenth-century urban planning and rebuilding attempts,[64] including the urban design plan of Henri Prost. Prost's plan, applied in 1938–1944, tried to adapt Bursa's roads for motor traffic as well as create open areas circled by axial roads around historic monuments such as the Green Mausoleum.[65] However, Prost's attempt to make the Green Mausoleum more visible so that views of it could be enjoyed from the centre of the city – following the common practice of *dègagement* – not only obstructed the beauty of the Gökdere, located in the valley of Olympus and one of the most beautiful and picturesque spots in the city, but also led to the Green Mausoleum (as shown in Fig. 7.3) looking like 'a can of preserves'.[66] Piccinato's scornful remark here is an observation on how Prost's planning failed to acknowledge the hilly topography of the city (after all Bursa was not Paris) when tearing down the buildings around the Green Mausoleum.

Indeed, other urban renewal and planning attempts that took place in the city in the aftermath of the 1855 earthquake under the leadership of Ahmed Vefik Paşa also succumbed to Vefik's aspirations to create a modern and western city in accordance with the Tanzimat reforms mentioned earlier. Not appreciating the cultural background of the city, new boulevards were drawn and the timber houses standing in the way were demolished. For Piccinato, these planning interventions were so radical that they changed the city completely. As he contends, prior to the restoration attempts: '[e]verything was untouched, complete, balanced. At that moment, a passionate and intelligent urbanist could make Bursa an exemplary city,

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[62] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 111–112.
[63] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 112.
[64] See n. 3, 21 and 24 above.
[65] Dostoğlu and Vural, 'Lörcher, Prost ve Piccinato'nun', 122–126; Dostoğlu and Vural, 'The role of Western planners', 239–245.
[66] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 113.

imitating the example of the Turks five centuries ago who knew how to create a new city and their new city next to the Byzantines and the old city'.[67]

Piccinato's approach to planning in Bursa

> To carry out town-planning in a town of the Middle East does not so much entail a particular effort to grasp the specific problem from a technical point of view and the technico-juridicial means for its solution, but rather to soak oneself, identify oneself and live in a completely different world.[68]

This quote helps explain what led Piccinato to a holistic approach to the historical periods in Bursa rather than emphasising one period over another. He is quick to appreciate the *sui generis* spirit of the city (Fig. 7.6) when he says:

> Bursa epitomises a large part of the history of Asia Minor, and its present structure suggests it as a town planning problem in all its terms; the richness of its urban and rural landscape, its monuments, from the Greek and Byzantine walls to the fourteenth-century mosques and minor architectural features to the thermal baths, and from the industrial developments to the ill-advised demolitions of the present century.[69]

As discussed, Piccinato was well-versed in the urban planning led by generations of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century planners that relied heavily on the idea of urban embellishment, including creating a hygienic environment, preserving open spaces and conservation.[70] In his mind, widened street networks, large parks and 'picturesque conservation' of the historic silhouette were key parts of the city-beautiful concept of previous urban planning attempts.[71] But Piccinato saw that these previous attempts had flaws, including not considering the total urban context and modernising the city in isolation without taking its history and urban accumulation into consideration. He once jokingly stated that wishing to do town planning writing was equal to doing gymnastics by speaking. For these and other reasons, according to Ruben Abel Bianchi, Piccinato's master plan for Bursa was not 'utopian', unlike that of previous planners such as Prost. It was also not pure 'academic rhetoric' with no chance of implementation.[72] In other words, his approach was not about creating a romanticised image of Bursa, emphasising a homogenous architectural façade or prioritising one style over others. Rather, Piccinato emphasised the beauty and historic value of the city and its landscape and aimed to enhance its beauty and preserve its historic legacy.

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[67] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 112.
[68] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 110.
[69] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 110.
[70] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 110.
[71] For the first discussion on these three points as integral part of the urban planning, see Hènard, *Études sur l'architecture et les transformations de Paris*, 17; Olsen, 'The process of urban embellishment', 82–85.
[72] Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 184. For a critique on the urban planners' utopian attitudes toward historic fabric, Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 7 and 13.

Figure 7.6. Panorama of Bursa by Piccinato (L'Archivio Luigi Piccinato (ALP) La Sapienza University, Rome). Legends: (1) Old city; (2) Muradiye; (3) Green Mosque; (4) Emir Sultan (5) Bayezid; (6) Commercial quarters; (7) new residential area (8) new commercial area; (9) public parks and sports complex.

In Bursa, Piccinato was keen to keep the historic city centre free of industrial activities, unless extensive areas were demolished to give space for major infrastructure and faster access points. This followed Giovannoni's emphasis on acknowledging the historic fabric of the city prior to any urban planning attempts. Piccinato also seems to have been inspired by Patrick Geddes (1854–1932), the Scottish biologist and planner famous for planning Edinburgh and Dublin, as well as cities in India. Geddes promoted the idea of 'conservative surgery' and suggested a minimal demolition of the historic fabric to adapt cities to meet the needs of the modern city and recommended observing history in its natural and geographic context.[73] Unlike Prost and others, instead of using demolition to enlarge spaces to give historically important buildings room to breathe, Piccinato was in favour of preserving minor architectural details and, in the case that their destruction was necessary, only doing so after proper scientific research and recording and in a manner that was realistic and functional.[74]

For Piccinato, the best way to understand the urban dynamics of a city involved going out and living in a place and observing rather than staying in the studio to draw plans. But like Prost, or any other urban planner, Piccinato did a systematic analysis of the urban problems, which he supported with maps and graphs. His maps especially pinpointed the units from the early Ottoman *külliyes*. He also took into account past governmental laws. For instance, his take on the landscape as part of the historic city

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[73] For his town-planning ideas and the study of urban matters, Geddes, *Cities in Evolution*, *passim*.
[74] Bianchi, 'The work of Luigi Piccinato', 186–189.
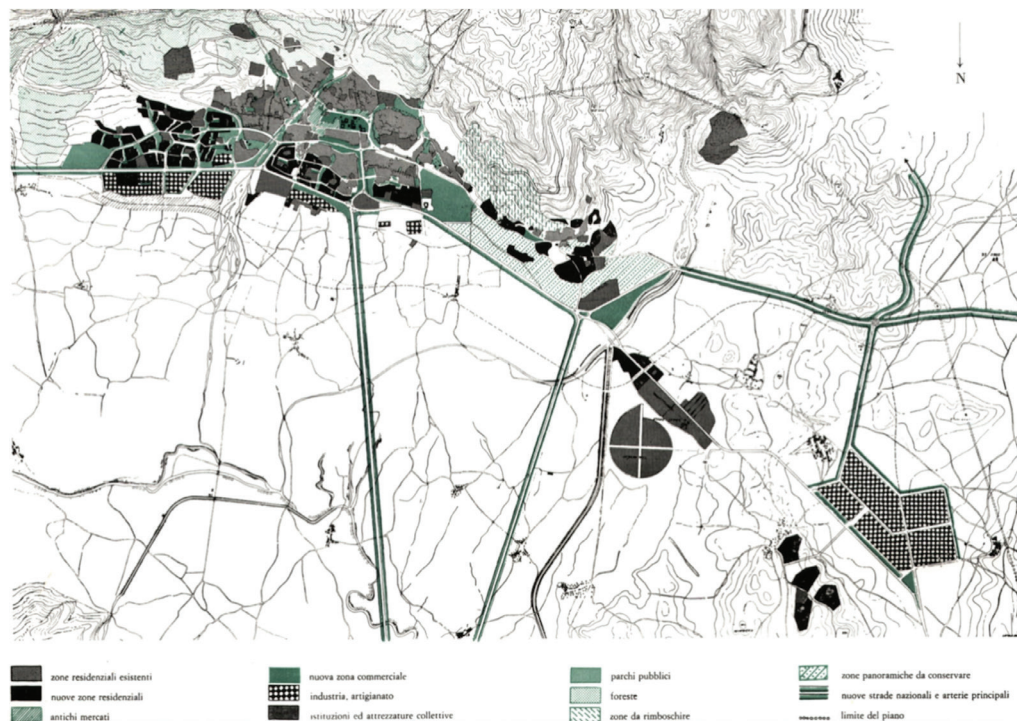
Figure 7.7. *Functional zoning plan by Piccinato (L'Archivio Luigi Piccinato (ALP) La Sapienza University, Rome).*

had earlier origins in the 1939 Severi and Giovannoni Act and the 1942 Town Planning Act. The Severi and Giovannoni Act, drafted in part by Piccinato's professor Gustavo Giovannoni, introduced the idea of the landscape as a tool to conserve the larger historic fabric, both urban and natural. The 1942 Town Planning Act emphasised a strict division between the historic centre and other parts of the city.[75] In accordance with this act, the priority was to identify the perimeters of the historic centre within a larger setting and then give this area special care, moving beyond only conserving the facades and architectural details to conserve and preserve the urban patterns associated with the centre, such as the buildings, spaces in between them and streets.

Piccinato's observations on Bursa's historic value resonate with the writings of the esteemed urban historian Spiro Kostof. Writing in 1967, Kostof proposed that historians analyse buildings in their 'total context'.[76] Kostof's four-fold approach is as follows: 'to study each building in its entirety because of the "oneness" in architecture; to look at buildings in a broader physical sense, later called "setting"; to contend all buildings of the past are worthy of study because they form a community; and to

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[75] Zucconi, 'Gustavo Giovannoni', 76–91, 85.
[76] Kostof, 'Architectural history and the student architect', 189–191.

scrutinise the nonphysical aspects that are essential to understanding the building'.[77] Kostof's discussion on the significance of demolition in densely populated historic cities and his reading of the urban fabric through binary oppositions (organically developed medieval cities vs. grid-planned cities of the classical period and smaller-scale development vs. monumental central planning) further links his thinking to that of Piccinato.

Piccinato was very keen on identifying Bursa as a city in its own right, not to be confused with any European/Italian city he had previously worked on, and we can see how the ideas he generated and the lessons he learned from his experiences in managing the Greco-Roman cities of Europe were applied to a very different sort of historic city in Bursa. For one, he was quick to see why Bursa should be approached differently. Despite the impressive unity of materials that gave the city its character, in the homogeneous environment of medieval European cities, Bursa (like almost every Middle Eastern city) was clearly double layered. Stated differently, from the time of its foundation in the second century BC to its transformation into the Ottoman capital, Bursa's monumental architecture used sturdy materials to form the façade of the urban fabric and residential architecture and less durable materials to form the background of the urban setting. These two juxtaposed layers formed what Piccinato called a *duplicazione*. This duplication forms the heart of Piccinato's zoning (Fig. 7.7). For him, they coexisted and formed a meaningful setting.

Piccinato also discusses the misguided nature of conservation, urban renewal and planning attempts in the nineteenth century in European cities, strongly echoing what his mentor Giovannoni heavily criticised – singling out monuments (*diradamento edilizio*) and creating stylistic homogeneity. He laments the destruction of the historical fabric to make new roads or enlarge existing ones.[78] He cites the Milanese experience where axial roads and regulatory urban plans fell short in accommodating the rise in car traffic, and he points out that in Bursa the boulevard opened up in the time of Ahmed Vefik Paşa, which was named after him, had to be widened by 70 metres.[79] Other cities with many urban planning attempts, such as Milan, Florence and Paris, experienced similar issues:

> Almost all the European cities were dismembered and fell, as more or less, under the pick[80] that opened the great wounds never healed again. Paris fell, the metropolis of world culture, Milan was destroyed, even Florence was split, cathedrals were isolated, and straight avenues and roads were drawn. Bursa could not escape fate.[81]

In his negative references to *il piccone risanotore* (literally 'the healing pick'), Piccinato gives a hint about his political orientation as an architect and urban planner. This

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[77] Kostof, 'Architectural history and the student architect'.
[78] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 113.
[79] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 112.
[80] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 113.
[81] To quote verbatim from Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', '...sotto il piccone che apriva le grandi ferite mai più rimarginate', 112–113.

term was promoted by Benito Mussolini as part of his urban clearance projects in Italy.[82] As Spiro Kostof has discussed, between 1924 and 1932 thousands of structures were demolished in Rome, Florence, Milan and Genoa. These clearance projects were called *sventramenti* (gutting or disembowelling). The term itself is often linked to Haussmann's *éventration* (a term itself derived from *éventrement*),[83] a common decluttering practice for policy makers and urban planners in the nineteenth century. Combined with the sentiments of the Futurists in the aftermath of the First World War, pencil-drawn avenues and complexes floating in space became the initial components in creating a 'modern city'. With his focus on a holistic view of the historic layers of a city and the environment, Piccinato eschewed this type of thinking.

Piccinato's proposal

Piccinato arrived only two years after the 1958 fire that destroyed the commercial quarter in the centre of the city. What started as the rehabilitation of the *hans* (inns) soon turned into a fully-fledged masterplan that aimed to offer restoration and conservation of both the historic monuments of religious and commercial value as well as examples of vernacular architecture. He was invited by the Ministry of Town Planning and Reconstruction to collaborate with a team of urban planners and architects working under the supervision of architect Emin Canpolat.

In his project, he underlined aspects of urban renewal (*rinovamento urbano*), conservation (*conservazione*) and restoration (*risanamento*), as well as discussing the Turkish laws on building regulations. Piccinato devoted his time to studying the intricacies of the vernacular architecture in Bursa. His plan indeed aimed to emphasise the architectural and cultural value of the old timber and mudbrick houses for which Bursa is famous, and it proposed a preservation and rehabilitation plan so they would not get demolished due to pressure from the Ministry of Town Planning and Reconstruction as part of the zoning and regulations acts.[84] Piccinato's interest in the vernacular and local values was something that he emphasised in almost all of his projects. While designing the city of Sabaudia in the Lazio region of Italy in 1971, he wrote: 'With Sabaudia … it expresses in a concrete way the acquisition of a new conscience of national rural values.'[85]

In Bursa, as Piccinato contends, the commercial quarters were first established outside the ancient walled city, which came to function as the heart of the lower city.[86] With the siting of Orhan's *külliye*, situated immediately outside the walls of the acropolis, an imperial core was promoted, mimicking that of the Hellenistic cities in

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[82] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 112–113; Kostof, 'His majesty the pick', 9–22.

[83] Haussmann, *Mémoires du Baron Haussmann*, 54.

[84] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 130–131. It must be noted here that combined with the establishment of the High Council of Immoveable Antiquities and Monuments in 1951, the Development Regulations passed in 1957 established that the tearing down of registered buildings posed a danger to environment.

[85] Sabatino, *Pride in Modesty*, 154.

[86] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 110–112.

Anatolia; it was even perhaps comparable to a Roman imperial forum, serving as the nucleus for commercial, social and judicial activity. Thus, the lower city, starting from the reign of Orhan onward, became the ultimate symbol of Bursa's Ottomanisation. The area became the focus of commercial activities, namely transportation and the sale and exchange of goods, a function transferred into the Republican period as well.

Through the ages, the construction, expansion and placement of the *han* compound in the lower city helped create a lively commercial scene among merchants and the local population. When the commercial quarters were demolished by the fire in 1958, there was an urgent need to restore the area so that this historic segment of the city would be preserved and continue functioning as usual.[87] By conserving the commercial quarters based on the perceptions of Bursa's inhabitants rather than using an abstract or aesthetic way of preserving the past, Piccinato reinvented Bursa's early Ottoman urban city. The commercial quarter itself had seven *hans*, two on the north and five on the south, divided by the long axis of the covered grand bazaar.[88] The buildings here were originally built in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with subsequent remodelling in later years. The urban renewal or conservation plan of Piccinato was as follows: he built a vaulted structure covering the grand bazaar, and this axial line became the backbone of the commercial quarter linking all the *hans* to one another. Old buildings in this area were restored. The ones that were not fulfilling a function or had stopped functioning were assigned new functions or regained their former functions, such as small bathhouses. Vehicular traffic was only allowed around the cluster of these commercial buildings.[89]

Once done with restoring the commercial quarters, Piccinato started working on the 1960 master plan of Bursa. To achieve this, Piccinato did a series of statistical calculations, studied the neighbourhoods and demographics, analysed the growth potential of the city and took into account industrial and commercial activities as well as the immigration problem. Bursa's master plan was drawn up at a scale of 1:5,000. Piccinato suggested that the city be developed along the Ankara–Bursa–Mudanya road; that is, in a linear format on an east–west axis, following the axis of the socio-religious complexes built by the Ottomans. The old road axis from the centre of the city would be maintained, extended to the west and east and end in the respective areas of socio-religious complexes and neighbourhoods. In order to support such development, he planned to develop small scale industry along the Ankara road, which is along the eastern edge of the city, and suggested an Organised Industrial Zone be established along the Mudanya road.[90]

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[87] N. 3 above. Çağaptay, *The First Ottoman Capital*, 25, 104–105.

[88] For an overview of Piccinato's interventions in the commercial area, Vural, 'Tarihsel süreklilik içinde', 289–309; Vural, 'Bursa'nın kentsel gelişimi', 95–102; Çakıcı Alp, 'A century of transformation', 25–26. The hans on the north included: the Emir, Coccoon, Coppersmiths, as well as a hammam and on the south, Geyve, Rice, Coachbuilders, Bedesten, Fidan, Yeni Hal and Sipahi and another hammam.

[89] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 117–119.

[90] Dostoğlu and Vural, 'Lörcher, Prost ve Piccinato'nun', 122–126; Dostoğlu and Vural, 'The role of Western planners', 239–245; Vural, 'Tarihsel süreklilik içinde', 289–309; Vural, 'Bursa'nın kentsel gelişimi', 95–102.

Piccinato's approach was to see the whole city as an organic and living entity, and he utilised functional zoning to achieve his vision. He identified zones and ascribed each a function; an important aspect of the plan was defining business areas, urban services and establishing a functional and rational transport network linking the organism. His functional zoning identified nineteen zones utilising the following guiding principles:[91]

- Organising the entire city in an organic way and identifying the zones and districts to promote linear development
- Identifying and improving the environments (historical texture, monuments, urban and rural landscape) constituting the character of the city
- Defining labour force, urban services and social institutions (crafts, industries, stations, warehouses, etc.)
- Establishing a rational road network connecting and serving the whole organism efficiently

In the concluding remarks of his 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', Piccinato states that, 'The Green Bursa is on its way: this is the way to save its historical unity, appearance and architecture; it is a way of structuring a healthier, more contemporary, richer order. I wish I could say the same for many Italian cities'.[92] He saw the richness of the city's urban and rural landscape, and in turn included the bathhouses, industrial districts and undeveloped areas in his master plan.[93] He was hopeful that, aided by his planning regime, the *Yeşil Bursa* (literally 'green Bursa') would maintain its historical cohesion and architectural legacy.[94]

Failures and successes

In keeping with Piccinato's suggestion, Turkey's first Organised Industrial Zone was opened in 1966 in Bursa.[95] However, the establishment of the Organised Industrial Zone created immense immigration pressure on the city, which rendered the population and density projections of the Piccinato plan obsolete. Bursa's proximity to Istanbul and the creation of the Organised Industrial Zone attracted industrialists and working-class people. As they relocated their businesses, there was a massive influx of people. One of the major shortcomings of the project was its failure to project this population growth. Prior to the arrival of Piccinato, Bursa's population was 136,528 in 1957. Piccinato estimated the population would be 250,000 in 1980,

[91] For a detailed discussion on each zone and maps see, Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 133 and figures 80–82.

[92] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 136.

[93] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 116–119.

[94] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 136.

[95] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa'; Aslanoğlu, *Kent, Kimlik, Küreselleşme*, *passim*; Arslanoğlu, 'Regulation of the general master plan', 36–40.

yet the city's population had already reached 350,000 by 1975.[96] This striking growth was partially due to the decentralisation of Istanbul's industry, brought on by the failed master plan projects discussed earlier. In turn, Bursa's burgeoning inhabitants began to spread towards the plain, and the city's plain became the centre of illegal housing construction.[97]

Although it was approved by the Turkish Ministry of Development and Housing in 1960, Piccinato's master plan was never realised. Yet his plan formed the basis for conservation strategies of future master plans in the years to come.[98] Piccinato recognised the problems of past planning efforts, such as Prost's mistake in ignoring the hilly topography,[99] and his approach to Bursa was significantly different than that of Prost. He appreciated the nature of the old city in Bursa. His work was analytical, and he had an understanding of the speculative mechanisms aiming to envision city growth, which he took into account by dividing the city into zones based on different functions. Unlike Prost, Piccinato did not aim to stage the city as a museum piece or offer gutted-out snapshots from the historic periods of the city. Rather, Piccinato tried to demonstrate that memories, events, figures and natural elements are embedded in the past and hence linked to the spaces, streets and monuments in Bursa. He was an urban planner of his period, inspired by Giovannoni and Geddes as well as seeming to have a Ruskinesque approach to the historic city. Piccinato wanted to save the historic monuments of Bursa in their overall setting and not 'as intangible monuments frozen in time'.[100]

A visitor to Bursa today sees quite a bit of urban sprawl: the present-day city expands beyond the linear axis that existed in Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman times. Continuing its role as a major commercial town, the city encompasses dwelling areas, private and state-owned factories producing automobiles, wool and silk, lands reserved for agricultural production and areas promoting winter and summer tourism. Anyone familiar with Bursa today might wonder what the Italian planner would make of the state-sponsored construction of concrete residential blocks sprouting up in the heart of the city, buildings that obstruct nearly every vista. Yet even as the population approaches two and a half million, and the city becomes a major industrial hub second only to Istanbul, Bursa retains a mystical and inspiring air, with its constantly changing urban fabric and layering still within the city.

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[96] Arslanoğlu, 'Regulation of the general master plan', 36–40.
[97] Dostoğlu and Vural, 'Lörcher, Prost ve Piccinato'nun', 122–126; Dostoğlu and Vural, 'The role of Western planners', 239–245; Arslanoğlu, 'Regulation of the general master plan', 36–40; Çakıcı Alp, 'A century of transformation', 15–34. For a recent reading in the spatial formation of the city, Küçükali, 'Risk caused by the spatial formation', 376–385.
[98] See n. 90 and 97 above. For post-Piccinato planning attempts, Çakıcı Alp, 'A century of transformation', 26–32.
[99] Piccinato, 'L'esperienza del piano di Bursa', 113.
[100] Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, 120–121.

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Repurposed cities

Chapter 8

Remembering the rose red city: Religion, pilgrimage and the shaping of Byzantine Petra

Marlena Whiting

The ancient Nabataean capital of Petra, in southern Jordan, lies nestled amid a gnarled sandstone outcrop in an array of red hues rising out of the surrounding limestone hills. The drama of its natural setting and its distinctiveness mark it out as a special place. The site was a locus of memory across different cultures, beginning with the Edomites in the thirteenth to second centuries BC, the Nabataeans in the first centuries BC/AD, extending to the shared religious patrimony of Christians, Jews, Samaritans and Muslims associated with events of Exodus in the Old Testament. The landscape had enduring sacred significance for each of these groups; the city functioned differently as a religious space, more closely linked to secular authority instead. The city that emerged in the first centuries BC/AD was a way of structuring civic and political life in part through religious practices, buildings, ceremonies and public offices. Religious spaces emerge as an important indicator of social and civic values. Religious change, especially the rise of Christianity from the fourth century, becomes a lens for viewing the ways in which the city community understood its past and its relationship to the environment, both built and natural.

From the late third century to the early fifth century, pagan and Christian communities are both attested in Petra and its environs. The written sources would paint a picture of conflict between the two groups, but the archaeological evidence suggests a pattern of gradual conversion and reuse of materials, rather than violent confrontation. The citizens of Christian Petra did not engage directly with its classical monumental presence. In fact, the temples and tomb façades which now make Petra famous may already have been rejected by the local community before the fourth century as representing intrusive foreign elements. Instead, Petra was incorporated into a universal Christian narrative, in part by linking its surrounding landscape with events in the Old Testament. The different effects of these processes are evident in

the remains of the monumental city centre and the suburban mountain-top shrine of Jabal Hārūn; a comparison of these two sites presents a comprehensive picture of the way the citizens of Petra adapted to religious and social change.

The city and its hinterland: Petra and Jabal Hārūn

Petra was the capital city of the kingdom of the Nabataeans, nomadic Arab traders who ruled over a territory that at its height, from the third century BC to the second century AD, stretched from Arabia to the Mediterranean, and as far north as southern Syria (Fig. 8.1). From the first century BC, Petra was transformed into a highly urbanised settlement. The geographer Strabo comments on the sumptuousness of the stone houses and the fertility of the land for agriculture.[1] The city's population in the first centuries BC/AD, at the height of its prosperity under the Nabataean kings and just after its annexation by the Roman empire in AD 106, is estimated at 30,000 inhabitants.[2] Petra boasted a full complement of urban public amenities expected of a Hellenised, Romanised city: a theatre, a nymphaeum, a pleasure garden, baths, palaces and urban villas, and shops on the colonnaded street (Fig. 8.2).[3] Petra's city centre contained several monumental religious buildings. These include the Qasr al-Bint temple and *temenos* which occupied the west end of the colonnaded street, the Temple of the Winged Lions located on the wadi slope to the north and the so-called 'Great Temple'.[4] Petra's dramatic landscape of gorges and mountains was
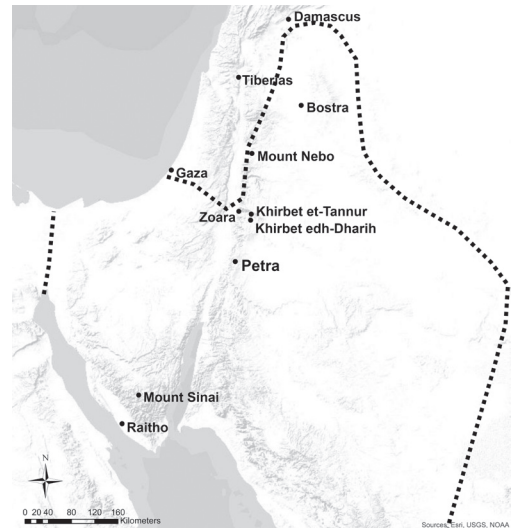
Figure 8.1. Sketch map showing maximum extension of the Nabataean Kingdom (Marlena Whiting).

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[1] Strabo, *Geographica*, 16.4.26, this is in contrast to Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 19.94.2–10, describing the nomadic habits of the Nabataeans in the fourth century BC. See Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 16–27, 60–61, on the transformation of Nabataean society.

[2] Joukowsky, 'Nabataean Petra: introduction', 2.

[3] For overview, see Schmid, 'From Aretas to the annexation' and Fiema, 'Petra and its hinterland'. For results of more recent excavations see Bedal *et al.*, 'The Petra garden and pool complex' (pleasure garden), Tholbecq *et al.*, 'The "High Place" of Jabal Khubthah'; Shiyyab, 'Recent discoveries'; Joukowsky, *Petra Great Temple*, 200–211 (baths); Schmid *et al.*, 'Palaces' (palaces).

[4] The function of the 'Great Temple' is a matter of some debate. The construction of concave seating suggests it served a civic function (e.g. a *bouleterion*). It is also possible that its function changed over time, perhaps around the time of the Roman annexation in 106. Joukowsky and Basile, 'More pieces', 52–54.
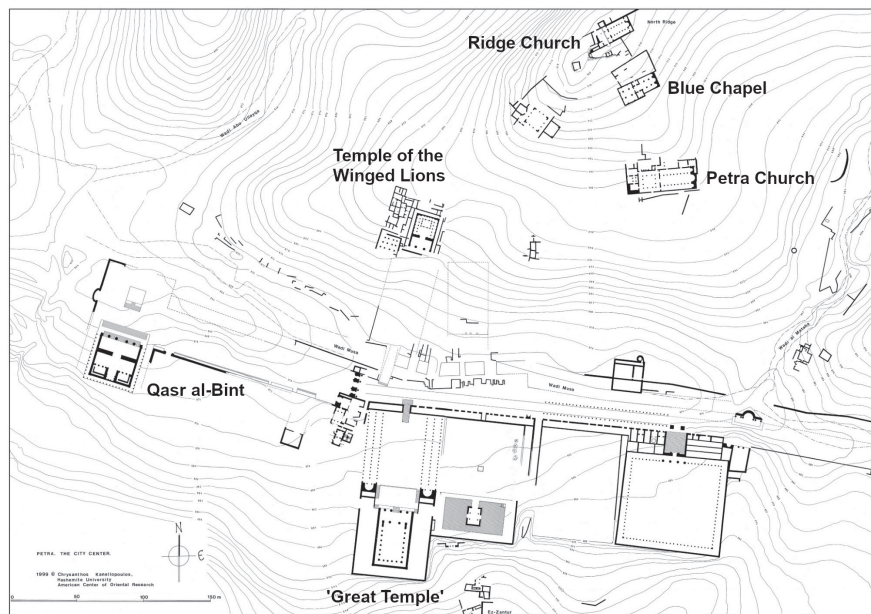
Figure 8.2. Plan of Petra monumental city centre showing key monuments (Chrysanthos Kanellopoulos and Talal S. Akasheh. With permission (ACOR)).

sacralised through its famous rock-cut tombs, cliff shrines, and mountain-top 'high places'.

The earthquake of May 19, AD 363 looms large in the lore of Petra as a watershed event, also leaving its mark on the archaeological record. A contemporary source reported that over half of the city was destroyed, and it was assumed never to have recovered.[5] However, buildings relating to the Byzantine phases of the city systematically excavated since the 1990s have overthrown this assumption.[6] These buildings include a cathedral, an episcopal complex and other chapels and churches. The Urn Tomb, with its classicising tomb façade overlooking the city, was converted into a church in 446, testimony to one way in which the Christian inhabitants of Petra engaged with the remains of the pagan past. Most significantly, excavations in a side room of the main Petra Church revealed a papyrus archive dating from the sixth century preserving assorted legal and financial documents related to a prominent family in the city.[7] While the city may not have been as opulent as it had been prior to the mid-fourth century, it nonetheless had regional and interregional significance. It had political importance, first as a *metropolis* of the province of Arabia, and later as the

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[5] Brock, 'Letter', 276. Browning, *Petra*, 58 in his popularising book on Petra characterised the Byzantine period in Petra as squalid and torpid, 'without even vain hope'.

[6] On the 363 earthquake, see Russell, 'Earthquake'. For an overview of archaeological and historical data related to Byzantine Petra, see Fiema, 'Petra and its hinterland'.

[7] Frösén, 'Petra Papyri'; Frösén *et al.*, *Petra Papyri I–V*.

Figure 8.3. Jabal Hārūn as seen from the modern town of Wādī Mūsā (looking west) (Judith McKenzie/ Manar al-Athar).

provincial capital of Palaestina Tertia. It also became a regional ecclesiastical centre (elevated to a metropolitan see in AD 451), sending bishops to ecclesiastical councils.[8]

The evidence from the city centre of Petra is complemented by archaeological work carried out on the suburban mountain-top shrine of Jabal Hārūn, located 5 kilometres southwest from the monumental city centre. The mountain is the highest in the Petra area, at *c.* 1300 m above sea level. It also has a distinctive profile, with two peaks and a plateau (Fig. 8.3). These characteristics make it a logical focus for religious interest for the inhabitants of Petra, dating back to the Nabataean period if not earlier. The mountain sits within the hinterland of the city of Petra, which supplied the city with agricultural produce, and building materials during its expansion in the first centuries BC/AD.[9] Pottery produced in Petra and the patronage of city elites indicate that the site was part of the city's economic and religious milieu, even if not physically part of the urban core.

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[8] Petra was originally in the province of Arabia, but was transferred to Palaestina Salutaris ca. 392, and then to Palaestina Tertia in 409. Sipilä, *The Reorganisation of Provincial Territories*, 166–174. On the city's honorific titulature, see Fiema, 'Military presence in Petra', 276–277. On church councils see Fiema, 'Petra and its hinterland', 193.

[9] The relationship of city and hinterland is evident in the finds from the survey of the slopes of Jabal Hārūn: increased agricultural and quarrying activity indicates support for the growing urban centre, while the presence of manufactured goods (pottery) from Petra confirms the reciprocity of the relationship. Hertell *et al.*, 'Summary', 337.

At the top of the higher of the two peaks is an Islamic shrine built in the fourteenth century, known today as the tomb of Aaron (Hārūn in Arabic), displaying a marble cenotaph and a crypt. The building incorporates Byzantine elements, namely an *opus sectile* floor. Religious activity on the mountain dating back to the Nabataean period is suggested by surface pottery and so-called 'cupmarks' carved into the bedrock for the pouring of libations.[10] However, of especial interest is the excavated religious complex on the lower plateau west of the peak. Excavations there revealed a first-century AD Nabataean sanctuary later incorporated into an extensive walled Christian monastic complex (*coenobium*) and pilgrimage centre.[11] The Christian complex was constructed in the mid- to late fifth century and remained in religious use until the ninth century; the last written attestation of monks at the site is from an eleventh century pilgrim account. The shrine, in its Nabataean, Christian and Islamic phases, belongs to part of the wider religious milieu of the city of Petra, as attested by archaeology and by pilgrimage practices among the modern inhabitants of the Petra area.[12] The changes in religious use that are evident at Jabal Hārūn are closely linked to the cultural shifts that were taking place in Petra itself as a part of the religious upheavals of late antiquity, which resulted not only in new forms of religious worship but new attitudes towards monumental and civic space.

Paganism, Christianity and society in Petra

The broad story of the rise of Christianity in late antiquity to become the dominant religion of the Roman empire known from elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean holds true for Petra as well: at the beginning of the fourth century there is evidence for pagan practice and sources tell us this continued even into the fifth century. By the end of the fourth century the temples stand empty, and in the fifth century churches begin to be constructed. But Petra differs with regard to this broad narrative in two ways. First, the characteristics of Nabataean religion may indicate a different cause for temple abandonment than Christianisation. Second, the specific archaeological information of the 363 earthquake destruction levels provides a datable horizon and appears to suggest an early end to paganism; contradicted by the Christian written sources which say paganism continued actively, even zealously, into the fifth century.

It is not appropriate to speak of 'Nabataean' religion as a single entity, as there were considerable local variations in the identities of the gods worshipped within the territory of the Nabataean kingdom. On the whole, worship focused on a supreme deity, whose attributes and gender varied by situation, but whose main sphere of influence was the annual cycle of fertility and elements of the natural world, with particular emphasis on rain and storms. The supreme god who came to be associated

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[10] Brünnow and von Domaszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia*, 422; Wiegand, *Sinai*, 142; Kouki and Silvonen, 'Ritual sites', 308.

[11] For final reports of the excavations and survey of the site and its environs, see *Petra – Mountain of Aaron* vols. I–III.

[12] Miettunen, 'Jabal Hārūn', 38–43; al-Salameen and Falahat, 'Religious practices'.

with the Nabataean rulers was Dushara. He was the patron god of the Nabataean royal family, and was variously worshipped as a god of vegetation, storms and solar rebirth. It is thought that the Qasr al-Bint temple at Petra was dedicated to Dushara, and the Temple of the Winged Lions opposite it was dedicated to his female counterpart, but these identifications are conjectural.[13]

Nabataeans preferred to worship their gods in aniconic form, as betyls.[14] Betyls are slabs of stone that can either be unadorned, or have stylised anthropomorphic markings, like eyes. Betyls remained in use throughout the entire period of Nabataean history. They could also be venerated not just in temples but in open air spaces as well. Betyls are commonly found carved into cliff faces but could also be set up as freestanding stones on bases known as *motab*, which are sometimes found at so-called high places of worship. The most famous at Petra is the high place at Jabal al-Madhbah, with a *motab*, drainage channels and a triclinium, with benches along three sides for ritual feasting, often associated with Nabataean sanctuaries.[15]

It is likely that Jabal Hārūn, where pagan worship appears to have continued up to 363, was regarded as a 'high place', sacrally linked to its mountain-top location and its natural features. The orientation of the oldest Nabataean building (which likely served as a temple with an altar) is to the south-east (Fig. 8.4). This could be to align with the first rays of light on the vernal equinox (the Nabataean new year), which would not be visible on the horizon due east because of the obstruction by the main peak.[16] The alignment could also be to respect the presence of a striking natural feature, a crack or fissure in the bedrock. This crack, nearly 2 metres long and 6 metres wide at its most broad, forms a natural cistern. It was deliberately enhanced in the Nabataean period by enlarging the underground chamber and adding settling tanks and channels for directing rainwater.[17] The cistern might well have been perennially filled with water and thus given a miraculous/divine aspect, much like a sacred spring (Fig. 8.5).[18] In the late first to early second century AD, a porticoed courtyard and series of rooms were added around the original core buildings. One of the rooms has the appearance of a triclinium.[19] There was further expansion of the complex in the second and third centuries, with rooms to the south. These could have been used as additional gathering spaces and also for the storing and preparation of agricultural produce, a nod to the religious importance

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[13] Bartlett, 'Nabataean religion', 68.

[14] On betyls, see *e.g.,* Wenning, 'Betyls of Petra'.

[15] McKenzie, *The Architecture of Petra*, 172; Nehmé *et al.*, *Atlas*, 49–50. On triclinia, see McKenzie and Reyes, 'Religious practice', 242.

[16] See Paradise, 'Architectural orientation' on the importance of solar alignments in Nabataean monuments in Petra. The temple at Khirbet et-Tannūr is aligned due east towards sunrise on the equinox. McKenzie, 'Introduction', 30.

[17] Fiema, 'Reinventing the sacred', 30–31, fig. 3; for the report of the excavation of the cistern and analysis, see Juntunen, 'Cistern'.

[18] Fiema, 'The Jabal Hārūn site', 542.

[19] Lahelma *et al.*, 'Western Building Area', 25; Schmid, 'Remarks', 68–69.
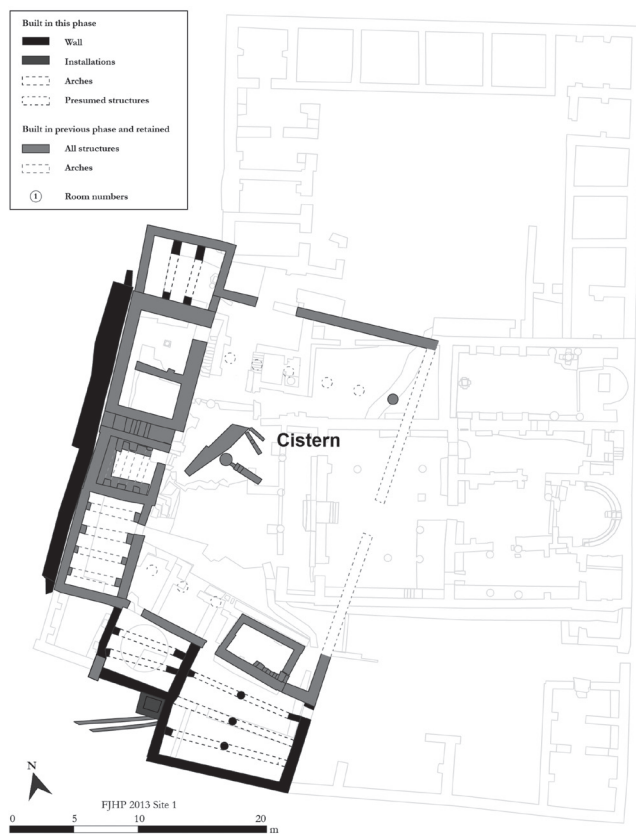
Figure 8.4. Plan of the Nabataean buildings at Jabal Hārūn (Finnish Jabal Harun Project).

of the annual cycle of cultivation, on which not only the rural settlements but the growing urban population of Petra would have been dependent.[20]

The Nabataeans appropriated, absorbed and adapted the visual elements that they thought were fashionable or relevant to their deities to continue to celebrate them in ways specific to them. Some 'foreign' gods were worshipped in their own right, such as the Egyptian goddess Isis, who was popular throughout the Mediterranean.[21] Religion in the Nabataean kingdom was also able to accommodate regional variations of religious worship from the distinctive religious culture of northern Arabia to the local pantheon of southern Syria. Worship of these deities continued well into the fourth century AD. As Nabataeans' trading networks brought them into ever greater contact with Hellenistic and Roman influences, the Nabataeans increasingly adopted trends of representing their deities in human form, mingling elements of Roman,

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[20] Kouki, *Hinterland of a City*, 124.
[21] *E.g.,* Vaelske, 'Isis in Petra'.

Figure 8.5. View of the natural cistern at Jabal Hārūn (Kai Juntunen).

Greek, Egyptian and Near Eastern iconography. At Petra, for example, Dushara is represented as Zeus but also as Dionysos, for his association with fertility.

This plurality of representation, and the regional variation, has in the past led to the interpretation that all these 'foreign' gods were in fact worshipped on equal footing, and that Nabataean religion was eclectic and syncretistic.[22] This interpretation has fallen out of favour somewhat. Robert Wenning has summarised Nabataean religion as 'associative' rather than 'syncretistic', and as 'henotheistic/henolatric' rather than 'polytheistic'. In this interpretation, iconographic representations of, *e.g.*, Hellenistic deities are attributes associated with a Nabataean supreme deity, and that even the identity of the supreme deity depended on the local context. Thus, Dushara is represented with the attributes of Zeus (storm god) and Dionysus (fertility god) at Petra, but those same attributes and functions are associated with a supreme deity identified (by inscription) as the Edomite storm god Qōs at the shrine of Khirbet et-Tannūr, 70 kilometres to the north.[23]

It is important to note that prior to the fifth century AD, worshipping of betyls was never fully supplanted, leading to the suggestion that the anthropomorphising art influenced by the Hellenistic east was a top-down innovation; first of the Nabataean

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[22] Glueck, *Deities and Dolphins*, 359–360. On syncretism vs assimilation as useful terms for Nabataean religion, see Healey, *Religion*, 14–16.

[23] Wenning, 'Great Goddesses', 511–512.

rulers, and then of local elites seeking to appear Roman.[24] Hellenising sculpture – mainly architectural adornment rather than free-standing statuary – has been recovered from the temples in the monumental city centre of Petra; these buildings, and by extension even the rituals carried out in them, may have been a top-down imposition which never fully replaced more traditional rituals involving betyls and high places.[25]

The monumental temples in Petra's city centre were damaged in the 363 earthquake and not rebuilt. The same is true of the temple at Jabal Hārūn and at Khirbet et-Tannūr and its nearby settlement, Khirbet edh-Dharīh. However, Walter Ward has argued that the civic temples of the city of Petra (Qasr al-Bint, 'Great Temple' and the Temple of The Winged Lions), were already out of use by the earthquake of AD 363.[26] Both Qasr al-Bint and the 'Great Temple' have abandonment layers of wind-blown sand and alluvial deposits sealed beneath the destruction layer related to the earthquake. These deposits are dated to the late second century in the 'Great Temple' and the early late third/early fourth century in Qasr al-Bint (where they follow the destruction of the main temple in a fire).[27] The Temple of the Winged Lions does not have an abandonment layer, indicating that it was in use up to 363, but it was not rebuilt afterwards. The apparent abandonment of the largest temples in the centre of Petra contradicts what we know from Christian authors, who speak of 'zealous' pagan worship in Petra even into the fifth century.[28]

The key to this apparent discrepancy lies in the distinction between public cults in the temples that may have been regarded as a top-down imposition on local religious practices, and the more traditional worship of betyls and cult practices at other places of ritual activity, such as the high places, that may have been endured. Qasr al-Bint in particular, was strongly associated with ruling powers and outside authority. First, it is presumed to have been the temple dedicated to the primary god of the Nabataean royal family, Dushara. Following the annexation by Rome, there was a suppression of Nabataean royalty and elite, which presumably impacted the cults associated with the royal family and their temples and tombs. A certain amount of turmoil likely followed the annexation, but in the course of the second and third centuries Petra began to accrue honorific titles which signalled the loyalty of its elites to Rome.[29] In the 160s an apsidal structure was built against the western wall of the *temenos* of Qasr al-Bint, which contained sculpture and inscriptions dedicated to the Roman imperial

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[24] Obodas III (r. 30–9 BC) and Aretas IV (r. 8 BC–AD 40) built in the Hellenising style (Patrich, 'Nabataean art', 99). During the reigns of Malichus II (r. AD 39–70) and Rabbel II (r. AD 70–106) there was a reaction against the Hellenising style (as representative of the expansionist intentions of Rome?) and a return to aniconic decor (Wenning and Hübner, 'Nabatäische Büstenreliefs', 161, n. 25).

[25] Patrich argues that there was a religious prohibition against graven images in Nabataean culture, but the preference for non-figural cult statues need not have been as formal as that, 'Nabataean art' 97–101.

[26] Ward, 'The end of public paganism', 139–147.

[27] Joukowsky, 'Surprises', 294; Renel, 'L'abandon', 351.

[28] Nau, 'Barsauma le Syrien', 187; Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.15.11.

[29] Fiema, 'Military presence in Petra', 276–277.

family.[30] Inscriptions related to the army (*legio III Cyrenaica*, stationed at Bostra) were found in the *temenos*.[31] An explanation for the abandonment of the Qasr al-Bint temple complex may thus be sought first in the suppression of cults of the Nabataean elites, and the loss of relevance of the Roman cult of the emperor because of the forbidding of sacrifices and other aspects of pagan cult throughout the fourth century and the framing of the divine aspect of the emperor by Christian notions.[32]

On the other hand, mountain-top sites such as Jabal Hārūn or Khirbet et-Tannūr with their temple structures (in Khirbet et-Tannūr's case with classicising cult statues) remained in use to the mid-fourth century because they derived their sacred authority from their position in the landscape, unlike the temples in the city centre which were associated with political authority. Khirbet et-Tannūr was abandoned after 363 – this is because the associated settlement of Khirbet edh-Dharīh was abandoned at that time as well. Petra, however, remained inhabited, and there is evidence of sporadic worship at Jabal Hārūn up to the construction of the church and monastery in the mid-fifth century, but no evidence of effort to rebuild the pagan structures, either in the city or the suburbs, after 363.

While it is not unusual to see pagan temples going out of use in the fourth century, the specificity which the 363 destruction level provides for dating the abandonment in the case of Petra is unusual. Although the process was inexorable throughout the fourth century, pagan sacrifices were not officially outlawed until 391, and until the end of the fourth century temples could only be dismantled under express imperial orders.[33] Furthermore, lack of direct evidence for ritual activity in the main temples at Petra is at odds with what we read about the persistence of paganism in written sources. It is possible that there was a lack of resources for repairs, as civic structures in the city centre were similarly affected, including water management. It is also possible that practices were taking place in ways and places that do not leave an obviously datable archaeological trace, *e.g.* at high places like Jabal al-Matbah, where no stratigraphic deposition survives, or at Jabal Hārūn, where most datable material was tidied away prior to the construction of the church complex. Nevertheless, although the archaeological evidence at Jabal Hārūn is diffuse, scattered remains do indicate that the site continued in use as a ritual site after the 363 earthquake.[34] Whether those participating in the ritual activity were pagans or Christians is unclear. According to written sources, Christians had already staked a claim to Jabal Hārūn by the late third century, yet paganism also continued, we presume, at 'high place'

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[30] A small temple excavated near the 'Great Temple' may also have been associated with the imperial cult. Reid, *Small Temple*, but see Schmid, 'Review of *The Small Temple*' on the quality of the evidence.

[31] Zayadine, 'L'exèdre du téménos du Qasr Al-Bint'; Fiema, 'Military presence in Petra', 278.

[32] Price, 'Imperial cult', 510. See also Bowersock, 'Polytheism and monotheism', 7.

[33] Forbidding of sacrifices: *Codex Theodosianus*, 16.10.10. See Caseau, 'Sacred landscapes', 29–31 on the process of desacralisation of temples throughout the fourth century.

[34] This evidence includes ceramics and glass, and an olive pit carbon dated to AD 390 (±45), Lahelma *et al.*, 'Western Building Area', 34–36.

sites including Jabal Hārūn. The excavators interpret the evidence as indicative of co-existence rather than conflict or radical change.[35]

Some practices may also have been relegated from public to private spaces. This is perhaps what is occurring at Qasr al-Bint in the late fourth century. Following the abandonment of the main temple, a set of rooms was built against the second century monument to the imperial family.[36] The assemblages of these rooms suggest a domestic use and a bone-working workshop. However, in the basement of the domestic building were several betyls and lamps usually found in religious contexts. The excavators describe the space as 'une autel domestique', and it is reflective of very different practice from the public ritual in the temple in previous centuries, perhaps even an example of 'cryptopaganism', with rites being carried out in secret.[37] The building was deliberately destroyed: the betyls were knocked over, the lamps smashed and scattered, and the building was set on fire. The excavators associate this with the early fifth century and end of paganism described in a fifth century saint's life.

The literary sources of the fourth and fifth centuries agree that paganism was still vigorous in Petra. Eusebius of Caesarea writing in the early fourth century notes the persistence of pagan practices in Petra ('full of superstitious men steeped in diabolical error'), although he also mentions that churches had been built there.[38] By 343 at the latest Petra was an episcopal see.[39] However, the liturgical spaces associated with the third and fourth century churches in Petra have not been identified. Sozomen, writing of events that took place around AD 383, mentions Petra among the cities of Arabia, Palestine and Phoenicia that zealously fought to preserve their temples.[40] Given the contemporaneous existence of an official Christian community and an active pagan one, it is sometimes regarded as inevitable that there should have been religious conflict between Christians and pagans in Petra.[41] However, the conflict is mainly to be found with the views expressed by the Christian authors of the texts, and there is very little evidence for conflict among the inhabitants of Petra. In fact, some of the practices described as abhorrent by Christian hardliners may represent hybrid practices, a way in which new converts to Christianity were able to conceptualise their new religion through remembering older traditions. The texts suggest the underlying pragmatism and flexibility to the function of religion and the identity of deities already observed in Nabataean times may have extended to the arrival of Christianity.

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[35] Lahelma *et al.*, 'Western Building Area', 34; Fiema, 'Reinventing the sacred', 33–34; Fiema, 'The Jabal Hārūn site', 548.

[36] Renel, 'L'abandon', 353–357.

[37] Fowden, 'Religious communities', 87.

[38] Eusebius, *Commentarium in Isaiam*, 2.23, 42.11.

[39] Bishop Asterius of Petra is recorded as being present at the Council of Serdica. Schick, 'Ecclesiastical History', 1.

[40] Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 7.15.11, 'προθύμως ὑπερμάχοντο', although this need not mean literal violence.

[41] *E.g.,* Fiema, 'Military presence in Petra', 280; for a more harmonious interpretation, see Bowersock, 'Polytheism and monotheism'.

Some indication of practices among both pagans and Christians in Petra comes from a late fourth century compendium of superstitions and heresies, the *Panarion*, compiled by the staunchly orthodox Epiphanius of Salamis. The first deals with the worship of the virgin Kore at Alexandria, Petra and Elusa. In Petra, Epiphanius says, Kore is worshipped as a virgin called Chaamou, who is the mother of the chief god, Dusares (born on the winter solstice).[42] Epiphanius interprets this as a deliberate aping of the Christian belief of the virgin birth of Jesus, in order to sow confusion. However, modern scholars think that rather than being an innovation inspired by Christianity, the Chaamou legend instead reflects an older tradition of pre-Islamic Arabia.[43] Elements of the Christian story were thus not necessarily unfamiliar to the citizens of Petra, or at odds with their beliefs. The timing of the festival, and Epiphanius' fear that Christians in Petra were unable to identify legitimate Christian practice from pagan, suggests a fluidity of the boundaries.

Epiphanius's second objection is a complaint against the Christian population of Petra. Epiphanius accuses them of being deceived or confused ('ἐφαντασίασε') into making an image of Moses and worshipping it.[44] For the vehemently iconophobic Epiphanius this represents a deviation from Christian orthodoxy bordering on heresy. But it is also possible to see in this practice an attempt at the fusion of earlier pagan beliefs in which physical representations of gods (whether iconic or aniconic) were worshipped. In both of the episodes, in the shadow of Epiphanius's condemnation we can observe traces of an attempt to merge elements of the Christian biblical story with remembered pagan practices, a way of coping with novelty by anchoring it in the familiar.

The story that describes the eventual conversion of the city to Christianity is one that reflects a pragmatic approach to religion, rather than deeply held dogmatism. In the fifth-century *Life of Barsauma the Syrian*, a pugnacious character and avid destroyer of synagogues and temples, Barsauma, arrived at Petra and the city gates were shut against him. The city had been suffering from drought for four years. Barsauma promised that rains would come; they duly came in a torrent which destroyed the city walls. The pagan priests converted to Christianity.[45] It is no surprise that rainfall and water should play such an important part in how Petra's conversion to Christianity was remembered. The main purpose of Nabataean religion seems to have been the seasonal propitiation of the gods to ensure that the rains fell and the crops grew. To embrace the divinity that could provide drought-ending rain, to me, is less of a signal of a radical cultural shift, and more evidence of the flexibility and inherent pragmatism of the belief system already evident in the first century BC. It

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[42] Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 49.22.11.

[43] Epiphanius is not entirely reliable for concrete details; he is after all writing a work of Christian apologetic, not ethnography. He may have included cults that were no longer actively worshipped, or massaged the details to suit his rhetorical ends. On the historicity of Chaamou, see Wenning, 'Great Goddesses', 514.

[44] Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 55.1.9.

[45] Nau, 'Barsauma Le Syrien', 187. This episode is dated by Nau to between 419 and 422.

is interesting to note that these elements, particularly those related to rainfall, are elements of folk religious practice in the Petra area to this day.[46]

The textual sources seem to suggest co-existence between pagans and Christians in Petra during the fourth century. What of the archaeological evidence? We have already seen that there is no evidence for temple rebuilding after the 363 earthquake. However, there is no firm evidence of church building until the mid-fifth century, or tentative evidence from before the late fourth.[47] It is possible that Christians had already been using the disused tombs for worship, and the official consecration of the Urn Tomb in 446 reflects this practice. Cross graffiti have been found at other tomb monuments in Petra, like at ed-Deir, possible evidence of the use of the space for congregational worship, or of hermits living in the caves.[48]

There is some deliberate damage to Hellenised figural sculpture from the temples and tombs in Petra. This iconoclasm is suggestive of religious conflict, but the damage is difficult to date. In other parts of the empire, Christians carried out a programme of desecration on statues, often out of fear of demons or supernatural powers.[49] For the specific case of Petra, however, the argument that the damage to sculpture dates to conflict between pagans and Christians is the weakest in terms of chronology. The damage could date from earlier, as a reaction by the Nabataeans against the introduction of anthropomorphic representations of gods, which led to the abandonment of the temples as places of worship.[50] However, many of the defaced busts lie above the 363 destruction level (with intact ones below), so the damage is unlikely to date from before that date.[51] Figural busts from friezes of Nabataean buildings of the first and second centuries were reused as ordinary building blocks in the Petra Church. The faces are very worn and they were in the uppermost reaches of the walls where they would not have been visible. A few busts were deliberately defaced, but these were located in the topmost level of the tumble and were likely

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[46] See Lahelma and Fiema, 'From goddess to prophet'; Miettunen, *Our Ancestors Were Bedouin*, 145–146.

[47] The excavators of the so-called Ridge Church (the northernmost of three churches on the north ridge above the monumental city centre) prefer an early date 'not long after the earthquake of 363' for its construction, Bikai, 'Churches of Byzantine Petra', 271. This dating is predicated on the discovery of a lamp in a sealed deposit in the structural support for the north wall of the North Ridge. This lamp is dated to 'the late 4th century', Bikai and Perry, 'Petra North Ridge Tombs', 59. While the dating cannot be narrowed down, it is not impossible that the Ridge Church could have been built before the Urn Tomb conversion and the construction of the other churches on the north ridge in the mid-5th century.

[48] Schick, 'Ecclesiastical History', 5.

[49] On this phenomenon, see Kristensen, *Making and Breaking the Gods.*

[50] For summary of the arguments, see McKenzie, 'Iconoclasm', 278–279; Patrich, 'Nabataean art'; Wenning and Hübner, 'Nabatäische Büstenreliefs', 161, n. 25.

[51] The chronology at Petra and corroborated by evidence at Khirbet et-Tannūr shows that objects which were buried during the 363 earthquake were not subjected to iconoclastic damage, which is a point in favour of a later date for the damage. McKenzie prefers a date in the 8th and 9th century, given the apparent ideological similarities between the way figures were targeted in the damage to sculpture and to Byzantine mosaic pavements. McKenzie, 'Iconoclasm', 273–279, 281–287.

defaced after the building collapsed.[52] It is therefore likely that the damage is part of the eighth and ninth century iconoclast movements that saw alterations to living figures in church mosaics throughout the region (including at Jabal Hārūn).[53] A further argument against dating the iconoclasm to the period of Christianisation, the pavement of the south aisle of the Petra Church, dating to the mid-sixth century, contains classicising personifications of the seasons, and of Oceanus, which would seem unusual if there had been a violent reaction against similar imagery by Petra's Christians a generation or so before.[54]

The destruction of the basement betyl room at Qasr al-Bint is dated by coin evidence to the period of the late fourth/early fifth century. The excavators assume that its end was violent because of the discovery of several fragments of weapons (*e.g.*, a dagger, an arrowhead, a piece of a composite bow), and explicitly link this to the events mentioned in the *Life of Barsauma*.[55] However, the *Life* mentions no deliberate destruction of pagan buildings in Petra – which the author presumably would have mentioned had it actually occurred, as it fits in with Barsauma's *modus operandi* elsewhere in Palestine and would have suited the author's hagiographic agenda.[56] The destruction of the room could have been carried out in violence by Christians, or it could be a deliberate obliteration or de-consecration ritual carried out by pagans themselves as part of their conversion process.

A process of de-consecration of pagan space is evident at Jabal Hārūn. When the Nabataean structures were incorporated into the Christian monastery in the mid-fifth century, the room that may have been the pagan sanctuary had been deliberately backfilled with even rows of stone slabs and ashlars and never reused.[57] This may have been a deliberate act by the new Christian occupants to de-sacralise the formerly pagan sacred space, or it may have been a de-consecration by the pagans. The other rooms of the old Nabataean structure were used for food production, and as the domestic quarters where the monks lived and ate.

The fourth century in Petra is thus marked by the devastation of the 363 earthquake, a hiatus in public building including religious buildings, and a period of pagan and Christian co-existence, culminating (as elsewhere in the empire) in the fifth century with the triumph of Christianity and the construction of Christian monuments. Our evidence for Christianity in Petra in the fifth century once again foregrounds the elite and the authorities. Could Christianity have been another top-down imposition on the people of Petra by outside authorities and local elites seeking privileges? The earliest confirmed date of a space for celebrating the Christian liturgy

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[52] Roche, 'Figurines', 355–356.

[53] Hamarneh and Hinkkanen, 'Mosaic', 256–259.

[54] Waliszewski, 'Mosaics', 247–259.

[55] Renel, 'L'abandon', 356–358.

[56] Nau, 'Barsauma Le Syrien', 187. On the reliability of the *Life of Barsauma* as a historical source, see Hahn, 'Conclusion'. The consensus is that the text has a core of historical truth, embellished to support certain theological points.

[57] Lahelma *et al.*, 'Western Building Area', 39.

Figure 8.6. Urn Tomb with carved apse and niches. Painted inscription inset left; exterior façade inset right (Marlena Whiting).

resulted from the conversion of one of the monumental so-called Royal Tombs, the Urn Tomb, into a church in 446.[58] An apse and two side niches were carved into the back wall of the tomb (Fig. 8.6). A painted inscription to the left of the left-hand niche records the work, providing the date. The inscription also mentions that the consecration of the space was overseen by the bishop and a deacon, and in the presence of a military unit, the *numerus Tertiodalmatarum*, stationed in or near Petra.[59] The presence of these officials, ecclesiastical and military, is a strong statement of central power and authority. It is possible that the deacon, and even the bishop, could have been members of the elite of Petra, although it was also common in the period for outsiders to be assigned to such posts. The *numerus* on the other hand was likely composed entirely of foreigners to the city.[60] This *numerus* is not mentioned

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[58] The Urn Tomb was likely originally built in the 1st century AD. McKenzie, *The Architecture of Petra*, 144–147.

[59] An inscription to the left of the apse provides the date and the names of the bishop and deacon who oversaw the construction work. IGLS 21.4 = Sartre, *Inscriptions de la Jordanie* IV, 81–84, n. 50. ᾽Επὶ τοῦ ὁσιοτάτου/ ᾽Ιάσονος ἐπισκό/που Θ(εο)ῦ χάριτι ἠγι/άσθη ὁ τοπὸς τῇ/ εʹ Λώου ἔ(τους) τμαʹ/ παρόντος νουμέ/ρου τῶν γενναιο/ τάτων [Τερτιοδαλμα]/τ[ῶ]ν καὶ ᾽Ιουλιανοῦ δι/ακόνου ΑΠ.ΝΙΑΣ +/ Χ[ρ] (ιστοῦ) σώζοντ[ος--]' = 'In the time of the most holy bishop Jason, by the grace of God, this place was consecrated on the fifth of the month of Loos, the year 341 [= 24 July, 446], the *numerus* of the most valiant *Tertiodalmatarum* being present, and Julianos the deacon ... Christ, Saviour'; Isaac, 'The army', 138–139; Fiema, 'Military presence in the countryside', 133.

[60] On the social origins of bishops and clergy in late Antiquity, see Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 183–207. A *numerus* was a unit of the *limitanei*, or frontier forces, whose troops were recruited from the province (Palaestina

in the *Notitia Dignitatum* of *c*. 400, nor is any military detachment mentioned in the city itself in that period.[61] Were the troops brought in to quell possible unrest or to set the imperial seal of approval on the consecration?

Five years after the consecration of the Urn Tomb church, in 451, Petra was elevated to the status of metropolitan bishopric. The Petra Church and the Blue Chapel on the north ridge were constructed around the mid-fifth century, and very likely were built to celebrate the city's new status; the Blue Chapel might have been part of the episcopal palace.[62]

Instead of converting the remains of the temples into churches, the inhabitants of Petra built new churches on a ridge to the north of the wadi bottom where the temples had been (Fig. 8.7). The ecclesiastical buildings on the north ridge were built over earlier Nabataean Roman structures, including some shaft tombs of the first century. The other buildings have been interpreted as part of a residential quarter, although a military function (lookout point and barracks) has also been suggested for the late Roman period.[63] The old temples seem to have been largely ignored or used as a quarry of building stone. On the one hand, ignoring abandoned temple buildings was fairly common among Christianised populations, often out of superstition that temples were inhabited by demons. Direct conversion of temple buildings into churches is rare until the sixth century.[64] A law of 397 permitted the demolishing of temples for building materials; recovery of building material seems to have occurred at Qasr al-Bint in the fifth century and lime burning and dumping activities seem to have been carried out in the lower *temenos* of the 'Great Temple' in the fifth and sixth centuries.[65] At the Petra Church, stone blocks from various earlier buildings were reused, including some with figural sculpture as noted above. The majority was not intended for display, with the exception of decorated blocks used in the door jambs of the main entrance.[66] The main jambs were decorated with quadrants of delicate floral reliefs, whose layout looks vaguely cruciform, thus they were likely selected for their Christian interpretation rather than any association with the past (Fig. 8.8). These floral reliefs were stacked on a relief of garlanded busts representing a Dionysiac procession or theatrical masks. The faces were extremely worn already in the fifth century, and the blocks were probably incorporated without any memory of their original meaning.[67]

The choice to relocate the religious focus of the city to the north ridge can be interpreted symbolically as part of structuring a new community identity. However,

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I–III), but not necessarily the city itself. Isaac, *Limits*, 206–207.
[61] Fiema, 'Military presence in Petra', 281.
[62] Bikai, 'Churches of Byzantine Petra', 272–273; Fiema, 'Appendix I', 437.
[63] Fiema, 'Appendix I', 437; military: Bikai, 'North Ridge Project', 59, 61.
[64] Caseau, 'Sacred landscapes', 32–33. The major exceptions are the Constantinian churches *e.g.,* at Jerusalem and at Mamre. On demons inhabiting temples and cult statues, see pp. 33–34.
[65] *Codex Theodosianus*, 15.1.36; Fiema, 'Reassessment' 113–114; Renel, 'L'abandon', 351.
[66] Roche, 'Figurines', 357.
[67] Roche, 'Figurines', 357.

Figure 8.7. View of Petra monumental city centre looking west. The standing remains of Qasr al-Bint are visible on the left; the white canopy marks the location of the Petra Church (Marlena Whiting).

the relocation also makes practical sense in light of the fact that the city's flood defences seem to have been damaged in the 363 earthquake and never repaired, leaving the Wādī Mūsā valley where the classical city centre lay vulnerable to flash floods.[68] Other natural disasters besides the 363 earthquake befell Petra, including further earthquakes and possibly a flood in the late fourth/early fifth century which may have deposited large amounts of sediment in the wadi bottom, where the temples were located.[69] This is a likely explanation for why the Christian buildings of the fifth century, like the Petra Church, Ridge Church and Blue Chapel, are constructed on higher ground. Other monuments in the city centre, like the nymphaeum, were likewise not repaired after 363. The temples gradually became an industrial zone, although commercial activity continued in the shops on the colonnaded street until the mid-seventh century.[70] Although Petra had considerable status as *metropolis* and as provincial capital of Palaestina Tertia, the revenue from the long-distance trade that had fuelled its building programme in the first centuries BC/AD seems to have dried up, and funds for an extensive programme of renewal of urban amenities might not have been available, corresponding also to a cultural shift towards funding works of Christian euergetism.[71] Economic activities in late antiquity seem to have relied on agriculture in the immediate hinterland.[72]

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[68] Fiema, 'Reassessment', 114.
[69] Paradise, 'Great Flood'.
[70] Fiema, 'Reassessment', 113.
[71] Fiema, 'Reassessment', 117.
[72] Kouki, *Hinterland of a City*, 129–130. Monastery as landowner: Kouki, *Hinterland of a City*, 132–133.

Within this agrarian economy, the Church and monasteries were important landowners. They were also recipients of patronage from urban elites. This is clear at Jabal Hārūn. The monastery ('the house of our Lord High Priest Aaron') is mentioned as the beneficiary of the will of Petra notable, Obodianos, whose family is also mentioned in an inscription at the site.[73] The effect of this wealth and patronage is evident in the building of the monastery complex in the mid-fifth century. The church, chapel and north and south courtyards were constructed at the same time, executed as part of a unified grand plan for a large pilgrim centre. The church was a three-aisled basilica, similar in scale to the cathedral of Petra, built around the same time.[74] There was also a baptismal chapel, so the complex from the start was intended to provide services for more than just the monastic community.

Figure 8.8. Reused blocks in the door jambs of the Petra Church (Sean Leatherbury/Manar al-Athar).

Two large courtyards were built, one to the north intended as a pilgrim hostel, and a courtyard to the south identified as additional rooms of the monastery (Fig. 8.9a), in addition to the western part of the complex which reused the Nabataean structures.

The grand scale of the initial Byzantine construction stands in contrast to its subsequent state (Fig. 8.9b). The complex, especially the church and chapel, was severely damaged by fire in the mid- to late sixth century. The church and chapel were rebuilt, but on a smaller scale. The west end of the church was converted into an open-air atrium, but the interior space of the basilica was effectively halved.[75] The main gate to the north courtyard was blocked, cutting off the obvious point of access for pilgrims.[76] However, a figural mosaic pavement was commissioned for the exo-narthex to the west of the atrium, which shows the continued patronage for embellishing the sanctuary. Further damage to the church continued as a result of earthquakes, and it was subject to increasingly inelegant repairs. The mosaic sustained iconoclastic damage to the human and animal figures in the early to mid-eighth century, but this

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[73] *P.Petra*, 5.55 (dated AD 573); Frösén and Fiema, 'Greek inscriptions', 387–389.

[74] Mikkola *et al.*, 'The church and the chapel', 104.

[75] Mikkola *et al.*, 'The church and the chapel', 118–129.

[76] The only access to the complex was a door in the south courtyard. The public and private areas of the monastery may have been reversed, with the north courtyard serving as quarters for the monks. Whiting, 'Monastery hostels', 110.
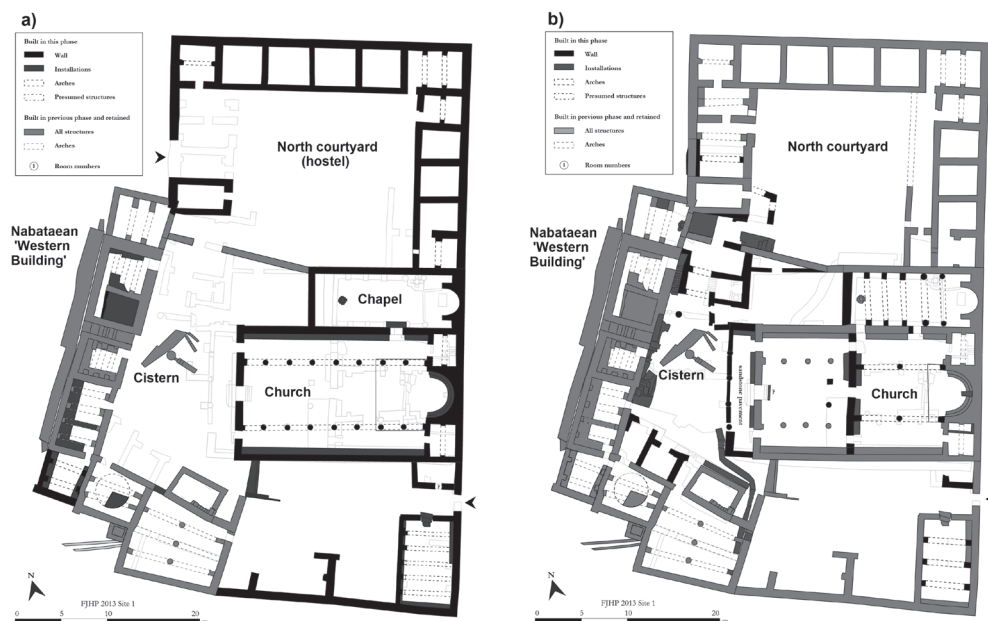
Figure 8.9. Plan of the monastery complex at Jabal Hārūn in the fifth century (a) and the ninth century (b) (Finnish Jabal Harun Project).

was done in a careful way to retain the mosaic as part of the church.[77] The church was finally abandoned for liturgical purposes in the mid-eighth century (possibly following the earthquake of 749, which may also have destroyed the Petra Church), but the chapel continued to serve until the ninth century, while the church and other areas of the complex were used for domestic purposes and small-scale production. By the tenth century the complex was no longer being repaired, and the only activity appears to relate to the salvaging of building materials. Literary sources by Crusaders under Baldwin I mention the presence of monks at Jabal Hārūn in 1100, and a Christian pilgrim travelling to Sinai in 1217 observed a church on the summit of Jabal Hārūn and said there were two Greek monks living there.[78] The record of the visit to the burial place of Aaron by the Mamluk Sultan Baibars in 1276 makes no mention of any church, or monks, at the site.[79] This process of gradual contraction is mirrored in the Petra city centre, too, although new archaeological discoveries continue to alter the picture. Although reduced, there is evidence of continuous settlement in Petra itself

[77] Hamarneh and Hinkkanen, 'Mosaic', 249–255.

[78] Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, 2.5.9; Thetmar, *Iter ad Terram Sanctam*, 14–15; Frösén and Miettunen, 'Literature, myth and legend', 13–14.

[79] Al-Nuwayri, *The Aim of the Intelligent in the Art of Letters* (Arabic text and English translation published in Zayadine 'Caravan Routes', 172–173); Frösén and Miettunen, 'Literature, myth and legend', 15.

through the Islamic period, and stronger evidence at settlements that once were part of Petra's hinterland, like the town of Wādī Mūsā, or Bayda.[80]

The longevity of the settlements around Petra and the monastery at Jabal Hārūn contradicts the narrative of decline and abandonment following the 363 earthquake, and that Christianity never gained a strong footing in the area. Instead, the citizens of Petra had many generations to adapt and grow accustomed to Christian beliefs. During this time the outward appearance of the city and the attitude towards its monuments changed considerably, but the relationship with the environment, especially the religiously-charged landscape, endured in altered, but nonetheless still recognisable, forms. This was achieved not just through religious practices, but by embedding Petra in a larger narrative, that of the Christian oikumene.

Petra and the Holy Land

As we have seen, the way that the Christians of Petra engaged with the ancient city had very little to do with its Nabataean monumental remains, which were generally not appropriated, except as a source of building material. Instead, Petra's Christian identity came from linking it with universal traditions and beliefs. The bishops of Petra are mostly known to have been supporters of orthodoxy and loyal to Constantinople.[81] With regard to the cult of saints and martyrs, the available evidence also indicates that Petra was integrated into the wider network of cults. The Petra Church was dedicated to the Mother of God, whose cult was widespread following the Council of Ephesus in 431.[82] No local martyrs are known, but the veneration of a martyr from Asia Minor is attested. The will of Obodianos mentions a hospital (*xeneon*) of the 'saint and triumphant martyr Kyrikos' who should likely be identified with Kyrikos the child martyr of Tarsus in Asia Minor, whose cult is widely attested in Syria, Palestine and Egypt.[83] Kyrikos seems to have been an important figure in sixth-century Petra, in addition to the hospital mentioned in Obodianos' will, there is also a chapel to the martyr in the nearby village of Zadakathon (Sadaqa), and the abbot of the monastery of Aaron shares a name with the martyr.[84]

On the one hand, Petra's Christian identity relied on adopting general elements of universal Christianity, like veneration of the Virgin Mary and cult of martyrs. On the other hand, Petra itself was incorporated into the Christian narrative by associating its landscape with events in the Old Testament, specifically the Exodus. This association marks a purposeful break with the Hellenism of the recent past. Invoking stories set in the time before the Nabataeans, in the era of the Edomites, served to express the primacy of Christians' claim on the landscape as pre-dating that of the Nabataean

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[80] Sinibaldi, 'Settlement', 92, 96.

[81] Schick, 'Ecclesiastical History', 2.

[82] The Petra Papyri mention the dedication of the church known as the Petra Church to 'Our [blessed and holy] Lady, [the most glorious God-bearer (Theotokos)] and ever-virgin [Mary]', *P.Petra* 5.55, line 52.

[83] Cult of Saints, Record E03663; Record S00007; Frösén 'Petra Papyri', 22.

[84] *P.Petra* 4.39; *P.Petra* 5.55.

pagans, and, by extension, the Hellenistic city. The *Onomastikon* was a gazetteer of biblical places compiled in Greek by Eusebius of Caesarea *c.* AD 295 and translated and annotated by Jerome in Latin in the later fourth century. This text associates two biblical events with the city of Petra, and with a mountain identified as Mount Hor (likely Jabal Hārūn).

Eusebius of Caesarea gives the following entry for Mount Hor: 'Or. The mountain on which Aaron died near the city of Petra, on which even until today is shown the rock [from which water] flowed by Moses'.[85] Jerome, in the *Liber locorum* (known also as *De situ*), some seventy or eighty years later, adopts the same view: 'Or. The mountain on which Aaron died, near the city of Petra, where even until today the stone is shown which Moses struck and gave water to the people'.[86] The association of Petra and the nearby mountain with the death and burial of Aaron at Mount Hor stems from Jewish tradition, our first recorded reference is in the *Jewish Antiquities* by Flavius Josephus, written in the first century AD.[87]

We can see that Eusebius has conflated two biblical events, the striking of the rock and the death of Aaron. Or, rather, his informants were shown a site that conflated the two, which Eusebius appears to accept, as does Jerome. The striking of the rock is described in Numbers 20:10–11, at Meribah. The Israelites then travelled to Kadesh in Edom, where Aaron died on the borders of Edom (Numbers 20:20–29).

Situating the striking of the rock at Mount Hor where Aaron died contradicts the biblical account, but this does not seem to have posed an obstacle for the two Church fathers in accepting local legend as definitive. The reference 'even until today' ('ἐν ᾧ **καὶ εἰς ἔτι νῦν** δείκνυται'; 'ubi **usque ad praesentem diem** ostenditur') is significant. It suggests that at the end of the third century, when Eusebius was gathering his information, there was already a Christian community in Petra, and the site was being venerated for its biblical associations. As we have seen, Petra was far from thoroughly Christianised at this time, drawing the criticism of Eusebius himself for being a place of pagan rites.[88] This indicates the importance of local stories about specific places, and associations made with the broader, universal Christian themes and narrative as key elements in shaping the religious identity of the Christian community, to differentiate themselves in a still strongly pagan Petra.

It is very likely that this association stems from local legend (possibly informed by Jewish tradition), because Petra is not the only place to claim to be the site of where Moses struck the water from the rock. In the pilgrim accounts and itineraries of the early Byzantine period we find at least four other sites mentioned. Egeria (fl. *c.* 381–384) writes that she is shown the place near Livias: 'the water that flows from

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[85] Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, '"Ὤρ. ὄρος ἐν ᾧ τελευτᾷ Ἀαρὼν πλησίον Πέτρας πόλεως, ἐν ᾧ καὶ εἰς ἔτι νῦν δείκνυται ἡ ἐπὶ Μωϋσέως ῥεύσασα πέτρα.'

[86] Jerome, *De situ*, 'Or mons in quo mortuus est Aaron, iuxta civitatem Petram, ubi usque ad praesentem diem ostenditur rupes qua percussa Moyses aquas populo dedit.'

[87] Josephus, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 4.82–83. See discussion in Frösén and Miettunen, 'Literature, myth and legend', 10–11.

[88] Eusebius, *Commentarium in Isaiam*, 2.23, 42.11.

the rock, which Moses gave to the children of Israel when they were thirsty'.[89] The pilgrim itinerary of Theodosius (dating to the first half of the sixth century) also mentions 'This Livias is where Moses struck the rock with his staff, and the water flowed'.[90] Two other authors place the site in Sinai. The Piacenza Pilgrim, writing around 570, mentions 'going on through the desert [southwards] we arrived on the eighth day at the place where Moses brought water out of the rock'.[91] Epiphanius the Monk (seventh century), places the event at Raitho, which is on the west coast of the Sinai Peninsula.[92]

The profusion of sites related to the striking of the water from the rock can partly, but not wholly, be accounted for by the fact that there are two such episodes in the Old Testament. The first account is Exodus 17:1–7. The sites mentioned in Sinai may possibly have been associated with this first episode. The second episode (Numbers 20:10–11), occurs after the death of Miriam and before the death of Aaron. In this episode Moses and Aaron disobey God's instructions, and as a direct result are denied access to the Holy Land. In the pilgrim imaginary of late antiquity it made sense to associate this episode with the death and burial of Aaron, and with the view of the Promised Land and the death of Moses, as Egeria does.

It is also important to consider, from the pilgrim's point of view, what interpretation was given to the Old Testament events in later popular belief. In an exegesis on the Exodus in 1 Corinthians 10:4, the apostle Paul mentions the 'rock which followed them, which was Christ'. Christological interpretation aside, the idea that the rock followed the Israelites in the desert appears to derive from Jewish interpretation of the Exodus. The earliest mention is in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* of the mid- to late first century (thus roughly contemporary with Paul), of a 'well which followed them'.[93] The story becomes more elaborate over the course of late antiquity in Jewish *midrash* and folklore: the well or rock was the divine gift given to Miriam, and it followed the Israelites providing them with water whenever they needed it. Upon her death it dried up, causing Moses to strike it to make it pour water, and inspiring God's wrath. The earliest attestation of the travelling rock associated with Miriam dates to AD 225.[94] By the fifth century, the story circulated in Jewish tradition that the rock, Miriam's Well, had come to rest in Lake Tiberias and could be seen there, and

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[89] Egeria, *Itinerarium*, 10.8–9, 'Would you like to see the water that flows from the rock, which Moses gave to the children of Israel when they were thirsty? You can if you have the energy to turn off the road at about the sixth milestone.'

[90] Theodosius, *De situ Terrae Sanctae*, 19, '… and from that place flows a large stream which waters the whole of Livias'.

[91] Antoninus Placentinus, *Itinerarium*, 'A day's journey from there, we came to Horeb…', 37 – this would place it north, possibly north-east of Mt Sinai (Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, 311, identifies Horeb with Jabal ed-Deir, east of Jabal Musa).

[92] Epiphanius Hagiopolita, *Itinerarium*, 20, 'And leaving there he [Moses] went on to Raithu. There the seven hundred fathers were slaughtered by the barbarians. In that place is the cliff of rock which Moses struck, and water flowed forth'.

[93] Pseudo-Philo, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, 10.7.

[94] See Sherman, *A Well in Search of an Owner*, 58, Table III-A-2.

in later rabbinical sources it was a site of healing. These stories were circulating in late antique Palestine and had clearly influenced Paul's interpretation of Exodus, as well as other early Christian authors, like Tertullian, Augustine and even Eusebius.[95] What were Christian pilgrims' preconceived beliefs about the rock? Would they have expected to see the living rock pouring forth water, as in the natural phenomenon of groundwater seeping through cracks in crystalline rocks, or the perennially full cistern at Jabal Hārūn?[96] Or would they have expected to see a smaller boulder, capable of rolling through the desert?

Strict accuracy to the Scripture does not seem to have been a crucial concern for establishing a site as a *locus sanctus*.[97] Expediency and a superficial similarity to the places described in the Bible were often enough to ensure a site's popularity and sanctity: to show pilgrims something that fit with their expectations from reading the Bible.[98] Thus we see that, despite the authority of Eusebius and Jerome, their Mount Hor which may have been Jabal Hārūn, was not universally accepted as the 'official' site of the striking of the rock. These other locations, even though they are not endorsed by the authority of Eusebius and Jerome, nonetheless make sense in light of the popular pilgrim routes. Sites throughout Sinai are strongly linked with the events of the Exodus, culminating in the theophany of the Burning Bush and the handing down of the Ten Commandments. Sinai was a very popular pilgrimage destination, especially among pilgrims doing a larger tour of the Holy Land and Egypt. Livias, on the other hand, is part of an extended itinerary that goes from Jerusalem to Jericho and the Jordan River. Some pilgrims would cross the Jordan and visit sites, like the memorial of Moses at Mount Nebo, or even sites on the Dead Sea, so it makes sense to incorporate the striking of the rock into sites related to the life of Moses.

Jabal Hārūn and Petra were at a disadvantage in this regard, as they were not located near other popular sites or on well-travelled routes. By the Byzantine period the Via Nova Traiana, the second-century route between the Red Sea at Aila and Bostra in southern Syria, was no longer serving as an interregional highway and had been superseded by routes that connected the Red Sea and the Mediterranean across the Negev Desert (traversed by many of our pilgrims).[99] It is clear from the discovery of watchtowers and road structures that communication routes around Petra and Jabal

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[95] *E.g.,* Tertullian, *De patientia*, 5; Eusebius, *Commentarium in Isaiam*, 2.23.42.11 considers all of the city of Petra to be the rock that is Christ.

[96] Hydrogeologist Issar believes the biblical story may reflect the practice still carried out among modern Bedouin of Sinai, of extracting water from the rock by identifying fractures in the crystalline rock (*e.g.,* granite) filled with softer material, and drilling or striking the softer material until the water seeps through. Issar, *Strike the Rock*, 121–123.

[97] For example, the site celebrated in the Byzantine period as the village of Emmaus where Christ met incognito with his disciples was the city of Nicopolis, a completely different location but conveniently located along one of the main routes to the coast from Jerusalem.

[98] This certainly fits Jabal Hārūn: the distinctive shape of the mountain with its plateau and summit is an enticing visual match for the biblical name Hor ha-hor which means (amongst other things) a mountain atop a mountain.

[99] Fiema, 'Tuwaneh'.

Hārūn were being well maintained in the Nabataean-Roman period, and partly in the late Roman period. There is less evidence for the Byzantine period, which ties in with the wider picture,[100] and fits with the declining role of Petra as a market for long-distance trade. From the later sixth century, the majority of pilgrim traffic to Sinai appears to have gone through the Negev, west of the Wādī ʿAraba. If the passes from the Wādī ʿAraba to Jabal Hārūn were not being maintained, this may have discouraged all but the most dedicated of pilgrims from incorporating Jabal Hārūn into their pilgrimage itineraries.[101] The journey to Petra alone would entail a detour of two to three days from the main pilgrim routes, let alone a further day's excursion to the mountain and back. The site is not mentioned in any of the surviving pilgrim itineraries or accounts from the fourth to seventh centuries.

The failure of the site to attract as many pilgrims as the original builders and patrons may have hoped for is evident in the changes to the layout of the monastery. The reduction in size of the extensive church and chapel complex, and the repurposing of the hostel space relatively soon after construction might be explained by their being built in the hope of attracting large numbers of pilgrims who never materialised.[102] In later phases a smaller church and reconfigured hostel (maybe in the south-east corner) may have been sufficient.

However, even if the site never successfully attracted large numbers of long-distance pilgrims, it played an important role in the local community. Although reference to the sacred texts of Christianity may originally have been a way for the Christian community to set themselves apart from their pagan neighbours, as more of the population became Christian the emphasis may have changed. The passages from Epiphanius' *Panarion* discussed above may allude to hybrid practices among the inhabitants of Petra that incorporated memories of older pagan rituals into Christian veneration. The recurring theme of water in different religious traditions relating to Jabal Hārūn suggests that the site held an important role in religious rituals relating to ensuring annual rainfall, regardless of religious tradition. Water was an important aspect of Nabataean worship, unsurprising in the desert, as part of the larger reverence of fertility.[103] In addition to the apparent significance of the natural cistern at Jabal Hārūn, other discoveries in the area point to water being a crucial aspect of worship at the site. These include a shrine at the foot of Jabal Hārūn apparently dedicated to Isis, with a rock-carved bust of the goddess at a place where water naturally appears from the rock.[104] In modern folk traditions, local Bedouin around Petra invoke Hārūn – Aaron – along with the figure of the Mother of Rain, to pray for rain.[105] Water also

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[100] Frösén and Miettunen, 'Literature, myth and legend', 11; Ynnilä, 'Ancient routes'.

[101] See Ynnilä, 'Ancient routes', 265 on the routes around Jabal Hārūn in this period. Ben David, 'Ancient routes from Petra'.

[102] Whiting, 'Monastery hostels', 110.

[103] *E.g.,* at Khirbet et-Tannūr, where an inscription mentions a dedication to the goddess of the local spring. McKenzie, 'Architecture and phases', 87–89.

[104] Lindner, *Petra und das Königreich der Nabatäer*, 291–292; Kouki and Silvonen, 'Ritual sites', 309.

[105] Al-Salameen and Falahat, 'Religious practices', 183–184; Miettunen, *Our Ancestors Were Bedouin*, 145–146.

played an important part in the Christian phases of the complex: firstly, of course, the cistern was retained and exposed and in a prominent place of the pilgrimage complex, visible to all. Water is recalled in an inscription found inside the church, which quotes Psalm 23:9 ('The God of glory thunders, the Lord upon many waters').[106]

In addition to providing a sacred focus for local pilgrimage, the monastery was an important factor in the local economy as land-owner and employer. Monasteries and holy sites also could play an important social role as places of social welfare. Healing could be derived from prayer or sacred objects, or through the provision of medical care. At Jabal Hārūn these aspects suggested by a painted inscription from Psalm 91, known from other contexts to be associated *inter alia* with protection from disease.[107] There was also an object found which was interpreted as a reliquary; visitors could obtain a blessing by touching the reliquary and whatever sacred object it might have housed.[108] The water from the cistern may have been thought to have sacred properties. More practical medical care is suggested by the discovery of several copper alloy spatulas which may have been medical implements.[109] The importance of the monastery in the social welfare of the non-monastic community is suggested by the will of Obodianos, where a combined donation is made to the monastery of Aaron and a *xeneon* of Kyrikos.[110] While a *xeneon* could be a pilgrim hostel, by the second half of the sixth century when the will was composed the term had come to mean a medical facility, and should be regarded as a charitable foundation for the care of the city's poor and sick, and those of the surrounding areas.[111] The joint patronage of Obodianos towards the hospital and towards the monastery shows that they played a similar role in the community. Perhaps the monastery of Aaron had its own medical facility, or it administered the *xeneon*, located in Petra. This affords a comparison with another 'pilgrimage' monastery, the monastery of Lot at Deir ʿAin ʿAbata to the east of the Dead Sea. Communal burials, including those of young children, suggest the importance of the monastery to the local community, particularly the inhabitants of the nearby city of Zoara, as a place of care and healing.[112]

The monastery of Aaron survived in use for many centuries. This can be attributed to it being a shrine of local importance to the inhabitants of Petra, rather than a *locus sanctus* of the greater Holy Land. At only a few hours' journey from the city, overnight accommodations would be unnecessary. If the focus of veneration was Aaron, his tomb lay outside the monastery precinct at the summit, where there was

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[106] Frösén *et al.*, 'Greek inscriptions', no. 12, 277–278. The Psalm appears in a variety of contexts in Christian spaces, including related to vases for holy water or ablutions. Water has many symbolic meanings in Christian liturgy, most importantly of baptism, but that does not necessarily preclude a site-specific symbolism.

[107] Frösén *et al.*, 'Greek inscriptions', no. 18, 279–280.

[108] Fiema and Comte, 'Object from locus E1.09'.

[109] Frölich, 'Spatulas'.

[110] *P.Petra* 5.55 line 60.

[111] Miller, *Birth of the Hospital*, 48–49.

[112] Politis, 'Monastery of Aghios Lot', 172, 175.

a chapel. Entry into the monastery by pilgrims and visitors may have been limited, but they still made gifts, bequests and contributed to the wellbeing of the monastery. The local population may well have firmly believed that this was the one true site of the striking of the rock described in Numbers. The recurring elements of water relating to worship at Jabal Hārūn from the Nabataean period to the folk practices of the present day demonstrate how strong local ties are to the site. The successive shrines of different religious traditions situated at Jabal Hārūn demonstrate that the mountain is a resilient element in the definition of the community, regardless of the public cults displayed in the city centre.

Conclusion

The transition of Petra from a Nabataean/Roman metropolis to a Christian city occurred through a new way of remembering spaces and rituals. The great public temples of the Nabataean/Roman period were not rebuilt after the earthquake of 363 and may even have fallen out of use prior to the earthquake. Nevertheless, memories of pagan practices, like the worship of betyls, may possibly have infused Christian veneration. The temples were not converted to Christian use, instead, new church buildings were constructed in the fifth century in a different area of the town. Instead of reference to the recent classical pagan past, Christian Petra structured its identity on imagined memories of place, derived from the universal Christian narrative, specifically the events of Exodus: the striking of the rock and the death of Aaron. Not successful in late antiquity as a long-distance pilgrimage destination, this holy site nonetheless remained active for centuries through support from the local community. The manner in which the local community continues to venerate the site to this day tantalises with the idea of a long cultural memory at work.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 9

'Hunting diligently through the volumes of the Ancients': Frechulf of Lisieux on the first city and the end of innocence

Sam Ottewill-Soulsby

Origins

People have been writing myths about the first city for a very long time. One of the oldest of these is the Babylonian creation myth (*Enūma eliš*) of the late second millennium BC, which presents the god Marduk founding Babylon to be the dwelling of the gods as one of the final stages of his formation of the world from the body of the vanquished goddess Tiamat.[1] Part of the interest in these stories lies in the idea that in the first city the true nature of all subsequent cities can be perceived more clearly. As Augustine wrote in *De Civitate Dei*, the first city was the 'archetype' for all earthly cities to come.[2] This is not an idea restricted to the ancient world. It also influenced the urban historian and sociologist Lewis Mumford when he wrote his celebrated *The City in History* in 1961. Fearing the decline of cities, he identified 'the recovery of the essential activities and values that first were incorporated in the ancient cities … [as] a primary condition for the further development of the city in our time'.[3] Mumford sought to revive the city from the modern malaise he had diagnosed by restoring its original essence.

The same year saw the discovery of the Neolithic settlement of Çatal Höyük in modern Turkey, which was quickly popularised as the world's most ancient city.[4] This new find was quickly taken up by specialists in urban studies as paradigmatic for the beginnings of continuous urbanism. In the words of Jane Jacobs:

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[1] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 1, 3.17, 350–401, 381–382.
[2] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 15.5, 'ut Graeci appellant, ἀρχετύπῳ', 457.
[3] Mumford, *The City in History*, 4, 569.
[4] Mellaart, 'A Neolithic city in Turkey', 94.

> The spark of city economic life is passed on from older cities to younger ... these links of life may extend – perilously tenuous at times but unbroken – ... back to Çatal Hüyük itself and beyond, to the unknown ancestors of Çatal Hüyük.[5]

For Jacobs the site of Çatal Höyük did not just offer evidence of the prehistoric city supporting her case that urbanism predated agriculture, but stood in direct ancestry to all cities in existence today.[6] That the dawn of the city fixed its eternal features was a concept employed for comic effect by the writers of the Flintstones, who presented the eponymous characters' home of Bedrock, 'the first city', as a mirror of 1960s American suburbia.[7]

Important to both Mumford and Jacobs were the urban ideals that they thought defined all cities and which had begun in that most distant past. Prehistoric urbanism in these accounts provided a means of getting at the core of what a city was by stripping away unnecessary layers and complications that later cities accrued. This volume is interested in the way ideas of the city were preserved, but also in the manner that they were adapted and abandoned. Cities are constantly evolving structures, unless they are dead, and that goes for the ideas that animate them as much as for their physical landscapes. Preventing such evolution is one of the best ways to kill them. However, when people reify primeval urbanism they reveal a great deal about their views of the city. In identifying what is essential in the first city, these writers tell us what they think lies at the heart of their own contemporary cities. This intellectual tendency of reading the modern city by its earliest forebears offers a potential avenue for understanding how people in the past viewed the city as a concept through their accounts of the first development of the city.

By focusing on the transition between a state of no-city to one of city, the writers of these aetiological narratives suggest information not just about the way they considered the first cities, but also about their views of the cities of their own time. As this suggests, the memories people have about the origins of cities shape and are shaped by their broader concepts of urbanism. An investigation of these myths provides an opportunity to consider the wider thoughts that people have about the city in general.[8] This is particularly valuable for the early medieval west, which is a period that is notably short on literature theorising about the city. This chapter examines the way in which the first city was addressed in the early medieval Latin world, beginning with Isidore of Seville (d. 636), before focussing on the universal history written by Bishop Frechulf of Lisieux (d. 850/852) in the 820s.

Frechulf serves as a useful case study because of his wide reading and influential position within the Carolingian empire, and he provides an interesting example of the potential uses of the first city. As shall emerge in what follows, Frechulf's first city draws heavily upon the classical first city, albeit adapted for his own ninth-century

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[5] Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities*, 178.
[6] Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities*, 18–19, 69.
[7] Lieber, *Flintstone Modernism*, 7.
[8] See the work done for a different period by Ferguson, *Utter Antiquity*.

context. This was a striking thing to do, because in doing so he risked contradicting Christian scripture and therefore the accepted narrative of history, an extremely controversial thing to do. That he was able to do so was partly because of the explosion of interest in the classics in the Carolingian period, and partly because of Frechulf's skill as an editor. That he bothered to employ these myths speaks to his genuine interest in reconciling the Greco-Roman and biblical texts that were available to him in order to create an account of Christian universal history. Ideas from the ancient world survived and were reused because they offered a valuable resource for understanding the past.[9] This is made particularly striking because unlike nearly every other chapter in this volume, Frechulf's use of the ancient city was not prompted by regular or intense contact with the physical remains of the ancient city. As we shall see, Frechulf successfully employed these concepts of the origins of urbanism that emerged in a pagan milieu to strengthen the Christian message of his history.

In order to demonstrate the novelty and craft of Frechulf's text, it is helpful to first consider the example of an earlier Latin Christian writer, Isidore of Seville. Isidore's *Etymologies* offer a window into the competing biblical and classical accounts available to writers in the period. The great storehouse of classical and patristic learning assembled by the archbishop in the seventh century was a ubiquitous presence in any centre with pretensions to learning in the early medieval world.[10] Among the numerous matters addressed in the work is the question of the first city, on which subject Isidore informs us:

> Before the Flood, Cain was the first to found a city, the city of Enoch in Naid, after the name of his son, and he filled that city with only the throng of his own descendants.[11]

This was the origin of the city in biblical and patristic tradition. Isidore drew upon a long line of authority with this assessment, not least the account of Genesis 4:17.[12] Augustine had devoted much of book 15 of *De Civitate Dei* to emphasising the importance of the first city being founded by the first murderer as all subsequent earthly cities were similarly stained in blood.[13] For the Bishop of Hippo, Enoch City was not just the original city, but also a crucial point in his reading of human history through the central concept of the two cities, one earthly and one heavenly, which

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[9] Pohl and Wood, 'Cultural memory and the resources of the past'.

[10] Fear and Wood, *Isidore of Seville and his Reception in the Early Middle Ages.*

[11] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.1.3 'Primus ante diluvium Cain civitatem Enoch ex nomine filii sui in Naid condidit, quam urbem sola multitudine suae posteritatis implevit.' Trans. Barney, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville.*

[12] 'And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and bare Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son – Enoch.' On the reading of this passage, Gordon, 'Contested eponymy', 165–170.

[13] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 15.1: 'Natus est igitur prior Cain ex illis duobus generis humani parentibus, pertinens ad hominum civitatem, posterior Abel, ad civitatem Dei [...] Scriptum est itaque de Cain quod condiderit civitatem; Abel autem tamquam peregrinus non condidit', 453–454; Griffiths, 'Secularity and the *saeculum*', 33–54.

structures *De Civitate Dei*.[14] Augustine's focus on the city founded by Cain was to be extremely influential for subsequent thought.[15] Cain's city appeared in Gregory the Great's exegetical work *Moralia in Job*.[16] Writing after Isidore, Bede incorporated Enoch City into his widely-read *Chronica Minora*, cementing its position in historical narratives.[17] On the basis of these mighty authorities, the knowledge that Cain created the city was widely accepted.

Despite this tradition, a closer reading of the *Etymologies* reveals considerably more uncertainty in Isidore's writings than might be otherwise expected.[18] Isidore makes the general observation that 'frequently we find dissension about who was responsible for the founding of cities' using Rome as an example.[19] A little further down he discusses the word *oppidum* or town, in which he presents a very different account of the development of human settlements:

> At first people, in effect naked and defenceless, had no protection against monstrous beasts, nor shelters from cold and heat, nor were they sufficiently safe among themselves from other people. At last, with native cunning, having lived in shelters of caves and woods, they fashioned huts and cottages from twigs and thatch, that life might be safer, in that there would be no access for those who could do harm. This is the origin of towns.[20]

Isidore here draws upon a very different type of explanation for the development of the city, one that derived from the Greco-Roman classical tradition. His inspiration was the commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid* compiled by the fourth-century grammarian Servius, which drew his attention to the importance of walls in the definition of *oppidum*.[21]

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[14] Martin, 'The two cities in Augustine's political philosophy', 196.

[15] O'Loughlin, *Teachers and Code-Breakers*, 81.

[16] Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, 1.6.6: 'Unde et primus Cain civitatem in terra construxisse describitur, ut aperte monstraretur quia ipse in terra fundamentum posuit, qui a soliditate caelestis patriae alienus fuit', 288, 8.54, 'Hinc est quod Cain primum filium Enoch vocat atque ex eius nomine civitatem quam condidit appellat', 454; 2.16.10: 'Sic primus in terra Cain civitatem construxisse describitur, qui videlicet peregrinus aperte monstratur, quia ipse in terra fundamentum posuit qui a soliditate aeternae patriae alienus fuit', 807.

[17] Bede, *Chronica Minora*, 'At quia reprobi sola praesenti sunt fidelitate contenti, Cain civitatem quam statuit non in septima generatione, sed in primogenito Enoch filio consecrat', 251; DeGregorio, 'Bede and the Old Testament', 127–141.

[18] Henderson, *The Medieval World of Isidore of Seville*, 174.

[19] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.1.2: 'Si igitur tantae civitatis certa ratio non apparet, non mirum si in aliarum opinione dubitatur'.

[20] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.2.5–6: 'Nam primum homines tamquam nudi et inermes nec contra beluas praesidia habebant, nec receptacula frigoris et caloris, nec ipsi inter se homines ab hominibus satis erant tuti. Tandem naturali sollertia speluncis silvestribusque tegumentis tuguria sibi et casas virgultis arundinibusque contexerunt, quo esset vita tutior, ne his, qui nocere possent, aditus esset. Haec est origo oppidorum, quae quod opem darent, idcirco oppida nominata dixerunt.'

[21] Servius, *Commentary on the Aeneid of Vergil*, 9.605: 'oppidum quidam a vico castelloque magnitudine secernunt: alii locum muro fossave aliave qua munitione conclusum: alii locum aedificiis constitutum, ubi fanum comitium forum et murus sit: alii oppidum dici ab oppositione murorum; vel quod hominibus

Unlike the discussion of Cain's city in the early medieval Latin west, there was no one clear line of transmission for classical notions of the first development of cities. Rather, a huge number of different but related ideas could be drawn upon.[22] At its heart, the Greco-Roman understanding of the origins of the first city was as part of a civilising process, by which humans went from primordial savages to members of a complex civilisation. This was often perceived as a positive development, as in the writings of Plato and Aristotle.[23] It could also be interpreted as a road to misery in Hesiodic narratives. For Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, one of the things that distinguished the Silver Age from the previous Golden Age was the rise of settlements built by humans who had left the natural shelter of caves.[24]

These two competing models for the emergence of the city, the biblical and the classical, could prompt tension for late antique Christian authors. In the second century AD, Patriarch Theophilos of Antioch attacked pagans who questioned the primacy of Cain's city.[25] Lactantius condemned those who believed the development of the city was the result of primitive people protecting themselves against the elements as 'nonsense ... unworthy of human intelligence. What poor and sorry people, to record their folly in writing!'[26] By the early medieval period, Enoch City was the dominant model for the first city.

That the older Greco-Roman civilising city nonetheless survived is demonstrated by Isidore's discussion of the origin of towns. The difficulties in understanding how Isidore understood the distinction between a *civitas* as founded by Cain, as opposed to an *oppidum* developed from mutual protection, come from the imprecision with which Isidore used his terms. The Bishop of Seville first contrasted *civitas* with *urbs*, the latter of which 'is the name for the actual buildings, while *civitas* is not the stones, but the inhabitants'.[27] The *civitas* is a community or *societas* of people. This apparently clear distinction is then undercut with the very next sentence, where an *urbs* is described as one of three types of *societas* or community, standing in between households and nations, both categories defined by people rather than buildings.[28] In his explanation for the word *urbs*, Isidore suggests the importance of walls to its external definition.[29]

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locus esset oppletus; vel quod opes illo munitionis gratia congestae sunt.' On the commentary, Fowler, 'The Virgil commentary of Servius', 73–78.

[22] See Lovejoy and Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*.

[23] Plato, *Protagoras*, 322c-d; Aristotle, *Politics* I 1252b. On the civic community and civilisation, see Shaw, "Eaters of flesh, drinkers of milk", 5–31.

[24] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1.120–121, 'et ventis glacies adstricta pependit;/tum primum subiere domos; domus antra fuerunt'.

[25] Theophilos, *Ad Autolycum*, 2.30–31; Droge, *Homer or Moses?*, 119; Rogers, *Theophilus of Antioch*, 7.

[26] Lactantius, *Divinarum institutionum*, 6.10.16: 'o ingenia hominibus indigna, quae has ineptias protulerunt miseros atque miserabiles, qui stultitiam suam litteris memoriaeque mandauerint!', 568; transl. Bowen and Garnsey, *Divine Institutes*, 351.

[27] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.2.1: 'Nam urbs ipsa moenia sunt, civitas autem non saxa, sed habitatores vocantur'.

[28] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.2.2.

[29] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.2.3–4.

This is immediately followed by discussion of *oppidum*:

> Some have said the word *oppidum* is from the 'opposing' (*oppositio*) of its walls; others, from its hoarding of wealth (*ops*), due to which it is fortified; others, because the community (*societas*) of those living in it gives mutual support (*ops*) against an enemy.[30]

It is interesting here that of these three defining characteristics, the first emphasises the importance of walls in a manner resembling those that ring his *urbs*, whereas the third points to a shared community reminiscent of that which constitutes a *civitas*. The substantial overlap between Isidore's concept of a city and a town points to a potential fluidity between the history of Cain's first city and the organic development of the town. Isidore managed to include both ideas by making the civilising model the origin of towns rather than cities, although the result is rather clumsy. Nonetheless, he was to be very influential, as the next section will demonstrate.

The Carolingian context

Frechulf was not alone in the Carolingian world in being interested in the first city, and many used the *Etymologies* as their model for how to reconcile the biblical and classical pasts to do so. In the encyclopaedic *De rerum naturis*, written in the 840s by Frechulf's teacher, the exegete Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856), for Louis the German, the discussion of the development of cities, as with much else, was taken directly from Isidore.[31] Hrabanus separated Enoch City from the section devoted to cities in book 14.1 '*De aedificiis publicis*', instead placing it towards the beginning of his encyclopaedia in 2.1, as part of an etymological discussion of the biblical patriarchs.[32] He positioned Isidore's account of the formation of towns much later in his text, with the material on settlements and public buildings.[33] A reader who consulted Hrabanus seeking information on settlements would therefore not necessarily encounter Cain and would only get the classical interpretation, suggesting a division in his mind between the singular Enoch City and the broader phenomenon of cities.

This is striking because Hrabanus was also aware of an explanation that made sense of Cain's city as an example of Isidore's explanation of the development of settlements as a means of protection against a hostile world. In about 796, Hrabanus' teacher, Alcuin of York (d. 804), answered a series of questions on Genesis.[34] He noted that Cain was a wanderer, surrounded by enemies and unable to settle, 'and perhaps,

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[30] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.2.5: 'Oppidum quidam ab oppositione murorum dixerunt; alii ab opibus recondendis, eo quod sit munitum; alii quod sibi in eo conventus habitantium opem det mutuam contra hostem'.

[31] Hrabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*, 14.1, col.375C–376D. On Hrabanus Maurus see Felten, *Hrabanus Maurus: Gelehrter*; Kotzur, *Rabanus Maurus*.

[32] Hrabanus, *De rerum naturis*, 2.1.1 33A.

[33] Hrabanus, *De rerum naturis*, 14.1 375C.

[34] Fox, 'Alcuin the exegete', 40, fn. 6.

therefore, he founded a city so that he could be saved in it'.[35] This helped make sense of the apparent contradiction between Cain the eternal nomad and Cain the founder of Enoch City.[36] It also served to reconcile Isidore's two models for the first city. Primitive humans first developed cities to protect themselves from external dangers, and no early man was in more need of protection than Cain. Alcuin was familiar with Isidore, but even if the encyclopaedist was not specifically on Alcuin's mind, his exegesis provides another interesting example of the way that Enoch City could be understood in a manner familiar to classical interpretations of the first city.[37] Given Alcuin's deep learning, it would not be surprising if he was familiar with these accounts. Alcuin's *Questions on Genesis* circulated widely, and his explanation for Cain's city was repeated by others, including by Hrabanus in his own *Commentary on Genesis*.[38] That Hrabanus nonetheless separated the two models in his *De rerum naturis* perhaps suggests that he felt that Cain's city was only relevant to a discussion of biblical material rather than to a broader treatment of the subject of cities.

As this suggests, Frechulf was the heir to an intellectual tradition that was concerned with understanding the origins of urbanism, and part of a context that was interested in building coherent narratives out of disparate intellectual materials. Frechulf was active in an important moment in medieval interaction with the ancient past, the so-called 'Carolingian Renaissance'.[39] Out of concern for the correct education of the clergy, the Carolingians sponsored a massive programme of learning, assembling scholars from across Europe and developing centres of teaching. The results of this included the copying and dissemination of books, with 9,000 Latin books surviving from the ninth century compared to 1,800 for all centuries before them.[40] While the primary focus of the copying was on Christian works, some texts by pagan writers were also preserved. The earliest surviving copy of the overwhelming majority of the corpus we know as the classics dates to the Carolingian era.[41] Nor were the scholars content to be mere copyists. The learning of the past was compiled in useful form and put to work in biblical commentaries, poetry, grammars and geographies.[42] One way to think about this moment may be to examine it in light of resilience theory and consider this a moment of cultural reorganisation and exploitation, as intellectual resources were rediscovered, and rendered usable by being made available and glossed.[43]

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[35] Alcuin, *Interrogationes et Responsiones in Genesin*: 'Et forte [idcirco] civitatem condidit, in qua salvari posset', col.525D.
[36] Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, 47.
[37] Bullough, *Alcuin*, 271–272.
[38] Hrabanus Maurus, *Questions on Genesis*, col.507A; Bullough, 'Alcuin's cultural influence', 1–26; Fox, 'Alcuin the exegete', 43.
[39] For an introduction, see McKitterick, *Carolingian Culture*; Contreni, 'The Carolingian Renaissance', 59–74; Contreni, 'The Carolingian Renaissance: education and literary culture', 709–757.
[40] Ganz, 'Book production in the Carolingian empire', 786.
[41] See the essays in Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries*.
[42] De Jong, 'The empire as *ecclesia*', 191–226.
[43] Redman, 'Resilience theory in archaeology', 72–73.

Not least among the literary genres that benefited from this efflorescence was the one that Frechulf would favour, that of history writing.[44] The ancient past was of great interest to Carolingian readers and writers, with a wide range of ancient and late antique sources being employed. As well as being of general interest, the deeds of the ancients provided moral lessons and warnings, as well as examples of the workings of God upon the world.[45] Orosius was extremely influential for many writers of history in the period, including Frechulf, and his historical schema of four empires, Babylon, Macedon, Carthage and Rome naturally prompted interest in ancient empires.[46] Works of geography in the period display an acute interest in cities such as Babylon and Carthage.[47] The Roman past became particularly relevant in the context of the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor in 800 and the celebration of his empire as the heir to the ancient past.[48] As a consequence, ancient Latin texts were not only more accessible than they had been for centuries but also more likely to be viewed as part of a shared tradition that the readers belonged to.[49]

This was a consciously Christian project of learning, with caution being necessary in the handling of pagan myth. Writers in the Carolingian period could have a complicated relationship with Greco-Roman civilising narratives. Writing the *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum* in the 790s, which argued against the worship of icons, Theodulf of Orléans condemned 'painters, who often follow the vain fables of the poets'.[50] These stories were not to be taken as truthful for 'although all these things are contained in pagan literature they are nevertheless utterly alien to Scripture'.[51] Among these myths was that of Prometheus:

> Or is it not contrary to Divine Scripture, that they depict Prometheus making lifeless men out of clay and the same Prometheus being lifted up among the guardians of heaven and, while he beholds the heavenly beings, touching the wheels of Phoebus with his fennel stalk, stealing fire, and touching the breast of the man he had fashioned, thereby giving him life?[52]

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[44] Nelson, 'History-writing at the courts of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald', 435–442; McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 39–50.

[45] McKitterick, 'Ancient History', 217–224; Evans, "Instructing readers' minds in heavenly matters", 56–71.

[46] Merrills, *History and Geography*, 40–41; Evans and McKitterick, 'A Carolingian epitome of Orosius', 123–153.

[47] Lozovsky, 'Roman geography and ethnography', 325–364

[48] Alberi, 'The evolution of Alcuin's concept', 3–17; McKitterick, 'The Carolingian Renaissance', 152–154.

[49] Although note Ward, 'The sense of an ending', 293.

[50] Theodulf, *Opus Caroli*, 3.23 'pictoribus, qui poetarum vanissimas fabulas plerumque sequuntur', 442.

[51] Theodulf, *Opus Caroli*, 3.23 'Quę omnia quamquam in gentilium habeantur litteris, a divinis tamen prorsus sunt aliena Scripturis', 442–443.

[52] Theodulf, *Opus Caroli*, 3.23 'An non divinis Scripturis contrarium est, quod Prometheum homines ex luto finxisse inanimatos fingunt et eundem Prometheum a Minerva in caelum levatum inter oras septemplicis clypei et, dum omnia caelestia vidisset, fingunt eum ferulami [Ph]oebiacis adplicasse rotis ignemque esse furatum et pectusculo hominis, quem finxerat, adplicato animatum reddidisse corpus?', 444.

Theodulf made it clear here what he thought of the value of classical myths for the early history of human society. But there is much else here that is more ambiguous. Whether Theodulf was actually familiar with any paintings of Prometheus is unclear. This passage appears as part of a great list of Greco-Roman mythology, stretching from Bellerophon to Vulcan, primarily drawn from the first Vatican mythographer, Isidore of Seville and, as in the case of Prometheus, Fulgentius' *Mythologies*.[53] Even as Theodulf downplayed the value of such stories in contrast to scripture, he still indulged in what amounts to a *tour de force* showcasing his breadth of reading. Knowledge of classical stories was valued by people like Theodulf, even if he denied them any value as history. Nonetheless, Theodulf's words point to some of the potential tensions involved in using such myths, and the tensions that Frechulf chose to navigate when he drew upon such material.

Innocence lost

Notwithstanding these challenges, Frechulf managed to bring together the civilising city and the city of Cain in his *Universal History* in a manner considerably more satisfying than earlier efforts. It is hard to say a great deal about Frechulf's career.[54] Coming from what is now central or southern Germany, he was appointed Bishop of Lisieux in about 824/825, probably after being a monk at Fulda. He made himself useful to Louis the Pious, being sent by the emperor on a mission to the Pope in 825 and participating in a reform council in 829.[55] Later he acted as jailer to Ebbo, the deposed Archbishop of Rheims.[56] Something of the circles he moved in, or at least aspired to move in, are suggested by his dedication of the second volume of his history to Louis' wife, the Empress Judith. Among Frechulf's correspondents were the Archchancellor Helisachar and Frechulf's old teacher, Hrabanus Maurus.[57]

Frechulf's *Twelve Books of Histories*, written in the 820s, are an example of a universal chronicle.[58] He described his work in a letter to Charles the Bald as the 'books from the World's beginning down to the dominion of the Franks in Gaul'.[59] His *History* was divided into two parts, the first beginning with the creation of the world and ending with the incarnation of Jesus, the second continuing until the time of Pope Boniface III in 607.[60] Frechulf had multiple purposes for composing this *History*. In a letter he wrote to Empress Judith, the wife of Louis the Pious, he suggested that the history

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[53] Theodulf, *Opus Caroli*, 3.23, 443–445; Fulgentius, *Opera*, 45–46.
[54] What follows is dependent on Allen, 'Prolegomena', *Frechulfi Episcopi*, 11–18.
[55] Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit*, 181.
[56] McKeon, 'Archbishop Ebbo of Rheims', 75–110; Schrör, 'Aufstieg und Fall', 203–222.
[57] Frechulf, 'Epistola ad Hrabanum Maurum' and 'Historiarum', 5–7, 17–20.
[58] On the genre, see Allen, 'Universal history 300–1000', 17–42.
[59] Frechulf, 'Prologus ad Karolum Calvum regem', 'libros ab inicio mundi usque ad regna Francorum in Galliis', 729.
[60] On this ending see Ward, 'The sense of an ending', 291–315.

would be of use to her son, Charles the Bald, offering it as a mirror for princes.[61] By contrast, in the letter to Helisachar that accompanies the first part, he attributes the conception of the history to his correspondent. Helisachar, Frechulf writes, had exhorted him to go 'hunting diligently through the volumes of the ancients, of both sacred and secular writers, and to collect briefly and clearly everything that pertained to the truth of the history'.[62] In his letters to Helisachar and Charles the Bald, Frechulf repeatedly emphasised that his history was a fusion of scripture and secular history because that was how truth about the past was to be found.[63]

As this suggests, Frechulf's history was a careful compilation of already existing material. Frechulf has been read as following an Augustinian scheme, interpreting history via the prism of the two cities, that of the heaven and that of the earth.[64] Recent work by Graeme Ward, among others, has served to complicate this perception, by demonstrating that Frechulf's choice of material often expands upon Augustine's vision in interesting ways.[65] Frechulf spent considerable time discussing the period before Abraham, and his treatment of Cain's city provides an excellent means of examining this problem further.[66]

Frechulf began his consideration of the first city with Augustine's description of Cain's city, much of which he derived from or read in the light of Claudius of Turin's *Commentarii in Genesim*.[67] The material Frechulf selected came from the passage in *De Civitate Dei* where the Bishop of Hippo sought to justify the physical reality of Enoch City. Augustine's primary difficulty was that the idea of a city made up of just one person was nonsensical, as Philo of Alexandria had long ago observed.[68] Cain's new settlement would have been rather short of inhabitants, particularly as most of the extant population consisted of people with reason to hate Cain following his fratricide. Echoing Cicero's *De Re Publica*, Augustine observed that:

> a city, which is nothing but a group of men united by some bond of fellowship, could not have been established at that time by just one person.[69]

Augustine solved this problem by arguing that the writers of the Bible did not mention every human that was alive then, but merely those most relevant to the narrative. Nor was it necessary to assume that Enoch was Cain's first child, or that the city was

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[61] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', Prol. 2, 436. On this theme see Ward, 'Lessons in leadership', 68–84.

[62] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1, Prol., ed. Allen: 'iussisti [Helisachar] ut perscrutando diligenter volumina antiquorum, seu agiographorum sive etiam gentilium scriptorum, quaeque pertinent ad historiae veritatem breuiter ac lucide colligere desudarem', 18.

[63] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 18, 20; Frechulf, 'Prologus ad Karolum Calvum regem', 729.

[64] Staubach, 'Christiana tempora', 167–206.

[65] Ward, 'All roads lead to Rome?', 492–505.

[66] Mégier, 'L'histoire biblique pré-abrahamique', 1064–1069.

[67] Claudius of Turin, *Commentarii in Genesim*, 920; Gorman, 'The Commentary on Genesis', 279–329.

[68] Philo of Alexandria, 'On the Posterity of Cain and his Exile', 355.

[69] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 15.8: 'quia nec constitui tunc ab uno poterat civitas, quae nihil est aliud quam hominum multitudo aliquo societatis vinculo conligata', 464; cf. Cicero, '*De Re Publica*', 6.9.13: 'acceptius quam concilia coetusque hominum iure sociati, quae civitates appellantur', 464.

founded shortly after Enoch's birth. The great age to which people lived back then allowed them to have lots of children, so Cain had a large brood with which to populate the city even before Enoch's birth, particularly as it was not immoral to marry within the family at that time. In beginning his description this way, Frechulf accepted the literal truth of the city of Cain as the first urban foundation and repeated Augustine's defences against charges of implausibility. He also took on board the point that a city was a community of people rather than just a collection of buildings.

Where Frechulf went next is interesting, as he followed this material with a lengthy quotation from the first-century Jewish historian Josephus. Josephus' *Antiquities* were translated from Greek into Latin in the sixth century under Cassiodorus' direction.[70] Josephus was well known in the Carolingian period, with his *Antiquities* circulating in a large number of manuscripts and employed by writers of the era.[71] The *Antiquities*, composed in part to demonstrate to a sceptical Flavian Rome the greater age of Jewish history compared to Greco-Roman tradition, offered Frechulf a convenient means of fleshing out the difficult-to-narrate earliest period of history.[72] Much of the beginning of the first book of his history is dependent on Josephus' *Antiquities*.[73] Despite Josephus' popularity, Frechulf's use of him is unusual. The passage he quotes runs:

> After long travels Cain settled with his wife in a place called Naid, where he made his abode and children were born to him. His punishment, however, far from being taken as a warning, only served to increase his vice. He indulged in every bodily pleasure, even if it entailed outraging his companions; he increased his substance with wealth amassed by rapine and violence; he incited to luxury and pillage all whom he met, and became their instructor in wicked practices. He put an end to that simplicity in which men lived before by the invention of weights and measures: the guileless and generous existence which they had enjoyed in ignorance of these things he converted into a life of craftiness. He was the first to fix boundaries of land and to build a city, fortifying it with walls and constraining his clan to congregate in one place. This city he called Enocha after his eldest son Enoch.[74]

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[70] Cassiodorus, *Institutiones*, 1.17.1, 55–56.

[71] McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 39–50; Pollard, 'Flavius Josephus', 15–32. The classic study of the transmission of Josephus remains Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition*. See recently Pollard, 'The *De Excidio* of "Hegesippus"', 65–100.

[72] Rajak, 'Josephus and the "Archaeology" of the Jews', 241–255; Price, 'Josephus', 223–229.

[73] Allen, 'Prolegomena', 204, 282–285. On Frechulf's use of Josephus, see McKitterick and Ward, 'Knowledge of the History', 249–250.

[74] Frechulf, *Histories*, 1.1.9: 'Multam peragrans terram cum sua uxore Cain collocatus in loco qui Naida nuncupatur, ibique moratus est, quo ei etiam filii nati sunt. At vero poenam illam non habuit pro emendatione sed ad incrementum et ad libidinem suo potius nutriuit in corpore, licet cum iniuria secum commorantium hanc haberet. Augens domum multitudine pecuniarum ex rapinis et violentia congestarum, ad luxuriam quoque et latrocinia suos inuitans familiares, quorum doctor in scelestis studiis erat, et simplicitatem quidem cum qua prius uiuebant homines, ad inuentionem mensurarum et ponderum permutauit, integramque eorum vitam ex earum rerum ignorantia ad callidatem corruptionemque perduxit. Terminos terrae primus posuit, ciuitatesaque constituit murisque muniuit, illicque suos coegit couenire domesticos. Hanc vero civitatem ab Enoch seniore filio suo Enocham appellauit', 37; cf. Josephus, *The Latin Josephus*, 1.2.60–62, 131.

No other writer of the period would make use of this material from Josephus in the same way that Frechulf did.[75]

It is worth exploring here what Josephus was trying to do with this portrayal. A running theme of his elaboration of the biblical account in Genesis was that greed and desire for power were the root of all tyranny.[76] Thus, Cain became the archetypal avaricious and illegitimate ruler. But this rewriting of the story of Cain also served another purpose. Among Josephus' varied readers was a Greco-Roman literary audience. Writing in Greek, he presented Jewish biblical material in a historical genre familiar to that audience. Josephus' discussion of Cain placed him within well-known Hesiodic narratives of a fall from a primitive Golden Age, before the corrupting influence of civilisation.[77] Important to the Golden Age legend was the role played by cities in the end of this early utopia, which was probably the element that suggested the link to Cain in Josephus' mind. Cain's city was thus associated with tyranny, piracy, decadence and cunning. If we return to the biblical and the classical models for the origin of the city outlined earlier, Josephus had in effect managed to merge the two by making the city of Cain part of the wider story of the civilising of humanity. In doing so, he made the account of Genesis more palatable for his audience by placing it within a narrative they already understood.

Frechulf of course had no need to play to a pagan Greco-Roman audience. The authority of scripture was universally accepted by his readers. Josephus' account was useful to him for a number of different reasons. First, it provided a useful means of putting Enoch City within a historical narrative, as the beginning of a series of kings and cities, as we shall see below with his treatment of Nimrod and Babylon. Second, in light of Frechulf's ambitions for this work to serve as a mirror for princes, this story offered a model for how a ruler should not act. The good king listens to warnings from God; Cain fell headfirst into his wickedness. The good king leads by example; Cain corrupted his followers and taught them only ill. The good king rules justly; Cain based his regime on wanton violence. Third, it allowed Frechulf to establish a teleology of history in decline until the birth of Christ, putting into place a mechanism of human suffering that accentuated Augustine's emphasis on the city of Cain as the embodiment of obsession with the goods of this world, rather than that yet to come.[78]

Frechulf placed Josephus' merging of Greco-Roman and Jewish models for the first city within the framework provided by Augustine to create a unified narrative. The city of Enoch became the embodiment of a destructive process of civilisation ultimately leading to humanity's misery and corruption. That Frechulf was well aware of the wider traditions Josephus was drawing on is suggested by the next body of material he employed, which was poetry from the *Consolation of Philosophy*, written by Boethius while imprisoned by King Theoderic in 523/524. After centuries in obscurity,

[75] Allen, 'Prolegomena', 208.
[76] Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History*, 126.
[77] Feldman, 'Hellenizations in Josephus' Portrayal of Man's Decline', 336–353.
[78] Frechulf, *Histories*, 1.1.9, 36

the *Consolation* had risen in popularity in the late eighth century, with its adoption by Alcuin.[79] It became a key text for scholars associated with the Carolingian court of Aachen. In his *Consolation*, Boethius followed traditional practice in interspersing prose with poetry. These verses were the best-known sections in the Carolingian world, and they were often used as teaching texts, with many Frankish students learning them by heart.[80]

The poem employed by Frechulf appears in book 2 of the *Consolation*, following a prose passage in which Lady Philosophy counsels Boethius against greed and avarice. Rather than seeking to accumulate riches, Boethius should trust to the beneficence of nature to provide him with the bare necessities of life.[81] Boethius then supports this with poetry, mourning a lost Golden Age in which people were in harmony with nature, living simple lives without 'the coals of avarice', beginning:

> Blessed was that age so long ago
> When people willingly placed trust
> In fields that never let them down.
> No enervating luxury
> Prevailed, and appetites were mild
> And satisfied by piles of acorns.[82]

This is an extremely standard treatment of a theme common to the poets of the Augustan era, bringing together celebrations of the joys of country life with longing for a lost paradise in a manner similar to Virgil, Horace and Tibullus.[83]

Frechulf was well aware that this was a pagan legend that he was including in his history, even if it was written by a Christian philosopher. In his text Frechulf moves from Josephus to Boethius by explaining that what followed was the interpretation of the 'Greek and Latin philosophers'.[84] Whereas he named Josephus before recounting his material, he does not identify Boethius, calling him instead one 'who has written according to their [pagan] way of thinking'.[85] This careful phrasing suggests that he foresaw potential criticism for including the passage, despite his avowed mission statement of bringing together pagan learning with Christian knowledge.[86] The importance of the metre to Frechulf is also suggested by the fact that this is the only

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[79] Gibson, 'Boethius in the Carolingian Schools', 43–56.

[80] Brown, 'Lupus of Ferrieres on the metres of Boethius', 63–79.

[81] O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 144–145; Blackwood, *The Consolation of Boethius*, 102–105.

[82] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.10, 38; Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, 2, Metre 5, 'Felix nimium prior aetas contenta fidelibus aruis nec inerti perdita luxu, facili quae sera solebat/ieiunia soluere glande,' 45. Trans. Harpur, *Fortune's Prisoner*, 44.

[83] O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 179–188.

[84] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.10, 'philosophi Grecorum atque Latinorum', 37.

[85] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.10, 'Secundum quorum opinionem quidam ex nostris suum', 38.

[86] This tension is noted by Allen, 'Prolegomena', 202. On the ambiguity of the reception of classical learning in the Carolingian period see Nees, *A Tainted Mantle*; Mulders, 'The dynamics of the image of love', and Teeuwen, 'Seduced by pagan poets and philosophers', 43–61, 63–79.

place in his history that he employs Boethius, implying a particular significance for its use.[87]

Boethius' poem complemented Frechulf's earlier material. The emphasis on greed as the source of conflict and suffering, distorting the careful balance with nature, brought out themes in the disastrous regime of Enoch City. Cain's desire for wealth prompted him to wage war to acquire the property of others. His luxuriant lifestyle in turn prompted others to imitate him. By showing this concurrence between divergent traditions, Frechulf strengthened the credibility of all the divergent parts. This clever pairing of extracts demonstrates that for all Frechulf's dependence on Josephus for the early part of his history, he did not use the Jewish historian uncritically, but thoughtfully drew out thematic parallels.

Boethius' Golden Age is one without cities, for 'soft grass ensured a restful sleep … and giant pine trees offered shade'.[88] By employing it next to Josephus' plundering tyrant, Frechulf added a new dimension to the city of Cain, one in which the foundation of Enoch City becomes a crucial turning point in humanity's loss of innocence. Frechulf succeeded in bringing together both the biblical and the classical models for the development of the first city. The result was a powerful account that tied Cain's city to the wider developments of civilisation. It also set up a central dynamic of the first volume of history, which was the darkness of the human experience before the incarnation.[89]

That Frechulf was not alone in thinking that images from the classical tradition could be used to consider the beginnings of civilisation in the Carolingian world is also suggested by the depiction of Adam and Eve in the Moutier-Grandval Bible (BL Add MS 10546 f.5v), produced at Tours in the 830s.[90] Here the first humans are pictured after their expulsion from Eden, with Eve sat in a bower that, Moffitt observed, shows a striking resemblance to Vitruvius' description of the first human structures, which claims that 'they erected forked uprights, and weaving twigs in between they covered the whole with mud'.[91] Vitruvius attributed 'the beginning of association among human beings' and thus the first cities to 'the discovery of fire' as part of an organic process of humans learning from each other in multiple places.[92] It is unclear how deliberate this echoing of Vitruvius was. The illustrations in the Bible probably originate from late antique models, so the resemblance is likely to be accidental. Nonetheless, it is interesting for the way it garbs the account of Genesis in clothes derived from the pre-Christian past. The biblical narrative of the beginning

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[87] Allen, 'Prolegomena', 282.

[88] Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, 2 Metre 5, 'Somnos dabat herba salubres […] umbras altissima pinus', 45; Harpur, *Fortune's Prisoner*, 44; Frechulf, *Histories*, 1.1.10, 38.

[89] Ward, 'The sense of an ending', 296–297.

[90] Moffitt, 'Vitruvius in a Carolingian Eden', 7–12.

[91] Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, 2.1.3, 'primumque furcis erectis et virgulis interpositis luto parietes texerunt', 80.

[92] Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, 2.1.2, 'ergo cum propter ignis inventionem conventus initio apud homines', 78.

of civilisation could thus be imagined in ninth-century Francia in a way that visually strongly resembled an alternative Greco-Roman explanation for this development.

Frechulf has in the past been condemned as an unthinking copyist, but as he compiled his history, the Bishop of Lisieux made choices about what material to include.[93] His account of the first city was not just a collation of all the sources he had available. Throughout his work he drew upon Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, as translated into Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia, explicitly referring to it a number of times in his text.[94] Eusebius' work was treated with great respect in the Carolingian world and was extremely important for shaping and structuring the past for writers of the period.[95] Frechulf drew particularly heavily upon the *Ecclesiastical History* in the second part of his history, logically given that Eusebius was primarily concerned in this work with the development of the church after the apostles.[96] Interestingly, Frechulf does not include Eusebius' account of the emergence of cities.

Eusebius had sought to explain the timing of the incarnation of Christ by arguing that primitive humanity would have been too savage to take any notice or derive any benefit of the coming of their saviour prior to the age of Augustus.[97] He described the lifestyle of these primordial humans:

> Roaming about more in the fashion of wild animals and beasts, they possessed no cities as the basis of society, no traditions to serve as standards of honour, no laws to bring about the uprightness of life. Not even the mere name of the arts and the sciences and of philosophy was known among them – but they wandered about, in the wilderness, rude and nomadic, with no fixed abode.[98]

God first needed to tame his creation with harsh punishments and wise prophets before they could be ready for the Word. Part of this rough education was the development of social communities, from which cities could emerge.[99] Eusebius was drawing upon the same body of Greco-Roman traditions of cities as part of a civilising process that Boethius did, but rather than seeing it as corruption, he perceived the city as a positive development, part of God's plan to shape humanity to his design.[100] Frechulf was almost certainly familiar with this passage, but he chose not to use it,

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[93] Allen, 'Universal history 300–1000', 41–42.

[94] See for example, Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 2.1.7, 451, 2.3.16, 601; McKitterick and Ward, 'Knowledge of the History', 250.

[95] Chesnut, 'Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius', 687–713; McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 226–233, 235–243.

[96] Allen provides a useful overview in *Frechulfi Lexoviensis*, 327–330.

[97] Kofsky, *Eusebius of Caesarea Against Paganism*, 100–101.

[98] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.2.19: 'ferino magis ac beluino ritu oberrantes non urbes ad societatem, non mores ad honestatem, non leges ad vitae iustitiam teuuere. artium vero disciplinarumque apud eos et totius philosophiae ne ipsum quidem nomen habebatur, sed agrestes quidam et vagi per deserta nullis sedibus vagabantur', 23. Morlet suggests that the material first appeared in the Proof of the Gospel in 'L'introduction de l'*Histoire ecclésiastique*', 91–92, but this is challenged by Johnson, *Eusebius*, 19–20.

[99] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.2.23, 25, 27.

[100] Grant, 'Civilization as a preparation for Christianity', 62–70; Kelly, 'The shape of the past', 13–27.

presumably because it did not fit with his vision for the early development of the city. This positive depiction of the rise of human society was at odds with the narrative he had built of the city and its other elements as the moment of humanity's decline. Far from simply lumping together all possible sources, Frechulf chose to pair the Augustinian city of Cain with Boethius' lost paradise to create a unified and coherent account.

Nor did Frechulf abandon this theme after his discussion of Cain's city. In his account of the first city, Frechulf used Josephus to associate the beginning of urbanism with the rise of tyranny. This was not the only place that Josephus explored that idea in his *Antiquities*. His account of Nimrod and the Tower of Babel also developed these themes.[101] Josephus was one of the first to associate the mighty hunter with the Tower.[102] Nimrod seized power by appealing to the pride of his people, encouraging them to defy God, 'and little by little he transformed the state of affairs into a tyranny'.[103] In order to prevent God from destroying them with another flood he decided 'to build a tower higher than the water could reach'.[104] This was the Tower of Babel and 'the place in that they built the tower is now called Babylon because of the confusion in the original clarity of language'.[105] Josephus thus linked an unjust ruler who defies God with a large building project in an echo of Cain.[106] He then proceeded to cite a Sibyl in support of this story.[107]

Frechulf quoted Josephus on this matter at length, abbreviating only the description of the tower itself.[108] But he also added material that makes the tower seem more like a city. He broke up the passages from Josephus with quotations from Genesis, such as 11.8, which describes Babel as a 'city'.[109] Frechulf then followed the reference to the Sibyl with a geographical excursus drawing upon Genesis 10.10, in which Nimrod was the founder of Aracha, Achat and Calennae in Shinar.[110] Frechulf used Jerome to identify these places with the cities of Edessa, Nisibis and Seleucia.[111] Frechulf was not alone in perceiving Nimrod's work as establishing a

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[101] Inowlocki, 'Josephus' rewriting of the Babel Narrative', 169–191; Sherman, *Babel's Tower Translated*, 153–194.

[102] van der Toorn and van der Horst, 'Nimrod before and after the Bible', 16–20.

[103] Josephus, *The Latin Josephus*, 1.4.2: 'Et cognatos sui generis ad causam tyrannidis adduxit', 137.

[104] Josephus, *The Latin Josephus*, 1.4.2: 'Ob quam rem turrem aedificandam altiorem suadebant, ubi aqua non posset ascendere', 138.

[105] Josephus, *The Latin Josephus*, 1.4.3: 'Locus autem in quo turrem aedificaverunt nunc babylon vocatur, dicta propter confusionem', 138.

[106] On Nimrod as tyrant, Frye, *Words with Power*, 163.

[107] Josephus, *The Latin Josephus*, 1.4.3, 138.

[108] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.28, 58–60.

[109] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.28: 'et cessaverunt aedificare civitatem', 59.

[110] Frechulf, 'Historiarum', 1.1.28: 'Fuit autem principium regni ejus Babylon, et Aracha, Achat, et Calennae in terra Sennaar. Aracha autem haec est Edisse civitas. Achat, quae nunc dicitur Nisibin, Calennae, postea verso nomine, a Seleuco rege dicta est Seleucia', 60–61.

[111] Jerome, 'Hebraicae Quaestiones', 10.8: 'Regnavit autem et in Arach, hoc est in Edessa, et in Achad, quae nunc dicitur Nisibis: et in Chalanne, quae postea verso nomine a Seleuco rege est dicta Seleucia', 13.

city.[112] Augustine wrote of Nimrod that he was the founder of Babylon.[113] Isidore of Seville presented Nimrod as the first city builder after the flood, 'After the Flood, the giant Nimrod first founded the Mesopotamian city of Babylon'.[114] Alcuin commented on the matter in his *Questions on Genesis*, answering the question 'whether the tower and the city are one entity or two', by stating that the tower was in the city of Babylon.[115] By drawing upon this context, Frechulf could develop Josephus' point, allowing the Frankish scholar to expand the connection between the founding of cities and the corruption of humanity, strengthening the narrative running through the first half of his history.

Conclusion

To conclude, the account of Enoch City in Frechulf's *Universal History* provides a fascinating window into his understanding of the development of the city in human society. In Frechulf's history the city was part of a civilising process that brought humanity out of blissful ignorance in nature. One of the symptoms of the growing craftiness of humans, it was a tool used by a tyrant to corral and coerce in order to fulfil his cruelty and avarice.[116] For him, the ancient city was thus a marker of humanity's corruption. But Frechulf's account also stands as a valuable case study for the way a scholar of the Carolingian era could skilfully reconcile the multiple traditions to which he saw himself as heir, despite his own awareness that many would perceive them as contradictory to each other. Greco-Roman concepts of the city proved to be highly resilient as they were reemployed and reframed in a new context. Frechulf employed these ideas in part because they were useful and came from a prestigious cultural past, but also because of his deep conviction that understanding human history was an important and that this was best achieved by drawing upon all of the sources available to him, even if they came from different traditions. In doing so, Frechulf stood in a long line of people who inhabited both traditions, including Josephus, Augustine and Boethius, but he also represented a moment of cultural reorganisation that attest to the adaptive resilience of the Greco-Roman concept of the city. In this use of classical models of the first city, we can see the impact of ancient ideas of the city, as they were adapted and tweaked in order to build a new understanding of the primordial past.

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[112] Murdoch, *The Medieval Popular Bible*, 127–148. The most complete examination of the legend of the Tower of Babel remains Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel.*

[113] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 16.4, 504–505, 16.11, 514–515.

[114] Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 15.1.4: 'Primus post diluvium Nembroth gigans Babylonem urbem Mesopotamiae fundavit.'

[115] Alcuin, *Interrogationes et Responsiones in Genesin*, 'An unum opus est turris et civitas, vel duo?', 533C; Fox, 'Alcuin the exegete', 39–60; Major, *Undoing Babel*, 128–132.

[116] For a modern version of this concept see Scott, *Against the Grain.*

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Chapter 10

Remembering the ancient Iranian city from late antiquity to Islam: Hamza al-Isfahani and the Sasanian *Book of Kings*

Edward Zychowicz-Coghill

As you stand beneath the cliff of Naqsh-e Rostam, in the heart of Fārs province, ancient Persis, you see a series of great rock reliefs depicting the Sasanian emperors of Iran: larger than life, processing, riding, jousting, receiving crowns. The aspects of the figures are dreamlike; an emperor faces a god, both on horseback, their legs trailing to the floor beneath their mounts, proportions distorted by the raw power behind their commissioning. The timeless, iconic stillness of a moment of investiture is juxtaposed against the frenetic impact of horse-borne clashes: ribbons and pennants screaming behind riders, horses' legs strained wider than a cheetah's at full pace, a speared horseman caught in the moment of death spun with his mount crashing head down, overturned into oblivion. There is burly power and immediacy to these images of kingship: shoulders are broad, biceps and pectorals bulge, but there are ghosts too. An Elamite king, alone, unheeded, carved a millennium beforehand, peers at Bahram II standing proudly amidst a crowd of his courtiers. The greatest ghosts, though, are of the Achaemenid emperors whose gargantuan tombs tower storeys above the Sasanian reliefs. Great doorways to the tombs of Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes open behind engaged columns supporting panels above that show the emperors standing, stately, before fire altars, beneath winged symbols of royal authority, on great throne-platforms borne aloft by tens of diverse figures representing the peoples of their empire.

Naqsh-e Rostam stands around 4 miles from Persepolis, the dynastic centre of the Achaemenid Persian emperors (r. 550–330 BC), and adjacent to the later site of Iṣṭakhr, the original base of the Sasanian dynasty (r. AD 224–651), which retained religious and ceremonial importance throughout their rule. Matthew Canepa has shown how the rock reliefs commissioned at Naqsh-e Rostam by the early Sasanians interacted with the imagery and layout of earlier Achaemenid carvings, converting the site into

'a coherent fusion of the two dynasties' visual culture, architecture, and ritual: in a sense, blurring them completely'.[1] Here, the late antique Sasanian dynasty sought to inscribe itself amidst the material heritage of the ancient Achaemenids, demonstrated by Shapur I's inscription of his *res gestae* onto the Achaemenid tower at the site, the 'Kaʿba-ye Zardosht'. This happened not only at Naqsh-e Rostam. In 311 another Shapur, a Sasanian prince, had an inscription carved into the doorway of the palace of Darius I at nearby Persepolis, next to Darius' founding inscription. The inscription tells the reader that that the prince 'blessed his father and grandfather. He blessed Shapur [II], the king of kings, blessed himself and those who built this structure', before asking God to remember them all.[2] The ancient Persian capital and the unnamed rulers who built it retained a powerful place in the Sasanian royal self-image.

The impact of Persian antiquity did not end with the Arab conquests of Iraq and Iran in the seventh century: Iranian epic traditions lived on in Islamic culture. Ibn Isḥāq (d. 767), the first great biographer of Muḥammad, glossed the numerous rebuttals of 'legends of the ancients' ('aṣāṭīr al-awwaliyyīn') in the Qurʾān as referring to tales of the mythic Persian heroes Esfandyar and Rostam, peddled by Persophile storytellers in Muḥammad's Mecca.[3] When the Abbasid dynasty (r. 750–1258) came to power with the backing of the Islamised Iranians of Khurasan, the *de facto* founder of the dynasty, the caliph al-Manṣūr, built his new capital Baghdad in a perfect circle emulating the round cities of Ardeshir, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty.[4] From the mid-eighth century, Iranian administrators and courtiers translated Middle Persian works of courtly literature, etiquette and history into Arabic, beginning the long trend in Islamic literature of using Sasanian rulers as models for princely conduct.[5] As the Abbasid caliphate fragmented in the ninth and tenth centuries, new regional dynasts in Iran bolstered their claims to prestige by adopting Sasanian royal titles and claiming descent from Sasanian or other ancient Persian rulers.[6]

One such dynasty was the Būyids, a family from northern Iran who in the 930s and 940s carved out a state incorporating much of Iraq and Iran, and who came to claim descent from the Sasanian emperor Bahram V. In the 960s the Būyid emirs Rukn al-Dawla and his son ʿAḍud al-Dawla struck silver and gold medallions depicting themselves wearing Sasanian-style crowns and bearing Middle Persian inscriptions of the ancient title King of Kings (*shāhānshāh*) and the Sasanian term for divinely

[1] Canepa, 'Technologies of memory', 587.
[2] Canepa, 'Technologies of memory', 589.
[3] Q 6:25, 8:31, 16:24, 23:83, 25:5, 27:68, 46:17, 68:15, 83:13 for *asāṭīr al-awwaliyyīn*. See Ibn Isḥāq, *Life of Muhammad*, transl. Guillaume, 136, 162–163, for the interpretation. Ibn Isḥāq's interpretation is probably more instructive of how widespread Persian legends were in his own time, rather than Muḥammad's, as argued by Hämeen-Anttila, *Khwadāynāmag*, 176–177, though for a positivistic reading see Omidsalar, *Poetics and Politics*, 40–44.
[4] Northedge, 'Early Islamic urbanism', 165; Wendell, 'Baghdād', 119–120. On these round cities see, with bibliography, Simpson, 'Sasanian cities', 24–27; Whitcomb, 'Shahristan to Medina', 82–85, 90–93.
[5] Gabrieli, 'Ibn al-Muḳaffaʿ'; Tor, 'Long shadow', 155–163.
[6] Tor, 'Long shadow', 149–155; Bosworth, 'Heritage of rulership'; Madelung, 'Assumption of the title *Shāhānshāh*'; Treadwell, '*Shāhānshāh* and *al-Malik al-Muʾayyad*'.

bestowed kingly glory (*khwarrah*).[7] This interest in pre-Islamic Persian titulature and regalia naturally led to an interest in the physical remains of the ancient Persian past. Twice in the year 344 AH (AD 955–956), on his way to putting down an insurrection in Isfahan and again on his return to Shiraz, ʿAḍud al-Dawla passed by Persepolis. On each occasion he left an Arabic inscription at the Palace of Darius next to the Middle Persian one which had been carved in 311, declaring that he had had the inscriptions in the ancient ruins read out to him.[8] On one occasion he specifies that his epigrapher was a Zoroastrian priest, who could have read the Sasanian inscription celebrating 'those who built this structure'. But the inscriptions left by the builder himself, Darius, would have been obscure, being written in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. What would ʿAḍud al-Dawla have thought about the pre-Sasanian origins of this city and why would he have thought it meaningful to carve himself into this tradition of engagement with the ancient remains of Iran? To begin to consider these questions, we must consider the kind of person whom he might have asked and how they would have understood Iran's ancient past. Fortunately, we have access to a history completed in the year 350 AH (AD 961), just six years after ʿAḍud al-Dawla's inscriptions, written in the city of Isfahan, the place where ʿAḍud al-Dawla was travelling to when he made them, by a scholar whose connection to ʿAḍud al-Dawla is confirmed by his dedication of one of his books to the emir. Examining Ḥamza's history allows us to see how Arabic translations of the Sasanian, Zoroastrian vision of history, compiled in a sixth-to-seventh-century text called the *Book of Kings*, became the key to an early Islamic archaeology of the very visible remains of the ancient Iranian city.

Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī and his *Chronology of the Kings of the Earth and the Prophets*

Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī was a scholar from the city of Isfahan, itself an ancient settlement and one of the major cities of central Iran.[9] Born in 280/893, he died sometime in the 350s/960s. While Isfahan was his home, he is known to have made three journeys to Baghdad where he studied with several of the most prominent scholars of his day. In his early lifetime Isfahan switched back and forth between the direct control by the Abbasid caliphs and warlords governing more or less in their name. In 323/935, however, when Ḥamza was in his early forties, the city fell into the hands of the Būyids, a decade before they expanded their power to Baghdad, thus ending the political authority of the now puppet caliphs.[10] As a litterateur and scholar, Ḥamza sought the patronage of these powerful new emirs. This is shown by his dedication

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[7] Donohue, *Buwayhid Dynasty*, 23–27; Miles, 'Portrait of the Buyid prince'.

[8] Blair, *Monumental Inscriptions*, 32–35.

[9] Part of the province of al-Jibāl, roughly classical Media, bordered to the south-east by Fārs/Persis, the south by Khūzistān, the west by Iraq, the north by Azerbaijan and the west by Khurasān.

[10] At his birth Isfahan would have been part of the Dulafid emirate, reverting back to ʿAbbāsid control in 284–897, though coming under the suzerainty of the Ziyārids in ca. 319/931. See Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, 153, 166–167; Bosworth, 'Mardāwīdj'.

of at least one book to ʿAḍud al-Dawla, the most powerful Būyid ruler, whose reign marked the apogee of his dynasty.[11] It was this emir whom we saw earlier inscribing himself into the long history of royal epigraphy at Persepolis. As such, we can place Ḥamza and his work in the midst of a moment of Iranian political reassertion which looked to the Persian heritage in order to legitimate new Islamic political realities and relationships.[12]

This position is borne out by what we know of Ḥamza's writings, which show a special concern for Persian history, language and culture. Aside from his world history, he is known to have written a (lost) history of Isfahan, as well as works on poetry, proverbs and lexicography. One biographer, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), claimed that Ḥamza was 'the most knowledgeable of his era with regard to Persian, and someone who was unmatched at conducting himself in Persian'.[13] Despite this, it seems that he only ever wrote in Arabic and was not part of the fledgling development of New Persian – contemporary high-register Persian, blending western and eastern Iranian features and written in the Arabic script – which was occurring in his lifetime further to the east. Rather than advocating the reinvention of Persian as a literary language, Ḥamza instead found ways to argue for the contribution of Persian to Arabic language and literature. Thus, in his *Muwāzana bayna -l-ʿarabī wa-l-ʿajamī* (*Comparison of Arabic and Persian*), on the relative merits of the two languages, Ḥamza strained, implausibly at times, to find Persian etymologies for Arabic terms.[14] Likewise, in his *al-Durra al-fākhira fī -l-amthāl al-sāʾira* (*The Precious Pearl: Proverbs in Circulation Today*) he systematically collected Arabic lines of poetry which he claimed were in fact 'translations' of Persian proverbs. Thus, it has been argued that rather than challenging the sanctified status of Arabic, the language of the book of God, and its prestige form of articulation, poetry, through which elites demonstrated their education and eloquence, Ḥamza was one of a group of Iranian intellectuals finding ways to leverage their Persian cultural capital by 'associat[ing] the wisdom of Persia they knew with the eloquence of Arabic they performed'.[15]

Ḥamza's clear interest in Persian history and culture has led to accusations, modern and medieval, that he was part of the *shuʿūbiyya*, a movement of pro-Persian reaction against notions of Arab superiority and exceptionalism. Al-Qifṭī (d. 646/1248), a medieval biographer, wrote that Ḥamza 'was accused of Persian chauvinism and conspiring against the Arab people'.[16] Whether or not he can be rightly considered

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[11] Noted by Key, 'Persian to Arabic', 108. On ʿAḍud al-Dawla, see Donohue, *Buwayhid Dynasty*, 65–85; Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam*, 272–285.

[12] On the Būyids and ideas of Persian kingship, see Busse, 'Revival of Persian kingship', 56–64, though Busse's essentialising view of Persian kingship as unchanging and inherently inimical to Islam colours his interpretation.

[13] The quote is from Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī's (d. 626/1229) *Udabāʾ*, given by Key, 'Persian to Arabic', 113.

[14] See the comments by Rosenthal, 'Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī'; Pourshariati, 'Sāsānid historical geography', 118.

[15] Key, 'Persian to Arabic', 112–116, quotations from 132–133.

[16] Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh*, 1.370: وكان ينسب إلى الشّعوبية وأنه يتعصّب على الأمة العربية . For discussion of the *shuʿūbiyya*, see the editors introduction to Ibn Qutayba, *Excellence of the Arabs*, xiv–xvii, and the bibliography at ibid., 283.

a Persian zealot has been debated by scholars, some arguing against al-Qifṭī that in his works he 'shows himself fully aware of the importance of the cultural rôle of the Arabs'.[17] Andrew Peacock, on the other hand, goes so far as to conclude – from Ḥamza's inclusion of astrological prophecies explaining the emergence of Islam and predicting the 'decline in the rule of the Arab nation' – that he was not just pro-Persian but in fact a crypto-Zoroastrian.[18] However, given that others have read him as a convinced Shiite, and medieval biographers make no accusation of his Zoroastrianism, this seems a claim too far.[19] We are better off concluding that we have no strong indication of what kind of Muslim Ḥamza was and that speculations about his secret inner beliefs are just that.

Ḥamza's *Taʾrīkh sinī mulūk al-arḍ wa-l-anbiyāʾ* (*Chronology of the Kings of the Earth and the Prophets*) incorporated both pre-Islamic and Islamic history in order to construct a complete reckoning of time from creation to his own day. To do so he detailed the information he could find about the successions of kings, prophets, or other rulers from pre-Islamic Persian, Greco-Roman, Israelite and Arab history. He attempted to synchronise these histories when he could, while despairing of the chronological disparities which he identified both within and between these histories.[20] He made real efforts to get internal knowledge of these traditions. Thus, for his Israelite chronology he consulted a Jewish scholar in Baghdad as well as a book written by a Jewish author.[21] On Greco-Roman history he used a book which had been translated from Greek in Baghdad and also arranged to have a Greek history owned by a Byzantine captive in Isfahan dictated with simultaneous translation for him.[22]

Nevertheless, his vision of the world and its peoples, inherited from Sasanian cosmography, was quite literally Perso-centric, claiming that 'the inhabited earth ... is divided between seven great nations: the Chinese, the Indians, the Blacks, the Berbers, the Romans, the Turks and the Aryans. The Aryans, who are the Persians,

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[17] Pourshariati, 'Sāsānid historical geography', 117–118, provides a round-up of opinions, herself siding with Goldziher that he was a *shuʿūbī*, while noting Mittwoch and Brockelmann's rejection of any overt anti-Arab prejudice evidenced by his works. The quote is from Rosenthal, 'Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī', who nevertheless sits on the fence. On *shuʿūbī* as 'bigot', see the editors and translators' introduction to Ibn Qutayba, *Excellence of the Arabs*.

[18] Peacock, 'Early Persian historians', 62–65. Peacock over-stresses Ḥamza's focus on Persian history when he suggests that Ḥamza merely 'allot[s] some space' to Arabic and Islamic history. Actually, Ḥamza devotes 110 pages to these topics as compared to 43 pages on pre-Islamic Iran.

[19] Adang, 'Chronology of the Israelites', 287.

[20] At Ḥamza, *Tarīkh*, 9, for example, he calls the Persian chronologies 'disordered and unsound' (مدخولة غير صحيحة), blaming their transmission between languages using scripts with ambiguous numerals.

[21] Adang, 'Chronology of the Israelites', 289.

[22] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 55–56, 61. Both books are described as being in *rūmiyya*, or 'Roman', which is likely to be Greek even though Ḥamza does use the specific Arabic term for Greek, *yūnāniyya*, when talking about Alexander's translation of ancient Persian wisdom for the Greeks, ibid., 34, 37. A Syriac chronicle would also be a plausible source, but we would expect Ḥamza to use the term *suryānī* for this, a term he does use several times, ibid., 7, 72, 73.

are situated between them in the centre of these kingdoms'.[23] Mirroring this Persian centrality, he began his history with the Persian rulers and devoted more space to them than other pre-Islamic peoples, forty-three pages in contrast to fourteen pages on Greco-Roman history, seven pages on Israelite history and a total of thirty-nine pages on pre-Islamic Arab rulers divided between four lines of kings from Iraq, Syria, Yemen and central Arabia.[24] Thus, despite his interest in multiple antiquities, it is clear that for Ḥamza the Persian past was the main ancient heritage to be understood.

While Ḥamza's particular interest in Persian history has long been commented on, what has not been noted is the particular role of cities and city-building in his account of Persian history. A crude measure of this is the fact that Ḥamza mentions the word 'city' twice as frequently in his section on Persian history as compared to his sections on Greco-Roman and Israelite history, and at least five time more often than in his histories of Arab rule.[25] For his Persian history, at least, we know that Ḥamza was being highly selective with his source material: in his entry for Jamshid, his third king of Persia, he notes that 'the biographical books are stuffed with stories about him but I have chosen not to mention them lest this chapter get too long'.[26] Al-Ṭabarī, using similar sources and with whom Ḥamza had studied in Baghdad, covered pre-Islamic Persian history in some three-hundred and thirty pages of the modern English translation of his history, in comparison with Ḥamza's forty-three pages in the Arabic edition.[27] Thus we must conclude that Ḥamza, one of the foremost scholars of his day, made an active choice to make cities a significant part of the narrative of Persian antiquity in his rather slimmer universal history. But what were the origins of

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[23] Ibid., 6: المسكون من ربع الأرض على تفاوت أقطاره مقسوم بين سبع أمم كبار وهم الصين والهند والسودان والبربر والروم والترك والأريان فالأريان من بينهم وهم الفرس في وسط هذه الممالك. See Peacock, 'Early Persian historians', 63.

[24] In this, he was typical of early Islamic historians. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), whom Ḥamza had met in Baghdad, devoted some 330 pages on the Persian kings, while barely spending a couple of pages on Greco-Roman history in its entirety, if we discount Alexander (who had a major role to play in Persian history and was integrated into sacred history as the Qurʾānic figure Dhū-l-Qarnayn). On Persian history, al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 1.344–345, 348–354; 2.1–10; 3.19–30, 112–118; 4.1–20, 43–55, 71–78, 81–85, 96–112; 5.1–74, 82–162, 252–268, 285–324, 381–412. Compare the brief mention of Seleucus and Antiochus at ibid., 4.96, and the list of Roman emperors at ibid., 4.126–127. Al-Dīnawarī's (d. ca. 900) *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* only mentions Roman rulers as antagonists to the Persian kings who are the main focus of his narrative. Al-Yaʿqūbī devotes 30 pages to the Persian kings in his history, see his *Works*, 2.450–479, in contrast to 4 pages on Greco-Roman rulers, ibid., ii, 431–434, though his treatment of Greek writers on medicine, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy dwarfs these political concerns at 77 pages, ibid., 2.359–428, 434–440. On Arabic historical knowledge of the Byzantine past, see El Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, 111–120.

[25] The term 'city' occurs in the section on Persian history 72 times over the course of 43 pages, an average of 1.67 times per page. In contrast the term is used only 11 times in his Greco-Roman history (0.78 times/page), 6 times in his Israelite history (0.86 times/page), 6 times in his history of the pre-Islamic Arabs (0.15 times/page), and 22 times in his 71 page section on Islamic-era history (0.31 times/page). This preponderance of mentions is despite my exclusion from the count of the plural form *al-madāʾin*, 'the cities', which is also commonly used as a proper noun referring to the Persian capital of Ctesiphon, and which would therefore skew the count.

[26] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 27: ومن آثاره أشياء قد حشى بها كتب السير فتركت ذكرها لئلا يطول قصة هذا الفصل .

[27] See n. 15 for page references.

his information about the ancient Persian city and why did he choose to incorporate it into his total accounting of world history?

Translating the ancient Persian past: Kings, cities and the origins of civilisation

Ḥamza's Persian history stretches from a 'first man', Kayumars,[28] until the death of the last Sasanian emperor Yazdegerd III (r. AD 632–651), defeated by the Muslim conquerors. It is organised by the reigns of kings, arranged in four successive dynasties. In the first sub-chapters he lists the rulers and their reign lengths for each dynasty, according to three different sources, before finally giving a sequential history of each reign. Ḥamza tells us that he is working from eight separate manuscripts (*nusakh*) translated or compiled, presumably from Middle Persian originals into Arabic, concerning the history or biographies of the kings of Persia in general or the Sasanians in particular. The translators/compilers of these works are named, including figures known from other sources as Persian-to-Arabic translators and even one Zoroastrian priest.[29] Ḥamza's sections on Israelite and Greco-Roman history demonstrate his concern to get real, if sometimes imperfect, information from non-Arabic sources, and his list of Persian kings corresponds closely to other early Islamic histories which claim to be dependent on Middle Persian texts.[30] As such, there is little reason to doubt that the content of his information indirectly derives from Middle Persian texts composed in the Sasanian period, reworked through translation into Arabic.[31]

The traditional view is that all of the extensive early Islamic Arabic and New Persian accounts of pre-Islamic Persian history were reliant on a single, large, court-

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[28] Given the variation in spelling of the figures of Persian national history between Middle Persian, Arabic and New Persian, I avoid confusion by simply following the spellings used in Dick Davis' English translation of Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh.*

[29] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 10.

[30] Adang, 'Chronology of the Israelites', 302, concludes that 'Ḥamza's account of Israelite and early Jewish history is among the most accurate ones produced by medieval Muslim scholars'. An easy comparison of Ḥamza's list with two other early Islamic historians can be made by consulting Hoyland, *Three Arabic Chronicles.*

[31] For a discussion of Ḥamza's sources see Hämeen-Anttila, *Khwadāynāmag*, 59–100, which now supersedes Rubin, 'Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's Sources'. The exact level of correspondence between Ḥamza's account and Sasanian historiography cannot be conclusively proven because we have no extant Middle Persian manuscripts from the Sasanian period. Compilations of Middle Persian texts, clearly based on a body of late antique literature, do survive. However, none of these texts are strictly historiographical, the earliest dated Middle Persian colophon is from Baghdad in 1020, and the compilations themselves appear to have been made in the ninth century. The texts they preserve clearly include responses to the post-Sasanian realities of the Zoroastrian community after two centuries of Islamic rule. As such they are best understood as early Islamic era cultural productions, contemporary with Arabic and New Persian texts such as Ḥamza's, drawing on similar bodies of sources. See Vevaina, 'Orality and textuality', especially 172, 185. As an example, *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* (ed. and transl. Daryaee) is a mostly Sasanian late antique geographical text which nevertheless includes the Arabian cities of Mecca and Medina, likely unknown to the Sasanians, and the cities of Kufa and Baghdad, founded in the Islamic era, see 26, 28.

produced history of Persian kings called the *Khwadāynāmag* (*Book of Kings*), written in the sixth or early seventh century.[32] It seems more likely, however, that we should consider the *Khwadāynāmag* proper as 'rather short and dry account[s] of each king, listing his regnal years, perhaps some throne speeches or maxims, mentions of the foundation of cities and Fires, and the main (positive) events during his reign, such as major victories'.[33] The rather longer accounts of Persian history which we find in Islamic historians such as al-Ṭabarī, and ultimately in Ferdowsi's *Shāhnāmah*, were the result of authors complementing this basic information using a tradition of 'epic narratives about specific persons, especially kings, and their heroic deeds' found in other texts.[34] While it is possible that Ḥamza drew on and selected from such texts, Ḥamza's history of the ancient Persians appears to cleave closely to the original, laconic *Book of Kings* in a relatively faithful reception and reworking of late antique Sasanian ideas about both the Sasanians and the dynasties which preceded them.

Thus, while recognising that historians like Ḥamza creatively engaged with this tradition, the Sasanian historical perspective conditioned what early Muslims could know about ancient Iranian history. This tradition covered Sasanian-era history from a self-aggrandising and self-legitimating dynastic perspective. In contrast, it passed briefly over the era of Arsacid Parthian rule (r. *c.* 247 BC–AD 224), characterising it as a period of Iran divided after the cataclysm of Alexander's conquests. The reigns described here have a sketchy correspondence to Parthian history at best.[35] However, with the representation of Iran's history before Alexander's conquests this 'national history' parts entirely with what we know of actual Iranian history. Beyond preserving the fact that Alexander conquers over a king called Dārā, *i.e.* Darius, the Achaemenids are erased and in their place we find a dynasty of kings called the Kayanids and then, before them, the Pishdadids, whose rule takes us back to the beginning of humanity.

These Kayanid and Pishdadid kings are not historically attested rulers but rather figures from the sacred history of the Avesta, the Zoroastrian scripture composed in the early first millennium BC and compiled into writing under the Sasanians.[36] This

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[32] This view was propounded by Nöldeke, *Das iranisches Nationalepos*, and underpins, for example, Shahbazi, 'Historiography ii. Pre-Islamic period' or Yarshater, 'Iranian national history', 359.

[33] Hämeen-Anttila, *Khwadāynāmag*, 226–227.

[34] Hoyland, *Three Arabic Chronicles*, 21. Hoyland and Hämeen-Anttila differ on whether the original *Khwadāy-Nāmag* was a single text or a tradition of associated texts, but otherwise their assessments of its nature are complementary.

[35] Morony and Wasserstein, 'Mulūk al-Ṭawāʾif'; Schippmann, 'Arsacids ii: the Arsacid dynasty'.

[36] These Avestan texts are not historical *per se*, but texts such as the Zamyād Yasht, a hymn of praise which names those who had possessed *xwarrah*, kingly glory, give a skeletal narrative which accords with the progression of rulers we see in the 'national history' in Arabic and New Persian redaction, see translation in Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta*. The narrative also appears clearly in the 33rd chapter of the *Bundahishn*, an apocalyptic account of Iran's history beginning with the first man, passing through mythic and historic time to the Arab conquests and continuing to millennial future time, see translation in Daryaee, 'Historiography in late antique Iran', 70–74. On the Avesta, see Kellens, 'AVESTA i. Survey of the history and contents of the book,' *EIr*. On the Kayanids and Pishdadids' Avestan origin, see Kellens, 'L'Avesta comme source historique', discussed by Daryaee, 'Tripartite Sasanian vision', 66–69. Payne, *State of Mixture*, 27–30, summarises Zoroastrian cosmology and the Kayanids' place in it.

apparent 'forgetting' of the Achaemenids has been the subject of much scholarly debate. Touraj Daryaee has recently stressed that not remembering the Achaemenids was a conscious ideological choice by the Sasanians, pointing out the various potential transmission channels of knowledge about the Achaemenids into the Sasanian period, had the Sasanians wanted to memorialise them.[37] He argues that this suppression of Achaemenid history was a Sasanian response to attempts by the Arsacids, the dynasty the Sasanians displaced, to present themselves as the inheritors of the Achaemenids by claiming descent from them and increasingly drawing on Achaemenid imagery in their iconographic production.[38] In contrast, from the late fourth century AD we see the Sasanians presenting themselves as the inheritors of these mythical Kayanids, using terminology on their coinage that the Avesta or later Parthian-era epic associates with them, such as *rām shahr* ('he who maintains peace in the realm') or *khwarrah* ('kingly glory'), and using the title *kay* as a royal title. Whereas contemporaneous third century inscriptions show that Ardeshir, the first Sasanian ruler, claimed himself to be descended 'from the gods', by the mid-Sasanian period the dynasty claimed rather to be descended from these Kayanid kings. Daryaee links this change to a wider late antique phenomenon in which accounts found in the scriptures of state religions came to dominate the ancient historical imagination, much as biblical history and Old Testament models of kingship came to overshadow ancient Greek history for the Byzantines.[39]

Kayanid history was a useful ideological prop for the Sasanians. Internally, it could be presented as a period of ideal Iranian political unity lost with Alexander's conquests but restored by the Sasanians.[40] Externally, Kayanid history provided an etiology for the Sasanian geopolitical world view of the Iranians: between a Roman state to the west and Turko-Chinese states to the north and east, destined ultimately to avenge an ancient betrayal by the founders of those kingdoms and re-realise universal Iranian rule.[41] Thus, in transposing the Sasanian account of universal history into Arabic, early Islamic historians were recycling the content of Zoroastrian sacred history which had been reworked by the Sasanians into a legitimation of their imperial project.

Such a translation had to engage with competing understandings of the people and events of ancient Iranian history. As Yuhan Vevaina has demonstrated, a Kayanid figure like Kay Khosrow can be found in Zoroastrian Middle Persian texts compiled in

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[37] Daryaee points to Yarshater, Kettenhofen, and Roaf as the main proponents of the 'forgetting' position, from Iranian (Middle Persian and early Islamic) texts, classical texts and architecture, respectively, see Daryaee, 'Construction of the Past', 494–500.

[38] Daryaee, 'Tripartite Sasanian vision', 70. On Arsacid Achaemenid claims, Neusner, 'Parthian political ideology'.

[39] On the Kayanid rather than Achaemenid legacy, Daryaee, 'Construction of the past', 500–503. For more on Sasanian historiography as religiously focused and late antique, Daryaee, 'Historiography in late antique Iran'. On the limited interest of Byzantine chroniclers in classical Greek history, Jeffreys, 'Attitude of Byzantine chroniclers'.

[40] Daryaee, 'Construction of the past', 502.

[41] Daryaee, 'Tripartite Sasanian vision'.

the early Islamic period, shown in his Avestan, apocalyptic role as the one who will subdue Wāy, the incarnation of finite time, and revive the ancient epic Iranian heroes for the eschatological confrontation which will overcome death and usher in the end times. Different Muslim constituencies must have had varied levels of awareness of these figures' Zoroastrian religious connotations, and differing levels of tolerance for recounting them.[42] Some Muslim historians, such as al-Yaʿqūbī, noted the supernatural tales which existed about these figures but called them abhorrent and claimed that 'Persians of intellect and knowledge … have never treated such things as real or true'.[43] As such, he refused to give any real account of these rulers, simply listing them before moving on to the Sasanians. Al-Ṭabarī, on the other hand, seems to have been fairly relaxed about relaying the mythic tales of ancient Persia.[44] Others, such as al-Dīnawarī, tried to preserve something of their sacred significance by eliding biblical and ancient Iranian sacred history, arguing that the biblical Arpachshad was the Persian Jamshid, Nimrod was Feraydun, David was Kay Khosrow and Nebuchadnezzar was the cousin of Kay Lohrasp.[45] Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī, by contrast, kept biblical and Persian ancient history well separated, aside from the occasional attempt to chronologically synchronise them.[46] Unlike al-Yaʿqūbī though, he chose to salvage something of the histories associated with the Pishdadid and Kayanid kings. He did not do so, however, by including the tales which al-Yaʿqūbī had explicitly rejected, of snake-shouldered demonic tyrants and immortal rulers in occultation. Rather, much as the Byzantine chroniclers had demythologised the pagan gods of Hellenic tradition by presenting them as human rulers, he stripped away the supernatural elements of their stories.[47]

Part of the way in which Ḥamza found an acceptable role for the mythic ancient Persian kings was through the theme of 'firsts', the innovation of new practices, a popular Arabic historiographical topic in the ninth and tenth centuries.[48] Ḥamza recounted how these rulers invented the fundamentals of civilisation and developed the state apparatuses of kingship, tasks which appear roughly divided between the Pishdadid and Kayanid kings respectively. Thus, we are told that Hushang Pishdad, the first ever king, 'innovated' ('abdaʿa') the extraction of iron and its crafting into weapons and the tools of manufacturing. Perhaps relating this development of metal to the ascendancy of man over other predators, we are also told that he instituted lion-hunting,

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[42] Vevaina, 'Orality and textuality', 177–187, especially his conclusions at 186–187. On Islamic receptions of mythical Zoroastrian figures, whether secularising or harmonising, and a discussion of Iranian-Semitic syncretism, see Shaked, 'First man, first king'.

[43] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Works*, 450, 452.

[44] E.g., his account of al-Ḍaḥḥāk (Zahhak) or Bīwarasb, whose details are explicitly attacked as an absurd fable by al-Yaʿqūbī, at al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 2.1–10.

[45] Al-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, 278, 284–286, 298–299, 304–305.

[46] E.g. the comments at Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 28, telling us which Persian kings ruled at the time of Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar and Christ.

[47] The only supernatural deed performed by an ancient Persian king reported by Ḥamza is Kay Khosrow's slaying of a great serpent or dragon (*tinnīn*), Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 31. On Greek euhemerism, see Jeffreys, 'Attitude of Byzantine chroniclers', 223–224 and Jeffreys, 'Malalas' world view', 62.

[48] On this trope, see Bernards, 'Awāʾil', with bibliography.

the prototypical image of kingship celebrated in ancient near eastern iconography.[49] In the lifetime of his successor, Tahmures, people came to craft idols and worship their ancestors as gods, while also developing the practice of fasting, though the king is not made directly responsible for these heretical innovations.[50] Feraydun himself is said to have invented charms to ward off evil and antidotes to poison, founded the science of medicine, identified curative plants and bred mules for the first time.[51] The next Pishdadid king, Manuchehr, was the first to bring aromatic plants from the mountains and planted the first garden.[52] With the Kayanids, the story of progress shifts to the development of the state. During the reign of their first king, Kay Qobad, Ḥamza tells us that people began to cultivate the lands, from the proceeds of which they paid a tithe which funded the supply of the army and defence of the frontiers.[53] Kay Lohrasp set down the first military registers, erected the first pavilions, and appointed his frontier governors (*marzbāns*) with thrones and bracelets of rank.[54] The last such notice tells us that Darab son of Bahman instituted a courier system of post roads, horses, and waystations.[55] Clearly, Ḥamza's model of technological development is top-down and king led. William McCants has argued that such claims of kingly 'firsts' derive from Sasanian court literature intended to aggrandise the royal institution.[56] By choosing to include these firsts in their works, early Islamic historians reproduced etiologies which claimed a monarchical, Persian origin for civilisation and governance at a time when new, non-Arab Islamic rulers and potentates were emerging in Iran and claiming descent from the Sasanians or even the Kayanids or Pishdadids themselves.[57]

The one other activity which Ḥamza consistently attributes to these ancient kings, threading it through their development of the technologies of civilisation and governance, is their construction of and in cities. Almost every king of note is reported building cities, to the point that city-building appears as the activity *par excellence* of ancient kingship, far more so than military campaigning or anything else.[58] This is

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[49] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 26 (Ūshang Fīshdād). On lions in Persian imperial imagery, Busse, 'Revival of Persian kingship', 54–55, and their importance specifically for Ḥamza's Būyid patron ʿAḍud al-Dawla and his claim to Sasanian ancestory, ibid., 60–61.

[50] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 27.

[51] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 29.

[52] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 29.

[53] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 30.

[54] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 31.

[55] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 32–33.

[56] McCants, *Founding Gods*, 114, and more generally 105–118. Surviving Middle Persian tradition makes claims about the originators of particular cultural practices and technologies, however it tends to attribute these to the primeval figures of Persian myth who lived before there were kings. See, for example, *Denkard*, bk. 3, ch. 209, translated in Sanjānā and Kohiyār, *The Dinkard*. See also, *Denkard*, bk. 7, ch. 1.11–16, in West, *Pahlavi Texts*, vol. 5, 6–8. where the children of the first man, Mashye and Mashyāne, are given the prime role in this. McCants argues that these are cultural aetiologies as produced by a Zoroastrian priestly class.

[57] McCants, *Founding Gods*, 115–116.

[58] Of the seventeen Persian kings before Alexander, twelve have such buildings attributed to them. The exceptions are Hushang, who is nevertheless said to be crowned at the city of Iṣṭakhr, which is named

particularly notable when we compare Ḥamza's narrative with other texts reliant on a similar body of traditions. The *Shahnameh* (*Book of Kings*) of Ferdowsi, for example, preserves extensive narratives about Kay Kavus which include campaigns against the demon kingdom of Mazanderan as well as the more prosaic kings of Egypt and north Africa and the Turanians north-east of Iran. Yet all Ḥamza reports about his rule is his construction of a great monument at Babylon.[59] Clearly, preservation of any material about city-building, along with notes about the development of technology, culture and governance, is the priority in Ḥamza's highly selective portrait of the ancient Persian rulership.

This focus on city building is accompanied by a subsidiary interest in the ancient Persian kings' digging of waterways, including the great rivers of Eurasia:

> It was [Manuchehr] who dug out the rivers of the Euphrates and the Indus, which is greater than the Euphrates, and who diverted great rivers from the Euphrates and Tigris.[60]

Ḥamza's account is a prime example of what James C. Scott calls the 'ideology of the agrarian state', which sees the rule of Persian kings as prior to the establishment of cities and even carving of these rivers through the ancient landscape. It is a thoroughly anthropocentric and state-centric vision of the origins of the landscape of human civilisation, which inverts the historically verifiable process in which the river wetlands of Mesopotamia gave birth to sedentism, followed by intensified irrigation and agriculture, and the much later subsequent development of states.[61]

The cities which these kings patronise are presented not in the abstract, but named as the living cities of Ḥamza's Iran, whose presence in this narrative claims their existence since time immemorial.[62] There seems to be method to his presentation, with Ḥamza granting the greatest antiquity to the cities which would be royal seats of Iran. Thus, we are told that the first king on earth, Hushang, was crowned at Iṣṭakhr, the Greeks' Persepolis.[63] Thereafter Ḥamza tells us it was named *būm shāh*, the Persian for 'the land of the king'. Hushang's successor, Tahmures

> built the city of Babylon and the citadel of Marw. In some of the manuscripts [it says] that he build Kardīndād, which is one of the seven cities of al-Madāʾin ... In Isfahan he built two great constructions, one of which is called Mahrīn and the other Sārwayh. Mahrīn became

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Būm Shāh (meaning 'Land of the King'), because of this, and Feraydun, Manuchehr, Kay Qobad and Kay Lohrasp.

[59] For extensive narratives about Kay Kavus from the Persian tradition, see Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, 142–280, in contrast to Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 30.

[60] Ibid., 29: هو الذي كرا نهر الفرات ونهر مهران وهو اكبر من الفرات، وشق من الفرات ودجله انهارا كبارا ز . The two Zab rivers of upper Mesopotamia which feed the Tigris are also said to have been constructed by the king Zav, while other rulers are presented creating or diverting rivers of Iraq and Iran, ibid., 30, 35, 38.

[61] Scott, *Against the Grain*, 43–96, 116–137.

[62] Often, Ḥamza reports both the original name of a city and it modern name, e.g. the cities built by Kay Goshtasp and Kay Ardeshir, Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 31–32.

[63] Strictly speaking, Iṣṭakhr lay three miles from the ruins of the Achaemenid ceremonial capital Persepolis, but was generally considered interchangeable with it in Arabic sources, on which see Mottahedeh, 'Eastern travels', 253.

thereafter the name for the rural district below that building, which had used to be called Kūk. As for Sārwayh, after thousands of years it was encircled by the walls of the city of Jayy [the main city of Isfahan]. Both of these monuments still stand.[64]

Iṣṭakhr/Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenids, the capital of Fārs province (Parsis) under the Parthians, and the hometown of the Sasanians, is glorified as the original seat of kingship. Next in antiquity are the great capitals of later eras: Babylon, whose fame passed into Islamic lore from both the Bible and the Zoroastrian tradition;[65] and al-Madāʾin, known in western scholarship as Ctesiphon, the capital of the Arsacid and then Sasanian empires.[66] Ḥamza adds to these Marw, the first Islamic capital of Iran and the seat of the revolution which brought the Abbasid dynasty to power, and his own city of Isfahan, showing some local pride. These cities do not appear as the contingent constructions of dynasties, part of the ebb and flow of human history, but rather as coterminous with the invention of civilisation by Persian kings, ancient as iron, tools and idolatry. Implicitly, the great empires which ruled from them are presented as standing in succession to the original, ancient Persian kings, drawing on a shared, age-old heritage whose monuments could still be seen.

As we might expect, given Ḥamza's focus on city-building as the emblem of Persian kingship, cities are key to the way in which he emplotted the master narrative of the history which he derived from the translated Sasanian tradition: the Persian kings' battle to maintain the integrity of Iran against the Greco-Roman power (*al-Rūm*) to the west and the Turko-Chinese power to the east.[67] In Ḥamza's narrative of the pre-Sasanian kings the eastern threat is represented by the invasion and conquest of Iran by 'Afrasyab the Turk', well known from longer Persian epic traditions as the eastern nemesis of the Pishdadid and Kayanid kings. The consequences for Iran are spelled out in Afrasyab's destruction of exactly the world of cities and rivers whose construction was presented as the fruits of Iran's proper rule:

In the years of his ascendancy over Iran, Afrasyab continued destroying cities, smashing fortresses, blocking up rivers, choking canals with earth, and filling in wellsprings. In the fifth year of his rule the people began to suffer from drought and did so till the end of his reign, as the water sources dried up for the period of his rule. The cultivated lands went unworked and the fields became worthless until Afrasyab was restrained by God.[68]

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[64] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 26–27.

[65] On Babylon in Zoroastrian sources – where its construction is often associated with al-Ḍaḥḥāk/Zahhak rather than Tahmures, see Van Bladel, 'Arabic history of science', 52–56.

[66] Ḥamza tells us that Tahmures' successor, Jamshid, lays out the actual city of Ctesiphon (Ṭīsfūn), which he describes as the largest of the seven cities which made up al-Madāʾin, *Taʾrīkh*, 27.

[67] Daryaee, 'Tripartite Sasanian vision'. Ḥamza describes the division of the world between these three powers, and the injustice done to the first of the Persian kings, Īrāj, at *Taʾrīkh*, 28–29.

[68] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 29: وبقي افراسياب في سني غلبته على مملكة ايران شهراً يهدم المدن وينسف الحصون ويدفن الأنهار، ويطم القنى ويعوّر العيون. وفي سنةِ خمس من سني غلبته قحط الناس فبقوا فيه إلى آخر أيامه. فغارت المياه في مدة أيامه، وتعطلت العمارات وبطلتِ الزراعات، إلى أن قمعه اللّ

The fate of the cities is bound up with that of the land itself: their destruction the first signifier of a misrule which threatens the very viability of Iran for human habitation. The inversion of proper order is represented by the rightful king's displacement from the civilised landscape of cities and fields: 'Afrasyab drove him from the throne of his kingship and confined him in the tangled forests of Ṭabaristān'.[69] Once Afrasyab was vanquished, through divine intervention, the restoration of the fragile health of the land is accomplished by the new king's attentiveness to cities and irrigation:

> When Zav became king he ordered the restoration of the cities and fortresses which Afrasyab had ruined, the dredging of the waterways he had blocked up, and the abolition of land tax and duties from the people. The lands prospered and returned to the best of their previous state.[70]

The second great threat to civilisation in Ḥamza's narrative of ancient history comes from the west. Alexander the Great ends the Kayanid line of kings and seeks to curb Iran's power by dividing it between numerous kinglets, 'so that thereby enmity and hatred be engendered among them and their pre-occupation with each other would leave them unable to turn their attention on those people remote from them in the west'.[71] This narrative sets up Ardeshir, the first Sasanian king, as the saviour of this balkanised Iran. We are told that Ardeshir 'disliked the baneful opposition between their kingdoms, despite their agreement on the origin of their religion', which he reasoned must have been the result of a former state of union or amity (*ulfa*). Further, we learn that on questioning the scholars at his court knowledgeable in matters of religion (*dīn*) and sovereignty (*mulk*), Ardeshir was told that 'the affairs of the realms of their ancient kings remained well ordered because royal authority was confined to one person whose subjects agreed unanimously to obey him', resulting in the honouring of their religion, the fecundity of their estate and the suppression of their enemies.[72] No matter whether or not this was in fact a reflection of Sasanian ideology, as argued by Daryaee, Ḥamza's replication of this discussion at length should be understood as an active choice taken and contextualised by the circumstances of his literary production. In the century before the Būyid rise to power in Iraq and Iran during Ḥamza's lifetime, the eastern caliphate had fragmented into a multitude of smaller states. Given that Ḥamza had dedicated works to a Būyid ruler, his inclusion of Ardeshir's advisors' call for a greater Iran re-united under one ruler and a shared

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[69] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 29: وازعجه عن سرير ملكه واحجره في غياض طبرستان .

[70] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 30: لما ملك زو أمر باعادة ما كان خربه افراسياب من المدن والحصون وحفر ما دفنه من الأنهار، ورفع عن الناس الخراج والوظايف، وعمرت البلاد وعادت إلى احسن ما كانت عليه .

[71] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 34: فيتولد من أجله العداوة والبغضاء بينهم، فيقع لهم من الشغل بأنفسهم ما لا يتفرغون إلى ما نأى عنهم من أهل أهل المغرب

[72] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 36: . . فأنكر الخلاف العارض في ممالكهم مع اتفاقهم في أصل دينهم وعلم أنه لم يجمعهم على الدين إلا الفة سبقت لهم . فأستخبر من بحضرته من العلماء بأمور الدين وأحوال الملك عن سبب ما ألفى عليه ملوك زمنه فعرفوه أن أوائل ملوكهم ما زال أمرهم في ممالكهم منتظما لا يتجاوز الملك واحدا وذلك الواحد يجتمع الرعية على طاعته . . . وكان لذلك دينهم عزيزا وجنابهم خصيبا وعدوهم مقموعا .

faith on the basis of its former union is surely a model offered by Ḥamza to the Daylamite emirs of his own day, with whose rise to power he concluded his work.[73]

The pernicious nature of Alexander's rule over Iran is again expressed through the destruction he wreaks on its cities. Alexander's intention in invading Iran is expressed doubly as the 'murder of the Persian nobles and men of rank' and the 'ruination [*takhrīb*] of the cities and fortresses'. It is expressed again later as the 'murder of the leaders and nobles' and the 'bringing of ruin universally to the cities and fortresses'.[74] In this latter case Alexander's vandalism is sealed by his burning the books of Persian religion and the sciences, though only after having had the latter translated into Greek and Coptic to be transported to Alexandria, thus following Sasanian tradition in claiming a Persian origin for Greek science.[75] Throughout his *Taʾrīkh*, Ḥamza associates the ruins throughout Iran which he attributes to Alexander with this sense of cultural loss: we are told that an ancient bridge he destroyed could not be restored, but had to be built over, and that a Sasanian king founded a new city over the ruins of a former city which had been so thoroughly annihilated by Alexander that its name was forgotten.[76] In both instances the structure or city is ultimately restored, but with a discontinuity of knowledge or technology that echoes Alexander's role as the great destroyer of ancient Persian wisdom, philosophy and literature. Alexander's comeuppance, in Ḥamza's text, is also implicitly tied to his destruction of cities: we learn that while returning from India he became ill at the city of Qom: 'his sickness continued on his way and he died before reaching Babylon, which he had made into a heap of dust'.[77] In monstering Alexander, Ḥamza was following the Zoroastrian/Sasanian perspective, which stood in contrast to a newer, Islamic tradition, resting on the identification of Alexander with the Qurʾānic figure Dhū-l-Qarnayn, which had rehabilitated him as an ideal Persian and Islamic ruler.[78] Ḥamza was clearly aware of this tradition, and of traditions about Alexander's foundation of cities in Iran, but rejected them outright:

> According to what the story-tellers find in the histories, he built twelve cities in the land of Iran, calling all of them Alexandria, one each in Isfahan, Herat, Marw, Samarqand, Soghdia, Babylon, and Maysān, and four in the alluvial plain of Iraq. But there is no basis for this story, for he was a destroyer, not a builder.[79]

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[73] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 183.

[74] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 34: لما فرغ الاسكندر من قتل الأشراف وذوي الأقدار من الفرس، وأستولى على تخريب المدن والحصون ووصل إلى ما. فعندها إستولى الاسكندر على مملكة فارس وأذاع القتل في العظماء والأشراف، وعم المدائن والحصون بالتخريب :37 .,Ibid . أراد

[75] As discussed by Gutas, *Greek Thought*, 34–45, and Van Bladel, 'Arabic history of science', 56–62.

[76] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 27 (the bridge built by Jamshid at al-Madāʾin), 39 (the unknown city built over by Shapur I). Alexander's ruin of another city built by Homay Jahrāzād is mentioned at ibid., 32, though the name remains known in that case.

[77] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 33: فلما بلغ قومس مرض بها وتمادت علته في طريقه فمات قبل ان يصل إلى بابل وكان قد جعلها تل تراب .

[78] Much has been written on the 'Islamic' and 'Persian' Alexander. See, for example, Weinfield, *The Islamic Alexander*; Manteghi, *Alexander the Great in the Persian Tradition*; Stoneman *et al.*, *The Alexander Romance*.

[79] Ḥamza, *Tārīkh*, 33-4: وفيما وجده القصاص من الأخبار أنه بنى بأرض إيران إثنتي عشرة مدينة سماها كلها الاسكندرية منها واحدة بأصفهان، وواحدة بهراة، وواحدة بمرو، وواحدة بسمرقند، وواحدة بالصغد، وواحدة ببابل، وواحدة بميسان، وأربعا بالسواد. أصل لأنه كان مخرّبا ولم يكن بنّاء .

Ḥamza's consistent use of terminology associated with ruins (*kharāb*) when discussing Alexander (*kharraba*, *takhrīb*, *mukharrib*), and reserved elsewhere for other tyrannical figures such as Afrasyab and Nebuchadnezzar, confirms that he is making a programmatic point associating ruined cities with Iran's subjection, division, or misrule.[80] By contrast, Iran's deliverance through the restoration of good governance by the Sasanians after the post-Alexandrian interregnum is represented by an explosion of city-building: eighteen new-built cities are named and located in Ḥamza's account of the reigns of the first two Sasanian kings Ardeshir and Shapur. The only Sasanian rulers who can match them in Ḥamza's account are the late fifth- to sixth-century rulers Qobad (r. 488–531) and Khosrow Anushirvan (r. 531–579).[81] Indeed, in contrast to the Kayanid and Pishdadid period, there is very little mention of city-building in Ḥamza's account of the Sasanian kings in the two centuries between Shapur I and Qobad.[82]

This incongruity invites reflection on the formation of the sources of Ḥamza's account, which gave him the material to represent city-building as such a fundamental activity of the Pishdadids, the Kayanids, the first Sasanian rulers and the later Sasanians. Although there appears to have been a Middle Persian literature which sought systematically to record the founders of cities, Ḥamza's account appears to be totally disconnected from this literature in the form in which it survives.[83] Rather, Ḥamza's account was in all probability, as he states in his preamble to this section of his work, closely reliant on Arabic translations of the Middle Persian *Khwadāynāmag* – a collection of short historical accounts of Persian kings – first produced in the late Sasanian period, probably in the sixth or early seventh century, likely with a

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[80] For *kh-r-b* derived terms associated with Alexander, see ibid., 27, 32, 34, 39, 64, for Afrāsiyāb, 30, for Nebuchadnezzar, 28, 31, 69, 72, 73, and for Roman or Arab invaders, 38 (twice), 41, 58.

[81] The account names seven cities built by Qobad and opens its section on Khosrow, having describing his regalia, by saying that he 'built a number of cities' (بنى عدة مدن), naming two before saying that he built others as well, ibid., 44–5.

[82] From Hormozd son of Shapur to the reign of Qobad's father Fayrūz (ca. 270–457 AD), twelve reigns in total, Ḥamza only mentions one ruler, Shapur II, constructing a city.

[83] We know of a text named *Ayādgār ī Šahrīhā* (*Memoire of Cities*), apparently from the Sasanian period, while a text titled *Šahrestānīhā-ī Ērān-šahr* (*Cities of Iran*), actually survives, albeit with some ʿAbbāsid-era additions from the time of its early Islamic redaction. This latter text is a simple gazetteer of cities naming their founders, including many of the Kayanid and Pishdadid figures Ḥamza recounts, divided into a four-part regional scheme which appears to reflect Sasanian administrative geography and somewhat ambitious territorial claims. It would seem to be exactly the kind of source which Ḥamza could have used for his claims about ancient city founders. However, a comparison of Ḥamza's *Taʾrīkh* and the *Šahrestānīhā* shows near total mismatch in their attributions of founders to cities. The only agreement between the texts are on a few cities founded by the first and second Sasanian rulers Ardeshir and Shapur, all of which have the name of the founder as part of the name of the city, suggesting this agreement relies on inference rather than common tradition, given these texts' disagreement elsewhere. This comparison therefore contravenes Hämeen-Anttila's (acknowledged) speculation that the *Šahrestānīhā* might be derived from the *Khwadāynāmag* in his *Khwadāynāmag*, 227.

continuation to the end of the dynasty.[84] In this connection, it is crucial to note that there is a very high correlation between the statements which Ḥamza records about the Pishdadids' and the Kayanids' city-building and waterway-making and those found in the histories of al-Ṭabarī and al-Dīnawarī.[85] This strongly suggests that the 'cities and irrigation' theme which is present in Ḥamza was a feature of the Arabic translation(s) of the *Khwadāynāmag* used by those three authors, and probably the original Sasanian text.[86]

The propagation of these themes as aspects of ideal rulership at the late Sasanian court makes good sense. Richard Payne has argued that the later Sasanians' intensification of their coercive power was rooted in a particular form of territorialisation: a 'package of walls, fortified settlements, and systems of irrigation ... across vast geographical spaces'.[87] The construction of these elements was exactly what was being celebrated in Ḥamza's account. Beyond the choice of themes, the strategy of legitimating later Sasanian practices by ascribing them to the first members of the dynasty was also current at the sixth-century Sasanian court. Khosrow Anushirvan (r. 531–579), for example, patronised an idealised biography

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[84] This characterisation of the *Khawadāynāmag* follows those made in the most comprehensive treatment of this work, Hämeen-Anttila, *Khwadāynāmag*. At 182, he states that 'Ḥamza seems to have followed very closely the Arabic translation(s) of the *Khwadāynāmag*, on which he is our most reliable and best-informed authority'. For Hämeen-Anttila's discussion of Ḥamza's sources, see ibid., 59–100, on Ḥamza's work itself, 117–121, and for the nature of the *Khwadāynāmag*, 223–232. Rubin, 'Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's Sources', argued that Ḥamza worked from translations of various texts which together constituted a *Khwadāynāmag* genre. However, Hämeen-Anttila's work effectively rebuts this proposition, pointing out that Ḥamza discusses working from different 'manuscripts' rather than 'versions' of the *Khwadāynāmag*, and that the differences which Ḥamza notes between them seem primarily to be do with chronology (i.e. numbers of years) rather than content. This reader finds Hämeen-Anttila's proposition convincing that more significant differences between Arabic texts derived from the *Khwadāynāmag* result from the addition of elements of separate epic accounts of particular Persian kings and heroes which are said to have been circulating in Arabic translation.

[85] Ḥamza states that al-Ḍaḥḥāk built an 'abode' (*dār*) in Babylon, while al-Ṭabarī and al-Dīnawarī agree that he built a settlement there called either Ḥūb or Ḥawb, al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 2.6; al-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, 282. Ḥamza's statement that Manuchehr dug the Euphrates, diverted other rivers in Iraq, and dug a river further east is paralleled by al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 3.24. Both Afrasyab's tyranny, destroying buildings and stopping the flow of rivers, and Zav's restoration of Iran after it, are described by al-Ṭabarī in terms which closely match Ḥamza, see al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 3.113, 114–115. Al-Ṭabarī's description of Zav's importation of garden plants from the mountains, ibid., 3.115, seems to be the same passage which Ḥamza ascribes to Manuchehr. Al-Ṭabarī describes Kay Qobad's establishment of taxation to fund an army to defend the realm in a similar way to Ḥamza, ibid., 3.116–117. Al-Ṭabarī's discussion of Kay Kavus' great city near Babylon could be inspired by the same passage which led Ḥamza to ascribe the ʿAqarqūf beyond Baghdad to him, ibid., 4.5. Al-Ṭabarī and Ḥamza agree that Kay Goshtasp built Rām Washnāsqān/Fasā, ibid., 4.71, that Kay Ardeshir built Ābād Ardeshir, ibid., 4.81, and that Homay Jahrāzād built Iṣṭakhr with captives from al-Rūm, along with great structures on the roads from Iṣṭakhr to Dārābjird and Khurāsān, ibid., 4.84. Al-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, 310, agrees on this point. Finally, al-Ṭabarī and Ḥamza agree that Darab son of Bahman built Dārābjird itself, al-Ṭabarī, *History*, 4.87.

[86] Hämeen-Anttila, *Khwadāynāmag*, 227, includes city-foundation as one of the elements of his rather sparse vision of the text.

[87] Payne, 'Territorializing Iran', 194.

of the first Sasanian ruler, Ardeshir, which projected Khosrow's own policies and reforms onto his glorious forbear.[88] Thus, the stress which Ḥamza's account places on the city building of both the sixth-century and the first Sasanians strengthens the case that this aspect of his account was inherited from the *Khwadāynāmag.* Thus, it seems that this was originally part of a late Sasanian attempt to promote an ideal model of kingship which constructed strong affinities between the deeds of the contemporary (or recent) rulers Khosrow and Qobad and the original founders of their dynasty. City-building was one of the royal practises which the late Sasanian rulers performed themselves and then both recorded and retrojected, in this case onto not only the founders of their dynasty but also their mythical forbears the Kayanids and Pishdadids.[89]

   This importance ascribed to urban patronage as part of the ideal of rulership also fits well into a broader sixth century late antique context. The Byzantine imperial image at this time was bound up with acts of monumental building and city-foundation, as shown by the focus of the emperor Justinian's great panegyric, Prokopios' *Buildings.*[90] Exactly this period has been described as 'the apogee of diplomatic exchange' between the Sasanian and Byzantine courts and we know that Khosrow Anushirvan had deported the populations of Byzantine cities into a newly built city in Iraq which was equipped with Byzantine amenities and explicitly named 'Better-than-Antioch'. Given this, it is hard to deny that the Sasanian rulers were engaged in a competitive imperial discourse of urban patronage.[91] Thus, the emphasis on the mythical ancient Persian rulers' foundation of cities in Ḥamza's tenth-century *History*, and the use of cities as key signifiers in his grand narrative of their history, seems likely to be an indirect reception and reuse of an element of late Sasanian imperial propaganda developed in dialogue with Byzantium.

   If ʿAḍud al-Dawla did read Ḥamza's account of ancient Persian kingship, which is plausible given that Ḥamza had dedicated another work to him and ended this history with the rise of the Būyids, it seems that the Būyid ruler was paying attention. ʿAḍud al-Dawla would go on to burnish his claims to legitimate rule throughout Iran and Iraq with a programme of city-patronage and irrigation to make a Kayanid king proud. Much of this centred on Baghdad, the site of ʿAḍud al-Dawla's elaborate investiture by

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[88] The Middle Persian 'Ardeshir romance', on which see Daryaee, 'The ideal king', 45; Wiesehöfer, 'King, court, and royal representation', 74–75.

[89] This is not to say that the early Sasanians were not great builders: archaeological evidence demonstrates they were, see Huff, 'Formation and ideology' and Whitcomb, 'Shahristān to Medina'. Nevertheless, the narrative details used to elaborate the archaeological remains of their activity comes from Islamic era redactions of late Sasanian literature, so the late Sasanian ideological interest in representing early Sasanian building activity must be factored into its use as source for that earlier period.

[90] Elsner, 'The rhetoric of buildings'; Whitby, 'Procopius' *Buildings*'; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 50–61; Cameron, *Procopius*, 83–112.

[91] Edwell, 'Sasanian interactions', 850; Canepa, *Two Eyes of the Earth*, especially 167–174. The contemporary witness Procopius records Khosrow's new Antioch, as does Ḥamza, who also says that the second Sasanian ruler Shapur did the same thing, *Taʾrīkh*, 39, 45.

the caliph as Commander of Commanders, a city which he had found much diminished after a turbulent period of unrest. In response, he funded the repair of buildings, streets and mosques, and ordered the owners of depredated properties to repair them while offering loans to enable them to do so. He also built a major new canal and restored many waterways in Baghdad and its hinterland. Further east, in his original territory of Fārs, he again dammed rivers and constructed large scale irrigation systems.[92] At Shiraz, capital of Fārs, ʿAḍud al-Dawla built a palace with gardens, streams and a library which the contemporary observer al-Muqaddasī considered unparalleled. Not content with this, he dug a great water conduit which connected this palace to a new city (*madīna*) a couple of miles away, planting enormous gardens around it and transferring craftsmen there to make it a hub of textile production.[93] The city, like so many of those founded by Sasanian rulers, bore his name, Fannā Khusraw, harking back to his supposed Sasanian and Kayanid ancestors Khosrow Anushirvan and Kay Khosrow. In a history such as Ḥamza's, ʿAḍud al-Dawla was given the material to present his great new building works as the restoration of proper Persian rule at the heart of the ancient domains of the Iranians.

Encountering the ancient city in tenth-century Iran

The ancient Persian city was not only something to be recounted or emulated in tenth-century Iran. It was there to be found physically as well. As we have seen, Ḥamza did not simply list the city-foundations and building projects of the ancient Persian kings. He sought, wherever possible, to relate their activities to actual places and remains throughout Iraq, Iran and central Asia, which could still be found in his own day. He drew together these diverse locations and monuments by arguing for their common origin as the products of construction by the Kayanid and Pishdadid kings of the Sasanian mytho-historical tradition. Thus, a structure beyond Baghdad known in Arabic as al-ʿAqarqūf, which we now know to be a ziggurat built by the Mesopotamian Kassite dynasty in *c.* 1400 BC, is identified by Ḥamza as 'a structure towering into the air' built at Babylon by Kay Kavus.[94] An ancient construction between the citadel and gate of the city of Marw, in modern Turkmenistan, was attributed to the great antagonist of Persian antiquity, the Turanian ruler Afrasyab.[95] The actually Achaemenid ruins of Persepolis and surrounds in the heart of Fārs province (Persis) are attributed to the Kayanid queen Homay Jahrāzād, who we are told had them

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[92] The fullest account of his building in secondary literature is Kabir, *Buwayhid Dynasty*, 62–66, see also Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam*, 275–277. Donohue, *Buwayhid Dynasty*, does not focus on this aspect of his reign.

[93] Al-Muqaddasī, *Best Divisions*, 351 (new city), 363–364 (palace).

[94] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 30, identifies it as the structure known as *al-ʿAqarqūf*, now known to be ancient Dur Kurigalzu, part of a city built by the Kassite dynasty nine miles west of modern Baghdad, Lloyd, 'Aqar Quf'.

[95] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 29.

built by captured Roman artisans of outstanding skill.[96] The wide geographical range of such identifications helped to mark out a generous territorial conception of the primeval Persian kingdom.

At times, this will to relate the ancient kings to modern remains results in an autoptic engagement with structures from the past. In his section on the Sasanian past, Ḥamza reports that after Shapur II's military victory over his Roman counterpart he specified that the Romans should restore the destruction they had wrought in Persia. Furthermore, damaged structures built originally of mud bricks and clay mortar should be restored in fired brick and gypsum mortar. Ḥamza concludes that this explains why the walls of the city of Jundīshābūr are half mud brick, half fired brick.[97] The orthogonal plan of Jundīshābūr – one of the 'Better-than-Antioch' cities – is explained because it was built by Roman captives in an eight-by-eight chessboard layout.[98] The observable remains of the past lend authority to Ḥamza's claims to recount events from, in these cases, six or more centuries before he was writing, while his account renders explicable the material realities of the present. Likewise, Ḥamza's claim that Jamshid, the third king of Persian tradition, built a fabulous bridge over the Tigris at Ctesiphon, is supported by the fact that the foundations of its arches existed to his day, causing sailors to avoid them when the river was low.[99]

Some of these claims may seem fabulous. Modern archaeology has produced interpretations of many such structures which are far more convincing to us. Yet we can still interpret Ḥamza's presentation as the product of a kind of pre-modern archaeology. Yannis Hamilakis has argued for the viability of investigating 'indigenous archaeologies': 'local, vernacular discourses and practices involving things from another time' that 'constitute alternative engagements with materiality and temporality, which can teach us a great deal'.[100] Ḥamza cannot be considered an indigenous archaeologist, given that he was writing in the scientific language of his day about sites and histories from across Iran and beyond. However, he was still doing archaeology, by Hamilakis' definition of it as 'discourses and practices involving material things of a past time'.[101] His identifications of ancient sites and objects is part of his production of a totalising, authoritative understanding of Iran's past, itself part of his wider project of the construction of new Arab-Islamic knowledge through the translation of Persian history and wisdom. His focus is not on the local meanings and uses of these remains, but rather in plugging specific identifications of

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[96] Ḥamza, *Ta'rīkh*, 32. Ḥamza calls these structures the 'Palaces of Iṣṭakr', *maṣāniʿ Iṣṭakhr*, also giving the Persian name of Hazār Sitūn, meaning 'The thousand columns', a name which is attested for Persepolis, and specifies three separate locations, one adjacent to Iṣṭakhr, and two on the roads cutting through to, respectively, the provinces of Dārābjird (to the south) and Khurāsān (to the north). The term used is *madraja*, which can mean a road between mountains, perhaps indicating the mountainous backdrops to Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam.

[97] Ḥamza, *Ta'rīkh*, 41.

[98] Ḥamza, *Ta'rīkh*, 39.

[99] Ḥamza, *Ta'rīkh*, 27–28.

[100] Hamilakis, 'Indigenous archaeologies', 49.

[101] Ḥamza, *Ta'rīkh*, 52.

city founders into a wider, national story: the coherent narrative of the succession of Persian kingship. In doing so, Ḥamza transforms the remains of unknown, forgettable or parochial diverse local pasts into the concrete remnants of a shared history, providing educated Persians with a scheme through which to read their cityscapes in a common way which granted them a common past, as well as opportunities to demonstrate their learning in ancient Persian myth-cum-history.

We are fortunate that Ḥamza gives us a practical example of how such encounters with antiquity worked or, at least, how he wanted to represent such encounters happening. In a section devoted to natural calamities and other oddities, near the end of his *Taʾrīkh*, he tells us that:

> In the year 350 [AD 961–962] one side of the building called the Sārwayh, inside the city of Jayy [in Isfahan], collapsed. This revealed a chamber in which was contained about fifty sacks of parchment. On these was writing in a script unlike any which anyone had seen before. It is not known when these had been stored in this this building. I was asked what I knew about the history of our wondrous palace, so I brought out to the people a book by Abū Maʿshar al-Balkhī the astrologer, a translation of a *Book of Differences in Astronomical Tables*, in which he says ...[102]

Ḥamza then gives a long quotation from Abū Maʿshar's (d. 886) book which explains that the Sārwayh was a library built by the ancient Persian kings in order to conserve for future ages their knowledge of the sciences (ʿulūm).[103] They had ensured the preservation of these texts by writing them down on strips of poplar bark, the most durable writing material they knew, and depositing them in the place which they judged to have the best soil and atmosphere for book preservation and the best clay for building: the contemporary location of the citadel of Jayy in Isfahan. Abū Maʿshar explains that this had become known many years before his own time when, as in Ḥamza's time, a part of the ancient building collapsed, this time revealing a cache of these poplar bark books containing the ancient sciences written in ancient Persian (*al-fārisiyya al-qadīma*). Some of these came into the hands of a scholar able to read the script. One book turned out to be the best ancient guide to calendrical and stellar calculations, which was then translated into astronomical tables for modern use. In another of these books was found the story of the foundation of the Sārwayh library. Thus, in Abū Maʿshar's tale the cache of ancient knowledge spoke for itself, telling of its original deposition by the second king of Persian epic, Tahmures, in order to preserve the sciences through a period of unnatural rains and inundation of which he had foreknowledge. Ḥamza concludes his quotation of Abū Maʿshar, returning to the events of AD 961–962, restating that the writing in the new-found books did not resemble any known people's script and, unlike the poplar bark books, could not be

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[102] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 151: سنة خمسين وثلاثمائة تهدم من البنية المسماة سارويه في مدينة جي بجانب من
وظهر عن بيت فيه نحو
خمسين عدلا من جلود مكتوبة بخط لم ير الناس قبله مثله فلا يدري متى أحرز ذلك في هذه البنية وسئلت عما أعرفه من خبر هذه المصنعة العجيبة
فأخرجت إلى حضرة الناس كتابا لأبي معشر المنجم البلخي مترجما بكتاب إختلاف الزيجة ويقول فيه.

[103] Ḥamza, *Taʾrīkh*, 151–153.

read. The implication, however, is clearly that they were another part of this royal legacy of ancient Persian knowledge.

Ḥamza's cache of parchments from the Sārwayh of Isfahan, like many other ancient remnants in Iran, was formally comprehensible but specifically illegible. Nevertheless, Ḥamza had the status of an authority on the ancient past in Isfahan to whom such matters were brought. To maintain such a status, he had to render these obscure traces of the ancients meaningful, a task which required a hermeneutic key. The Sasanian tradition of knowledge of ancient Persia provided him with such a key. Ḥamza's remarkable story shows us how layers of reuse of an etiology of the ruins of Isfahan compounded that etiology into authoritative fact.

Abū Maʿshar the Astrologer, whose book Ḥamza quoted to explain the Sārwayh cache, had used the ancient remains of Isfahan as a material anchor to an origin story of his astrological knowledge as an inheritance from the ancients.[104] The ruins in the citadel became a material testament to the connection between the primeval Persian sages and himself, the vehicle for the transmission of their science, which was also his science. His explanation also recounted an ideal of the foresight and benevolence of the ancient Persian kings, who had built the library and facilitated this transmission, perhaps intended to hold a mirror to princes as to how they should use their power and resources to patronise the sages of their own time. It is perfectly likely that Abū Maʿshar was not the inventor of this story, which may have been a claim made by the Sasanian astrologers whose work he was translating.

Regardless of its actual origin, once Abū Maʿshar had translated it into Arabic and recorded it in writing, the etiology became again a resource with which a scholar like Ḥamza could perform his knowledge of the past. Confronted with ancient texts which he could not read, Ḥamza did not accept that they were unknowable, but applied what he could infer about their history from his own education. Nor did he simply tell his audience that the Sārwayh was built by Tahmures. Instead, he physically brought forth Abū Maʿshar's book into his interlocutors' presence (*akhrajtu ilā ḥaḍrati-l-nāsi kitāban li-Abī Maʿshar*). In contrast to the religious scholars of prophetic Islamic tradition (*muḥaddithūn*), who accorded prestige to knowledge memorised and recited without prompts, there is a different theatricality to Ḥamza's presentation of Abū Maʿshar's book as prop to his explanation, a text to explain these texts. Even if he could not translate these ancient writings for his audience, he could at least translate Abū Maʿshar's Arabic, itself ostensibly a translation from Middle Persian, into eloquent, colloquial Persian for them. Thus, the remnants of the ancient city gave a scholar like him the opportunity to stand at these thresholds of translation – between Middle Persian, Arabic, contemporary Persian and unknown ancient languages – and present himself as a custodian of a primeval knowledge and history, a role rooted in the possession and reproduction of texts claiming continuous genealogies of knowledge

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[104] Abū Maʿshar, whose astrological writings survive and were influential in both the Islamic and Latin Christian world, claimed to transmit the ancient knowledge passed down by three Hermes of whom Hushang, the Persian first king, was the first, see Burnett, 'Abū Maʿshar'.

across time and languages. Ḥamza's *Taʾrīkh* itself is part of this tradition, of course, emphasising its reliance on translations from Persian. As we see from this example, it was not only the Sasanian tradition of royal history which fed into this self-positioning, but also texts from other disciplines such as Abū Maʿshar's work on astrology.[105]

The story of Ḥamza's cache has a final twist. Ibn al-Nadīm, in his great catalogue and history of literature, the *Fihrist*, quotes Ḥamza's story about the Sārwayh in his chapter on 'accounts of the philosophers, the ancient sciences, and the books composed about them'.[106] But Ibn al-Nadīm adds a story about Isfahani archaeology which Ḥamza does not mention. He tells us that:

> I myself witnessed, in the year 340 and some [*c.* AD 950s], that Abū-l-Faḍl Ibn al-ʿAmīd sent here some torn documents which had been discovered at Isfahan in boxes within the walls of the city. They were in Greek so the people who concern themselves with such things – such as Yuḥannā and others – translated them. They contained the names of soldiers and the amount of their allowances for subsistence. The documents had the most awful rotting smell, to the point that you would keep away from them like a tannery. But when they had remained in Baghdad for a good while they dried out and changed so that the smell was gone. To this day our teacher Abū Sulaymān has some of them.[107]

The story is not inherently implausible: the Sasanians themselves thought Isfahan had been founded by Alexander the Great, Jayy (Greek: Gabae), the citadel of Isfahan, had a Seleucid history, and Greek had continued to be used through the Parthian period.[108]

If Ibn al-Nadīm was recording a different find to that described by Ḥamza, as suggested by the different dates, it seems that the discovery of ancient texts from the ruins of Isfahan was not an unusual event. If obscure papers and books were periodically encountered as antique buildings were demolished or collapsed, one can appreciate how such remains could have become symbols for the persistence and presence of ancient knowledge. It also shows us that other high-profile actors attempted to capitalise on the cultural cachet accorded to ancient artefacts. Ibn al-ʿAmīd was the vizier to the Būyid rulers Rukn al-Dawla, ʿAḍud al-Dawla and Muʾayyad al-Dawla.[109] If Ḥamza could find a Greek translator in Isfahan, one suspects that the vizier could have as well, but chose instead to dispatch these finds to stir the interest of the intellectual salons of Baghdad. These were no doubt disappointed to

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[105] Tahmures' foundation of the Sārwayh makes it into Ḥamza's account of his reign in his *Taʾrīkh* as well.

[106] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 297–299. See also the translation in Dodge, *Fihrist*, 576–579.

[107] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 299: رأيت انا الفضل بن العميد ابا انا ان بالمشاهدة انه دفن إلى في قنس هاه انها في
وأربعين منقطعة اصيبت
بأصفهان في سور المدينة في صناديق وكانت باليونانية فاستخرجها أهل هذا الشان مثل يوحنا وغيره وكانت اسماء الجيش ومبلغ أرزاقهم وكانت
الكتب في نهاية نتن الرائحة حتى كأن الدباغة فارقتها عن قرب فلما بقيت ببغداد حول ما جفت وتغيرت وزالت الرائحة عنها ومنها في هذا الوقت شيء
عند شيخنا أبي سليمان .

[108] , tr. Daryaee, 28; Hansman, 'ISFAHAN', *EIr*; Dąbrowa, 'Greek: A language of the Parthian Empire'; for early Sasanian Greek inscriptions, Huyse, 'EPIGRAPHY ii. Greek inscriptions from ancient Iran', *EIr.*

[109] Donohue, *Buwayhid Dynasty*, 23–24; Dodge, *Fihrist*, 958.

find a military roll rather than new works of Aristotle or Galen. Nevertheless, the anecdote sheds a tantalising side-light on further elements in early Islamic society of Hamilakis' definition of archaeology: beyond the immediate attempts to interpret these artefacts, Abū Sulaymān's possession of some of them at the time when Ibn al-Nadīm wrote his *Fihrist*, some forty years after their discovery, suggests practices of collection of these curios and, perhaps, exhibition.[110] Given Ibn Nadīm's evidence of interest in these finds, it is interesting that Ḥamza chose not to recount their discovery in his *Taʾrīkh* alongside that of the cache of 350 AH (AD 961–962). However, given his scorn for the idea that Alexander had built cities in Iran, and his exclusive association of city-foundation in Iran with Persian kings, his omission of this other archaeology of his hometown's ancient past might be read as an intentional choice to pass over a Hellenistic heritage of Iran which sat uncomfortably with his larger vision of Persian history.

Conclusions

Along with Greco-Roman history in general, early Islamic authors made no great effort to remember the Greco-Roman city, even as many Muslims lived in formerly Greco-Roman cities in Syria, Egypt, north Africa and Spain. Even when a historian unusually interested in accessing the Roman past, like Ḥamza, sought to translate historical knowledge from al-Rūm into Arabic, the sources he used did not dwell on the role of the city in history. The Sasanian historical and cultural viewpoint was far more extensively received into the Islamic tradition. While this viewpoint was primarily interested in the king and the court, Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's Persian history, based in large part on Arabic translations of the Middle Persian *Khwadāynāmag*, shows us that the late Sasanians had incorporated city-building as one of the markers and legitimating acts of kingship. In the Sasanians' history of Persian rulership they stressed their own city-building and that of the founders of their dynasty, but also projected this concern back into the realm of the mythical, originally Avestan, kings of the Kayanid and Pishdadid dynasties. In doing so, they produced a vision of the origins of civilisation which credited the primeval Persian kings with the development of technology and culture, the establishment of the waterways of the civilised world, and the construction of cities throughout Iran, Iraq and central Asia. Contrarily, they made the ill fate of these cities and waterways one of the key means through which to narrate the misrule and tyranny suffered by Iran when it was ruled by kings from the Turko-Chinese east (Afrasyab) and the Greco-Roman west (Alexander). Thus, the state of the cities of Iran was presented as the litmus test of good governance. Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī, writing three- to four-hundred years after the development of this Sasanian historiographical conceit, chose to replicate it as the opening act in his

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[110] Hamilakis, 'Indigenous archaeologies', 61, identifies 'practices of collection, reworking, recontextualization, exhibition, and in some cases veneration' as well as interpretation and explanation as constituting the 'indigenous archaeologies of Ottoman Greece'.

world chronology. Ḥamza was writing under the Būyids, who in the decade before the completion of Ḥamza's composition had shown particular interest in the ancient past of their new realms, and in presenting their rule in the guise of Sasanian kingship. He no doubt wanted to interest the new Iranian political elites with an authoritative, concise collation of the Sasanian historical vision, and to present to them its grand narrative of Iranian re-unification after post-Alexandrian disunity. Yet in tying this narrative to the material remnants of past times visible throughout Iraq, Iran and central Asia, he was conducting a pre-modern archaeology which offered literate elites like himself a key to reading their antique cityscapes as meaningful signs of a common, continuous heritage which went back to the dawn of time.

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Chapter 11

Traces of the ancients: The pre-Islamic monuments of the Maghrib in the medieval Arabic geographical tradition

Amira K. Bennison

Medieval Muslims from al-Andalus and the Maghrib viewed the remains of past civilisations in the light of the topographical realities that they witnessed around them, or heard about, and the contemporary Islamic world they inhabited, many centuries removed from the monuments in question. It is frequently assumed that misattribution of function, imaginative myths of origin and other 'mistakes' in medieval Muslim narratives in general indicate a state of ignorance which the modern western academy is in a position to 'correct'. However, this chapter is based on the premise that it is more productive to consider how medieval Muslims from the western Islamic world writing in Arabic responded to an increasingly distant past and its traces in the landscape, what they thought was memorable when they described that past, and why that may have been so.

In the case of the Maghrib, the shifting Muslim-Christian frontier, fluctuations between more centralised imperial moments and phases of decentralisation, and relations with eastern Islamic lands and polities, as well as the Arab-Islamic literary culture in which writers were steeped could all shape their narration of the past. As Tixier has noted, tenth- to eleventh-century Andalusī and Maghribī geographers adopted what was essentially an ʿAbbāsid form relatively late in the day to integrate their regions into the knowledge base of an Islamic world faced with the reality of political fragmentation alongside cultural cosmopolitanism.[1] With the rise of the Almoravid and the Almohad empires, however, the Maghrib acquired a new Islamic centrality which peaked in the late twelfth century only to diminish with the collapse of the Almohad empire in the thirteenth century.

Several famous western Islamic geographical works dealing wholly or in part with the Maghrib were written in this eleventh to twelfth-century window and, while they

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[1] Tixier du Mesnil, 'La géographie arabe médiévale', 15–27, esp. 25–26.

often do not directly address political questions, they are inflected by the emergence of the Maghrib as an imperial hub. Although Andalusī and Maghribī writers drew on earlier geographical sources, including the great works of the Islamic east, and shared characteristics with them, I shall focus primarily upon three western Islamic works written during this particular phase, stretching from 1050 to 1200, in which the flowering of western Islamic geography and imperial ambition coincided.

The first work is Abū ʿUbayd ʿAbd Allāh al-Bakrī's *Kitāb al-Masālik waʾl-Mamālik*.[2] Al-Bakrī (d. 1094) wrote his geographical work in Almería in al-Andalus and is one of the so-called 'arm-chair' geographers whose work was 'citational' rather than 'experiential'.[3] One of his most important sources was Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq (d. 973) whose original work is now lost and Ducène sees his contribution primarily in terms of the preservation of these earlier materials.[4] Al-Bakrī's work also marks the moment when western Islamic geographical writing came into its own. From the geo-political perspective, he wrote during the period of the Ṭāʾifa kings after the collapse of the Andalusī Umayyad caliphate and prior to the rise of the Almoravid empire, a time of uncertainty and shifting allegiances, in which an Andalusī writer may have felt the need to regain control of his world through narrating it and reasserting an imperial Umayyad vision of North Africa in the tradition of the ʿAbbāsid geographers and the wider Islamic world.

The second work I shall refer to is Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Idrīsī's *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq*,[5] conventionally although perhaps erroneously dated to 1154.[6] Much about al-Idrīsī's life (d. *c.* 1165–1166 or later), including his place of birth and upbring remains unclear. He was a descendant of the Ḥammūdids, a Maghribī lineage which claimed descent from the Prophet through Idrīs b. ʿAbd Allāh and established a short-lived caliphate straddling the Straits of Gibraltar in the early eleventh century. Al-Idrīsī's father settled in Sicily where the author was probably born, although his familiarity with eastern al-Andalus and with Ifrīqiya has led to speculation on this point.[7] Al-Idrīsī found a position at the court of Roger II, the Hautville king of Sicily, and probably continued to serve his son, William I. This gave him a nuanced attitude towards Christian-Muslim relations and the Norman incursions into North Africa. Al-Idrīsī prepared his geography as a complement to a silver globe for the Christian Sicilian king and the broad, inventory-like scope of his work means that he often provides less detail on the Maghrib than al-Bakrī, but he does update and add to the image of Ifrīqiya provided by his predecessor.[8] One significant change was the decline of Qayrawān and a rise in pastoralism, often attributed to the western

2   Al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique.*
3   Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 70–71.
4   Ducène, 'al-Bakrī'.
5   al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum.*
6   Nef, 'Al-Idrīsī', 53–54.
7   Nef, 'Al-Idrīsī', 54–60.
8   Oman, 'Al-Idrīsī'.

movement from Egypt of nomadic Arab tribes.[9] The effects of this appear clearly in al-Idrīsī's work which refers to the devastation and decline of Islamic empires and their ruins, as well as to the remains of the distant pre-Islamic past.

Thirdly, I shall consider the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār fī ʿAjāʾib al-Amṣār*.[10] We know relatively little about the book's author, tentatively identified as Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Rabbihi (d. 1205),[11] beyond the facts that he came from Marrakesh and was a servant of the Almohad empire during the reign of the caliph Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb (r. 1184–1198). Like many other geographical works, much of the content of the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, written around 1191,[12] is drawn from earlier sources, particularly al-Bakrī's work, and possibly another unknown early twelfth-century author.[13] Nonetheless, it includes many new snippets of information pertinent to late twelfth-century Almohad perceptions of the pre-Islamic past and the author visited many of the places he describes, adding new experiential material to the citational, compilative tradition that renders the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār* a more valuable work than sometimes appreciated. Moreover, the Almohad mission was conceived as a renewal of Islam itself and the empire as the new Islamic heartland, inflecting literary as well as religious production in ways not yet fully analysed or understood. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi was a contemporary of Ibn Jubayr and recent analysis of the latter's *riḥla* or travelogue has noted the importance of the Almohad caliph Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb's expansion of the idea of the Almohad caliphate into a claim to a universal caliphate, modelled on that of the Umayyads of Damascus and Córdoba, nostalgia for whom lingered on in al-Andalus and the Maghrib.[14] Ibn ʿAbd al-Rabbihi's work was a product of the self-same imperial religio-political environment.[15]

The pre-Islamic sites that are mentioned in these works encompass towns and their walls, bridges, aqueducts, palaces and fortresses, spectacle buildings and churches or temples.[16] Sometimes their descriptions seem accurate, sometimes they seem fanciful or vague and sometimes they are juxtaposed with more recent Islamic-era constructions. This chapter will discuss the general approach to the pre-Islamic past within these medieval texts, then analyse how a number of sites are depicted. I shall focus firstly on how this sample of authors reconfigured the pre-Islamic past to either enhance the prestige of important Islamic cities by giving them a deep

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[9] See Poncet, 'La "catastrophe" Hilalienne'.

[10] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Rabbihi, *Kitāb al-Istibṣār* (NB, the edition of the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār* is not attributed because the author had not been identified at the time of publication).

[11] Ducène, 'al-Bakrī'. The Almohad chronicler, al-Marrākushī mentions that he knew a Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Rabbihi, descendant of the more famous Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi who wrote the *ʿIqd al-Farīd*, who was one of the caliph's secretaries. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *al-Muʿjib fī Talkhīṣ Akhbār al-Maghrib*, 424.

[12] The author notes the year of writing in his description of Ceuta. *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 138.

[13] On the composition of the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, see Levtzion, 'The twelfth-century Anonymous *Kitab al-Istibṣār*'.

[14] Dejugnat, 'Voyage au centre du monde', 192–194.

[15] Dejugnat, 'Voyage au centre du monde', 194.

[16] I have chosen to use Underwood's collective term, 'spectacle buildings' for amphitheatres, theatres, circuses and hippodromes as they are not clearly differentiated in Arabic sources. Underwood, *(Re)Using Ruins*, ch.3.

history linked to ancient Near Eastern prophets, heroes and kings, or to provide a *memento mori* or a lesson (ʿibra) about the transience of greatness. Secondly, I shall consider their acknowledgement of the technical expertise of past civilisations and the marvellous (ʿajāʾib) in comparison to the wonders of the Islamic age. This second aspect encompasses both marvel and pride in the acquisition of valuable artefacts for re-use in Muslim buildings along with occasional hints of triumphalism in relation to Christian buildings and artefacts, a phenomenon witnessed in reverse, and sometimes in cycles, by Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The pre-Islamic past in medieval Maghribī Arabic narratives

The Muslim relationship with the pre-Islamic past was ambiguous. On the one hand, it was considered to be the Jāhiliyya, the 'Age of Ignorance', leading religious scholars especially to view its cultural production with suspicion. However, as people of diverse backgrounds converted to the new faith, they brought aspects of their cultural heritage with them and negative religious attitudes did not prevent the courtly circles around the ʿAbbāsid caliphs from sponsoring translations of Greek, Pahlavi and Sanskrit knowledge into Arabic as the basis for the flowering of classical Arab-Islamic science and culture.

Although geographical and historical writing were not immediately recognised by Muslims as distinct 'sciences' of either ancient or Islamic religious derivation, there was a need to map the landscapes of revelation and Islamic empire, to locate the rise of Islam in relation to its predecessors, and more prosaically to identify, administer and tax territory, in sum, to impose a *grille d'intelligibilité* over the physical spaces in which Muslims moved.[17] Islamic achievements were viewed as the culmination of history and, while rarely dealt with in detail or with precision, the pre-Islamic past was a necessary backdrop that gained meaning through its relationship to an ever-changing Islamic present.

As Zayde Antrim has noted, the 'discourse of place' appears in many forms in early Islamic Arabic writing from the appearance of the homeland and homesickness for it in poetic anthologies, to description of cities, routes and realms in geographical texts and historical chronicles as these genres emerged.[18] Although the Islamic present naturally dominated this discourse, the pre-Islamic past appeared in tropes drawn from pre-Islamic Arabian poetry, use of Byzantine or Sasanian administrative terminology for territories, or urban foundation myths drawing on biblical antecedents. In her summation of how cities were described in the geographical corpus, Antrim captures the flavour of this relationship:

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[17] Tixier du Mesnil, 'La géographie arabe médiévale', 22.
[18] Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 1–8.

Cities were erected in the geographical imagination from the rubble of sacred history, its prophets – like the land upon which they walked and the structures they built – touched by the human and the divine, impermanent, striving towards salvation, but stumbling – and crumbling – along the way.[19]

The period of the ʿAbbāsid translation movement generated the Arabic terms which came to be used for pre-Islamic peoples and their civilisations including the word *awwal* (pl. *awāʾil*) conveying a sense of being prior, first and originary. The term could refer to the 'firsts' of the Muslim community but equally to those 'preceding' the Muslims or the 'ancients' (*qudamāʾ*), whether Graeco-Roman or Persian in eastern Islamic lands, implicitly placing Muslims in relation to their non-Muslim predecessors and, in many cases, their actual ancestors.[20] In the medieval Maghribī texts addressed here, the *awwal*, or more rarely the *awāʾil*, usually appear denoting those who preceded the Muslims, the ancients in the sense of an *ancien régime* or forebears.

Another term that appears sporadically is Rūm or 'Romans', denoting the pre-Christian Roman empire and the Christian eastern Roman empire or Byzantium, both of which had a significant presence in north Africa. Occasionally the two are distinguished by qualifying the term Rūm with 'ancient' or 'first'. In his description of Constantine in eastern Algeria, for instance, al-Idrīsī talks of a building constructed by the 'first Romans' (*al-rūm al-awwal*).[21] In the western Maghrib and al-Andalus, Rūm could also denote Christians in general and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi describes the Normans of Sicily and the Crusaders in the Levant as Rūm rather than as Franks (*ifrānj*), another term in common use at the time.[22] The identification of the inhabitants and rulers of the region, past and present, thus encompasses both a recognition of differences and a vagueness as to the meaning of particular terms.[23]

Although the pre-Islamic past is a tangible presence in the works under review, it was not the focus of their authors and plays a minimal role in their overall narration of place, a feature perhaps more pronounced in relation to the Maghrib than other parts of the Islamic world.[24] Al-Bakrī, al-Idrīsī and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi were primarily concerned with providing information to travellers and traders and their patrons. Their works are arranged by itineraries that note the number of days' travel (*marḥala*) from one trading town, port or stopping place to another. The terrain, flora and fauna, agricultural products, local measurements, the population, their tribal affiliations and their customs are prioritised over history, both Islamic and pre-Islamic. When a historical excursus is included, the Islamic conquest era gains most attention, followed by information about Islamic dynasties often linked to towns they (re)founded such as Qayrawān, Qalʿat Banī Ḥammād, Fes and Sijilmāsa.

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[19] Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 143.
[20] For an overview of the term's use, see Rosenthal, 'Awāʾil'.
[21] al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum*, fasc. 1–4, 265.
[22] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 130. The range of Arabic vocabulary, positive and negative, used for Christians is explored in Lapiedra, *Cómo los musulmanes llamaban a los cristianos hispánicos*.
[23] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 133.
[24] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 128–130.

Antiquity and the empires of the past gain little more than fleeting, formulaic observations which weave their remains into the topography of north Africa as wonders (ʿajāʾib) and rarities or marvels (gharāʾib), often indexed against the similarly outstanding achievements of Muslims in later centuries. Some references do no more than acknowledge a place's pre-Islamic phase as a prelude to lengthier descriptions of its contemporary features and status. However, some towns that did have a pre-Islamic history are described purely in terms of their Islamic existence, suggesting either the varied survival of visible remains or, since a number of noteworthy sites are barely described, selectivity based on the contemporary relevance of a place.[25] The ruins of Cherchell (Marsā Sharshāl, Iol Caesarea), one of the capitals of Juba II and Cleopatra Selene, are a case in point. Although al-Bakrī notes that there is 'a mighty uninhabited city of the ancients' at the site, he gives no further description, even though Leo Africanus in the sixteenth century and later European travellers indicated that the remains were extensive and impressive.[26] It is likely that this early modern resurgence of interest reflected the resettlement of the Muslim town by migrants from the Iberian Peninsula after a medieval phase of minimal inhabitation.

In contrast, the physical remains of pre-Islamic sites that receive most attention are in or near major Islamic settlements or capitals such as Tunis-Carthage, Gafsa, Constantine, Ceuta and Tangier, or close enough to routes to merit comment such as Lepcis Magna (Libya). All three geographers adopt a consistent set of stock phrases to encapsulate the pre-Islamic footprint upon the eleventh to twelfth century Maghrib, using the ubiquitous collective term āthār (traces, remains) and, on occasion, kharāʾib (destroyed places, ruins), for derelict or very sparsely inhabited sites in the countryside rather than remains embedded in the contemporary urban fabric. Al-Bakrī describes Lepcis Magna in the following way, 'Between Tripoli and Sharūs are five days [travel], between them is the fortress of Labda (Lepcis Magna), of ancient construction using lime plastered stone with wondrous ancient remains and ruins around it.'[27]

Cities and sites identified with the pre-Islamic era are further qualified by use of a particular, but not entirely exclusive, set of adjectives revolving around notions of antiquity, permanence, and splendour, such as qadīm/qadīma, old or ancient, and azalī/azaliyya, an adjective literally meaning 'eternal' or 'everlasting', which conveyed the sense of the deep continuous history of a place through the ages without precise dating or information.[28] For instance, al-Idrīsī describes Tunis (Tunes) as 'an ancient,

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[25] In his survey of antique sites in the western Maghrib mentioned by medieval Arabic sources, Siraj gives detailed analysis of the textual and archaeological evidence and its contradictions. Siraj, *Tingitane.*

[26] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 81; French, 165. Leo Africanus, *Description of Africa*, Volume 2, Book IV, 679. The second capital of Juba II and Cleopatra Selene was Volubilis in modern Morocco which is similarly described only in the most minimal way.

[27] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 9; French, 26.

[28] This lexicon was not unique to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, similar formulae appear in earlier eastern geographical works and later works as well. Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 134.

everlasting fortified place called Tarshīsh in the history books'.[29] Although *qadīm* decoupled from *azalī* could suggest unspecified age and an Islamic provenance, some settlements founded by Muslims such as Fes are explicitly described as *muḥdath* or 'modern', creating a contrast with towns of Antique heritage, even if such 'modern' sites may have had pre-Islamic phases.[30]

Most descriptions go on to refer to the traces of the ancients within the city (*fīhā āthār li'l-awwal*),[31] or to its pre-Islamic buildings (*bināʾ* or *bunyān al-awwal*).[32] On occasion, these stereotypical statements are filled out with additional adjectives such as large (*kabīr*), great or mighty (*ʿaẓīm*), fine or noble (*jalīl*) and towering or lofty (*shāmikh*). For a handful of sites, writers give more elaborate accounts of standing ruins and specific buildings, the materials they were constructed from, and their architectural features. Walls of stone (*sūr min ṣakhr* or *ḥajāra*), finely worked stone masonry (*ṣakhr muḥkam*), marble (*rukhām*), arches/vaulting (*aqbāʾ*, *ḥanāyā*), arcades/colonnades (*āzāj*), cisterns and basins (*ṣahārīj*) and aqueducts (*qanāt*, *qanāṭir*) predominate in these accounts as hallmarks of the 'ancients'.[33] Much as we still marvel at the Colosseum in Rome or the amphitheatre at El Djem (Thysdrus) in Tunisia, the ordered rows of columns and arches that characterised classical architecture clearly signified the pre-Islamic past for medieval Maghribī Muslims. Other tropes include reference to the pristine state of ancient buildings, as if the labourers had just laid down their tools, and the infinitude of wonders at some sites. The following sections will consider a selection of these descriptions and the different ways in which they 'work' in the textual world of medieval Maghribī writers.

Myths and lessons in the construction of the past

Medieval Maghribī writers were part of a network of Arabic-Islamic *literati*, past and present, and used similar conventions to their predecessors and peers in the Islamic east in their representation of the pre-Islamic past and its material remains. Their understanding of Islam as a renewal of the same revelation received by Moses, other biblical prophets and Jesus, and of the Arabs and Berbers as sharing an ancient near eastern Semitic genealogy, encouraged them to position pre-Islamic cities within that framework, rather than locate them in relation to the Greco-Roman past.[34] Antrim observes that, for many cities, a plethora of names, including pre-Islamic ones,

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[29] al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum*, fasc. 1–4, 285. The identification of Tunis with Tarshīsh also appears in al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 37; French, 80.

[30] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 108. Siraj, *Tingitane*, 597–616.

[31] For example, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi uses this phrase for Arshgūl, Gafsa, Constantine, Sétif, Tahūda, *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 134, 150, 165, 166, 174.

[32] For example, al-Bakri uses this phrasing for Lepcis Magna, Gabes, Gafsa, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 9, 17, 47; French, 26, 41, 100.

[33] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 138–140.

[34] On Berber genealogies, see Shatzmiller, 'The myth of the Berbers' origin'; de Felipe, 'Berber leadership'.

functioned to bolster the prestige and importance of that place, as did foundation myths and incorporation of ancient, often biblical allusions in such legends.[35]

Although not common in the medieval Maghribī narratives under discussion, textual allusions to biblical antecedents and pre-Islamic names, could function as a way to flag the contemporary importance of a city. The spurious identification of Tunis with Tarshīsh, mentioned above, is an example of this convention, as is the myth that Ceuta (Sabta) was founded by a grandson of Noah called Sabt.[36] In a similar vein, the construction of 'the sturdy fine stone wall of precise workmanship' around Gafṣa (Qafṣa, Capsa Justiniana) is attributed to a slave of the biblical King Nimrod, called Shantiyān by al-Bakrī and Shaybān by Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi.[37] Nimrod appears in the Islamic tradition as a mighty but prideful monarch whom Abraham reminds of the ultimate power of God, and is thus an appropriate symbol of prestigious monarchical patronage but also a reminder of the incontestable power of God to both create and destroy, and the possible ruin of even the most spectacular cities of the past.

The site which most stimulated this kind of reflection was Carthage (Qarṭājanna, Carthago), ruined but impressive and close enough to Tunis and the densely inhabited coastal plains of Ifrīqiya to be the subject of detailed description and mythico-historical discussion. Carthage also figures as the epitome of pre-Islamic empire, elements of whose history had been transposed to the Arabic literary corpus and which were probably also present in the minds of the population of Ifrīqiya, a dwindling proportion of whom remained Christian. The last mention of the bishopric of Carthage appears in the late eleventh century. In a footnote to his French translation of the north African portion of the *Kitāb al-Mamālik wa'l-Masālik*, De Slane suggests that al-Bakrī showed poor judgement in quoting a garbled version of the ancient history of Carthage on the authority of Ibn al-Jazzār, a late tenth- to early eleventh-century scholar physician from Qayrawān.[38] The broader parameters of his story are, however, in keeping with the points made above about the importance of sacred history to medieval Islamic society. More recent scholars note that al-Bakrī also draws on Latin sources such as the *Annales* of Tacitus and the *History* of Orosius, indicating that they were circulating in Arabic translation in al-Andalus.[39]

Al-Bakrī begins his account with the comment that Carthage was founded by a King Dīdūn, and although the similarity between the name Dīdūn and Dido, founder and queen of Carthage in the *Aeneid*, suggests a trace of the classical myth, Dīdūn is gendered male and inserted into a sacred scriptural narrative by the anachronistic assertion that he was a contemporary of David.[40] On the authority of Ibn al-Jazzār,

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[35] Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 35–38.

[36] Siraj, *Tingitane*, 479.

[37] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 47; French, 100; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 150.

[38] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, French, 91 n. 2.

[39] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 136. See also Ferré, 'Les sources du "Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik"'; Penelas, 'Modos de reutilización en la historiografía andalusi'.

[40] Al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 41, French, 89.

al-Bakrī then gives an alternative report that the city was built by the remnants of the people of ʿĀd, whom God destroyed with a searing wind for rejecting the prophet Hūd in the Qurʾān.[41] When this incarnation of Carthage fell into ruin, it was rebuilt by a grandson (rather than a slave) of Nimrod, who was responsible for the aqueduct. Al-Bakrī brings the story to its conclusion with the second destruction of Carthage during the Punic Wars, giving a lively account of the battles between Hannibal and Scipio, drawn from the Latin tradition.[42] Al-Idrīsī omits a historical introduction to his description of Carthage and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi presents al-Bakrī's story in a modified form that focuses on Hannibal and Scipio.[43]

Although it is alluded to rather than spelt out, the hand of the Divine appears in these accounts of Carthage's history and its dramatic fall, giving meaning to the mighty, splendid ruins which medieval Muslims could see. The passing reference to ʿĀd evoked the Qurʾanic and biblical idea of the sudden divine destruction of ancient towns and communities as punishment for rejecting the prophets sent to them, and for putting too much store by worldly achievements.[44] Although a notably unsentimental commentator who saw economic, social and political reasons for the demise of cities, Ibn Khaldūn, a native of Tunis familiar with the ruins of Carthage, refers to ʿĀd and Thamūd at the start of his discussion of the relationship between monuments and dynastic power, implicitly drawing attention to this Qurʾanic narrative.[45] Shortly afterwards, he explicitly mentions the fate of Thamūd, reporting that the Prophet identified some rock dwellings as those of Thamūd and warned, 'Do not enter the dwellings of those who wronged themselves. Only weep in fear lest the same misfortune that befell them befall you'.[46] In the narration of al-Bakrī, reprised in the *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, when Hannibal hears that a Roman army is threatening Carthage, he says, 'I wanted to extirpate the Romans from the earth but I think that a god of heaven [*ilāh al-samāʾ*] wanted something else!'[47]

Furthermore, the association of Carthage, like Gafsa, with Nimrod strengthens the allusion to human might but also its fragility before God. In a similar vein to Shelley's response to the Colossus of Memnon in 'Ozymandias', pre-Islamic ruins could thus constitute a salutory tale of the fleeting nature of human power and the inevitable fall of the mighty. The title of Ibn Khaldūn's famous fourteenth-century history, the *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*, can be translated as the *Book of Lessons*, and its narration of the cyclical rise and fall of regimes implicitly considers the meaning as well as the mechanism of such

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[41] Qurʾān 41: 13–16. The destruction of ʿĀd, Thamūd and similar communities is mentioned repeatedly in the Qurʾān.

[42] Al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 42–43; French, 90–3. See Fear, *Orosius*, 194–195.

[43] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 121–122.

[44] On the Islamic attitude to ruins as warnings, see Devecka, *Broken Cities*, ch. 3.

[45] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 356. The foundation of Tangier was also popularly attributed to the people of ʿĀd. Siraj, *Tingitane*, 486–487.

[46] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, vol. 1, 359.

[47] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 43; French, 92; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 122. De Slane interprets the Arabic phrase as a translation of Baal Shamīn. The sentiment is similar to that expressed by Orosius in book 4 of his History. Fear, *Orosius*, 189.

turns of the wheel of fate. The notion of the past as a lesson also appears in Ṣafwān b. Idrīs's (d. 1202) description of the theatre at Sagunto as the 'Kaʿba of Admonition' (*kaʿbat al-ʿibra*), an unusual turn of phrase that compares the circumambulatory space of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Mecca with the theatre but implicitly contrasts the spiritual succour offered by the former with the lesson or admonition provided by the latter through the passing of the civilisation that built it and its abandonment.[48]

Such lessons could straddle the pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. In the case of the monumental wall of Gafsa, with its mythic attribution to Nimrod's slave, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi adds that this long-enduring wall had been destroyed by the Almohads leaving only foundations and a tower to attest to its fine and mighty construction, thereby using the longevity and strength of the wall as a means to compliment the power of his own masters, the Almohads, who had the might to tear down something 'everlasting' as they built their western Islamic caliphate. The tale of the conundrum faced by the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Manṣūr as he tried to decide whether to destroy the Sasanian Tāq-i Kisra at Ctesiphon or not, and his eventual inability to dismantle it, comes to mind.[49]

The fate of pre-Islamic sites and the lessons one might learn from them was not, however, a source of deep emotion for medieval Maghribī writers. The vague mythic-historical context and distance in time from the events described precluded Muslim self-congratulation or lamentation. The word used for monumental remains, *āthār*, did carry an emotional charge in Arabic poetry where it indicated the kicked-out traces of the camp of the beloved who has departed with her kin, signalling grief, loss and ephemerality. This tone of grief and devastation does appear but only when the remains described are of towns and cities destroyed in Islamic times. The most prominent example of this comes in the description of Qayrawān, founded by Muslims during the conquest era. While al-Bakrī wrote a confident and eulogistic account of Qayrawān in the eleventh century, the subsequent decline of the city led al-Idrīsī to pen a nostalgic lament, invoking the language of poetry.[50]

> The city of Qayrawān is the foremost of capitals and it was the greatest city of the west, the most populated, the most prosperous, the most finely built … then God – May He be Praised – gave the Arabs power over it and natural disasters overcame it and now nothing remains but obliterated remains [*aṭlāl dārisa*] and destroyed traces [*āthār ṭāmisa*].[51]

The more recent Christian past played a different role to more distant pagan times, functioning primarily as the foil for legends of the Muslim conquest of north Africa

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[48] Elices Ocón, 'Teatros, circos y anfiteatros', 145–146. Elices Ocón interprets the phrase as indicating that the theatre was a place of 'pilgrimage'.

[49] Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 60. Kennedy, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, Vol 29, 4–5.

[50] Yann Dejugnat observes the adaptation of elements of the *qaṣīda* structure in Ibn Jubayr's *Riḥla*, where the ruins are those of Baghdad, another city of Muslim foundation perceived to be 'in decline' by the twelfth century. Dejugnat, 'Voyage au centre du monde', 173–174.

[51] al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum*, fasc. 1–4, 284. The Arabs that al-Idrīsī refers to are the Banū Hilāl and Banū Sulaym tribes who migrated into Ifrīqiya from Egypt in the eleventh century.

during the second half of the seventh century AD. Descriptions of Ceuta (Sabta, Septem) on the Straits of Gibraltar speak of the positive role played by the mysterious Christian Count Julian in Tāriq b. Ziyād's invasion of al-Andalus in 711 alongside references to its antique past and the monuments to be seen there.[52] In contrast, the town of Tahūda or Tahūdha (Sidi Okba, Thabudeos) in central Algeria, 'a large ancient city with a mighty wall built of fine stone' appears as an unlucky site due to its role in the confrontation between the legendary Muslim general ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ and the Maghribī Christian king or chieftain, Kasīla.[53] After a cycle of battles, Kasīla defeated and killed ʿUqba outside Tahūda in AD 683, a catastrophe foretold by the Prophet that rendered the town ill-omened but subsequently redeemed by the presence of ʿUqba's tomb.[54]

One mode for the presentation of the pre-Islamic past, therefore, was as part of a longer, often mythically inflected, sacred history which encompassed the rise of great kingdoms and cities but also their fall by divine fiat. Medieval Islamic cities gained prestige from their ancient past and the traces of it within the townscape, as prosperous contemporary incarnations of God's everlasting plan. The more recent pre-Islamic past served as a canvas for drawing the myths and legends of the Islamic conquest era which signified the rise of God's last chosen people, the Muslims. In addition to these broad historical brush strokes, geographers also described some individual sites and ruins within the landscape. Some were given new mythical Islamic associations such as the Arch of Caracalla at Cherchell, identified as the Miḥrāb of Solomon by Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi,[55] or embued with the supernatural in popular folklore,[56] but the most consistent attitude towards individual sites was scientific, or pseudo-scientific, amazement, a theme the next section will elucidate.

The marvels of ancient technology and their Islamic equivalents

By far the most notable aspect of references to pre-Islamic monuments in these texts is their evocation of wonderment. In geographical texts, written for entertainment as well as edification, the 'wondrous' (*ʿajīb*) could indicate what we would consider fantastical and mythic elements such as strange beasts, talking statues or mysterious cities of bronze in remote locations on the peripheries of the Islamic world.[57] It could equally denote, however, wonders more akin to the seven wonders of the ancient world such as the Pharos in Alexandria which indicated pinnacles of human ingenuity

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[52] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 103–104; French, 204; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 138.

[53] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 72–74; French, 148–151; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 174–175.

[54] Al-Bakrī adds that when the Fāṭimid caliph al-Muʿizz ordered a contingent of troops to desecrate the tomb, they were prevented from doing so by a hurricane. al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 74; French, 152.

[55] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 139.

[56] Both al-Bakrī and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi speak of the 'cisterns of the demons' at Carthage, and the latter adds that people feared to enter them, especially at night, but that he went in with a few companions and heard the fearsome echoes within. *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 123.

[57] Clarke, *Muslim Conquest*, 70–83.

and achievement. The rhyming companion and near synonym of ʿajāʾib (wonders) in these texts is gharāʾib (marvels, rarities) from the root gh-r-b denoting strangeness as well as amazement and wonder, a pairing familiar from other examples of the genre.

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi highlights the importance of 'wonders' in the title of his work, *The Book of Investigation into the Wonders of Great Cities* and foremost among them were aspects of the antique urban ensemble which demonstrated technical mastery. Three main categories may be identified, firstly, bridges, aqueducts and other hydraulic features; secondly, palaces, fortresses and walls; and thirdly spectacle buildings such as amphitheatres, theatres and hippodromes. In many cases the categories overlap through the supply of water to palaces, the perceived structural consistency of the architecture, the reuse and repurposing of buildings, or misattributions of their functions, and their mutual presence at the sites described.

While parts of the Maghrib were relatively well-watered by rivers and seasonal rainfall, hot, dry summers ensured that the supply of fresh water was as important a consideration for Islamic regimes as it had been for their predecessors. The maintenance of a regular supply of water for the irrigation of agriculture, the nourishment of the population and the performance of ablutions before prayer and bathing had both political and religious significations and was seen as a mark of a good ruler. It is therefore unsurprising that medieval Muslims were fascinated by the channels, aqueducts, reservoirs and cisterns of their predecessors. Again, Carthage and the hydraulic engineering in its environs stands out as a focus of Muslim admiration. Al-Bakrī mentions a reservoir in the middle of Burj Abī Sulaymān, a village near Carthage, adding:

> [It is] surrounded in our time by 1,700 standing arches and a similar number of fallen ones, water brought from the Jafāra spring to Carthage used to flow into this construction via a mighty channel, a few days' length, hidden underground in some places and in other places raised on multi-level aqueducts [qanāṭir fawqa qanāṭir] that reached the clouds.[58]

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi takes al-Bakrī's passage and expands it to stress the wonder of the site.

> Among the wonders of the world [ʿajāʾib al-dunya] is the structure of the channel which used to bring water from the Jafān spring a distance of five days' travel to the city of Carthage. It is a mighty channel which used to carry enough water to power five or more water mills. Its width is about eight spans and the depth of the water is about a fathom and a half. Sometimes it disappears under the ground in elevated areas and when it crosses lowlands it is carried on multi-level aqueducts that almost match the clouds in height. It is among the most marvellous [aghrab] buildings on earth. In the middle of the city is a large reservoir surrounded in our time by around 1,800 arches not counting those which have been destroyed.[59]

The bridge at Constantine (Qusanṭīna, Cirta/Constantina) which straddled the deep ravine around the rocky spur on which the town is situated also evoked repeated

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[58] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 44; French, 95.
[59] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 123–124.

comment.[60] Al-Bakrī begins by noting that Constantine is a 'large, antique, prosperous city' encircled by rivers and then describes the bridge.

> These rivers flow in an extremely deep ravine at the bottom of which is a bridge of four arches, with another bridge built on top, and another on top of that of three arches, and on top of that a roofed structure [*bayt*] at the level of the top edges of the ravine to allow passage into the city. From this structure, the water at the bottom appears like [the tail of] a small comet because of its depth and distance. This structure is called the 'Crossing' [*ʿubūr*] because it is suspended in the air.[61]

Al-Idrīsī gives more detail on Constantine, noting that it can only be easily reached from the west, where there are Roman buildings that include a palace and a spectacle building alongside Islamic cemeteries.[62] He then describes the bridge:

> The river gorge surrounds ... Constantine on all sides like an encircling necklace ... The city has two gates, the Mīla gate in the west and the Bridge gate in the east. This bridge is one of the most amazing built structures [*min aʿjab al-bināʾāt*] because its height is around one hundred *dhirāʿ rushāshī*.[63] It is of Roman construction with upper arches upon lower arches whose number across the breadth of the gorge is five.[64]

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi adds his own enthusiastic and personal description of the antique ensemble at Constantine making an explicit comparison with Carthage.

> [It is] a large, prosperous, ancient, everlasting city containing many traces of the ancients. Its water is brought from afar via aqueducts which are similar to the aqueducts of Carthage. It also has massive reservoirs like those of Carthage.

He then compares Constantine's position on a rocky spur above a ravine to that of Ronda in the Iberian Peninsula, although more inaccessible and dramatic with the roar of the river reverberating through the ravine, before describing the iconic bridge.

> The ancients erected a mighty bridge across this ravine, three in fact one upon another, suspended in the air near the top of the ravine providing access to the city and connected to its gate. On top of the bridge, adjacent to the gate, they constructed an arched building which the inhabitants of the city called the ʿAbūr, meaning the dog star Sirius, because it appears to be suspended in the sky. If you are in the middle of this bridge, crossing to the other side, you think that you are flying in the air and you see the waters of the mighty river in the depths of the deep ravine looking like a little brook.[65]

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[60] Bridges and aqueducts are both termed *qanṭara*, pl. *qanāṭir* in Arabic and are therefore placed in the same category by the geographers.

[61] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 63; French, 131–132.

[62] Given his Norman Sicilian patron, al-Idrisī compares the amphitheatre at Constantine to one at 'Thurma' in Sicily, probably either Tauromenium (Taormina) or Thermae (Termini Imerese).

[63] A *dhirāʿ* is usually about 0.6 m.

[64] al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum*, fasc. 1–4, 265–266.

[65] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 165–166. One might suggest that the Arabic word is *ʿubūr* with the more mundane meaning of 'crossing' rather than *ʿabūr*, Sirius, which al-Bakrī does not mention.

He finishes with the statement that Constantine is 'among the wonders of the world' (ʿajāʾib al-ʿālam), and that he himself had visited it, inspected its monuments, and contemplated 'the traces of the ancients' at many locations.[66] Intriguingly, he adds the cryptic comment that he did this with a purpose (gharaḍ), leaving us to speculate whether the Almohad caliph, Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb, said to have collected classical statuary from Madīnat Zahrāʾ near Córdoba, had ordered his officials to survey classical remains with a view to finding similar items.[67] This hint at a twelfth-century motive for observing and describing the past returns us to the context in which medieval geographers operated. The Almohads were a self-consciously imperial Maghribī regime and Almohad caliphs launched ambitious urban building programmes that included the development of suburban estates with large reservoirs as well as new urban ensembles, described on occasion using the paired adjectives ʿajīb and gharīb.[68] Almohad recognition of the achievements of the pre-Islamic past therefore took place in an atmosphere of cultural confidence, akin to that apparent in ʿAbbāsid Baghdad in the eighth to ninth centuries.

The Islamic counterpoint to the pre-Islamic engineering feats evident at Carthage and Constantine was the system of reservoirs (marājil or mawājil) at Qayrawān, described by al-Bakrī before the city's decline in the later eleventh-century. According to al-Bakrī, the project to provide reservoirs to supply the new Muslim settlement was initiated by the Umayyad caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik and brought to fruition by the Aghlabids, an ʿAbbāsid gubernatorial dynasty, whose achievements appear in his text to be as amazing as the pre-Islamic Roman ruins of Ifrīqiya. Although he mentions fifteen reservoirs, he concentrates on two:

> The greatest and most splendid [reservoir] is that of Abū Ibrāhīm Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Aghlab near the Tunis gate which is circular and extremely big. In the middle is an eight-sided tower with a viewing chamber at the top, open on four sides, standing on eleven supports with no gap between them.[69] The surface area of this chamber is about 2 dhirāʿ [1.75m]. Ibn al-Aghlab used to reach this pavilion by a boat called the 'Cutter'.[70] There are high vaults connected to this reservoir, gallery mounted upon gallery. Ziyādat Allāh built a palace to the west of this reservoir. To the north it is connected to another delightful reservoir called the 'Fountain' into which the waters of the river pour when they are in spate. As the intensity of the flow abates and once the water level in the Fountain has risen two fathoms up the release gate between the two reservoirs, it is allowed through to the great reservoir. This reservoir is a wondrous thing of marvellous construction. And [the Fāṭimid

[66] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 166.

[67] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-Mughrib*, vol. 4, 275; Bennison, *Almoravid and Almohad Empires*, 106–107.

[68] Bennison, *Almoravid and Almohad Empires*, 319.

[69] An obscure phrase relating to measurement when the cistern is filled with water follows. A marginal note from the editor comments that the text is 'obviously corrupted' at this point. al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 26.

[70] The Arabic term is *zallāj*, denoting the swift flight of an arrow and smooth movement. I have translated it as 'Cutter', in the sense of a speedy ship that 'cuts' the water. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi transforms the meaning by omitting mention of a boat and saying the pavilion is literally the distance of a well-fired arrow from the edge of the reservoir. *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 115.

caliph] ʿUbayd Allāh said, 'I have never seen in the east the like of two things in Ifrīqiya, the reservoir at the Tunis gate and the palace in the city of Raqqāda'.[71]

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi gives a clearer, shorter summary of al-Bakrī's description, aided perhaps by observation, although as we saw from al-Idrīsī's lament, Qayrawān had fallen on hard times by the late twelfth century. These depictions of the Muslim-built reservoirs of Qayrawān are highly reminiscent of descriptions of classical constructions and also evoke similar building forms, the reference to high arches (*aqbāʾ*) with one arcade (*azaj*) mounted on another suggest an aqueduct while the construction as a whole is called both 'wondrous' and 'marvellous', the paired adjectives *ʿajīb* and *gharīb* regularly deployed to signal antique technological virtuosity, as noted above. The language thus in and of itself generates a comparison and similarity between these two phases of achievement which celebrates the latter, without diminishing the former.

Grand standing structures of various other kinds also attracted attention for their strength, size and sumptuous use of marble. Their function was sometimes unclear to medieval Muslim geographers who identified some such structures as palaces or fortresses and others as spectacle buildings, even when their form was similar. At Carthage, for instance, al-Bakrī and his successors describe a cluster of 'palaces' and a 'theatre' which probably correspond to the amphitheatre, theatre and circus.[72] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi expands al-Bakrī's description of one such 'palace', possibly the circus:[73]

> There used to be a mighty palace overlooking the sea called Qūmis, one of the most wondrous things in [Carthage], built as it was on marble columns, fluted and as white as snow, and of such superlative size that twelve men could fit on top of the column with a table for food or drink between them. The circumference of one of these columns is about thirty spans, rising to an immense height, and other columns face them. The whole palace is built of rows of arches mounted upon each other of the most amazing workmanship and finest construction.[74]

Similarly, the amphitheatre at El Djem, now an iconic Tunisian monument, is identified as a palace, Qaṣr Lajam, and woven into the legend of the Kāhina, a local queen who fought against the advancing Muslims in the seventh century AD, through its alternative appellation, the Palace of the Kāhina. Here, a local myth and/or reuse seems to have trumped acknowledgement of the structure's original function, despite the geographers' evident awareness of its circular form.[75] Marble was closely associated

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[71] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 26; French, 59–60.
[72] Elices Ocón, 'Teatros, circos y anfiteatros', 135.
[73] Caiozzo, 'Vestiges préislamiques', 139.
[74] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 123; al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 44; French, 94.
[75] 'Its circumference is a mile and it is built of stone around 25 spans in length. Its height in the air is 24 *qāma* [a *qāma*, or man's height, 6 feet]. Inside it is stepped from bottom to top. The entrances are arches, one on top of the other of most precise workmanship.' al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 31; French, 69.

with palatial architecture and power which may have encouraged the geographers to think of such sites in relation to Islamic palaces. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi provides a comparable description of the modern palaces of Bijāya built by the Banū Ḥammād during their eleventh-century reconstruction of the city.

> In Bijāya, there is a place known as the Pearl, a mountain spur rising from the sea connected to the city where palaces built by the Ṣanhāja kings are situated. No observer has seen more beautiful building or a more pleasant location. They contain arched windows with metal grilles and arched filigree doors and the walls of the richly ornamented halls are built of white marble from top to bottom. They have the finest decoration, including gold and emerald, which includes beautifully written calligraphy and pictures.[76]

In several places, however, the medieval geographers did identify ruins as a type of building relatively alien to the Islamic urban environment, a *dār malʿab*, a generic term for large recreational spaces such as amphitheatres, theatres and hippodromes which encompassed the sense of an open area for some kind of 'game', the *malʿab*, and the grand superstructure encircling it, the *dār*. This vocabulary originated in the Islamic east and seems to have been introduced into the western Islamic lexicon by al-Bakrī.[77] One or more of the geographers mention a *dār malʿab* at Sousse (Sūsa, Hadrumetum/Justinianopolis),[78] Constantine, Tebessa (Tibassā, Theveste)[79] and Algiers (Madīnat Jazāʾir Banī Mazghannā, Icosium),[80] among other places. The *dār malʿab* that attracts most attention, however, is that of Carthage which again emerges as the most significant antique site in the medieval Maghribī imaginary. It is described in detail by al-Bakrī, al-Idrīsī and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, all of whom refer to its local name, the Ṭiyātir, clearly derived from Latin *theatrum* or Greek *theatron*.[81]

> Al-Bakrī: The most amazing thing at Carthage is a *dār malʿab* which they call the Theatre constructed of arches upon columns surmounted by similar colonnades which surround the arena. Animals of all kinds and practitioners of all the crafts are depicted on its walls, as well as representations of the winds, the face of the east wind [*al-Ṣabā*] announces glad tidings while the face of the west wind [*al-Dabbūr*] is morose.[82]

> Al-Idrīsī: Today there exist remnants of famous Roman buildings such as the Theatre which has no peer among the buildings of the world in terms of its virtuosity. This Theatre is built in a circle of about fifty arches, standing in the air, the width of each being more than thirty spans. Between each arch and the next is a column and its jamb, and the width of the column and its two jambs is four and a half spans.[83] There are five arches mounted upon each of these arches, arch upon arch of the same description, all built of the same ashlar

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[76] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 130.
[77] Elices Ocón, 'Teatros, circos y anfiteatros', 133–134.
[78] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 34; French, 75.
[79] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 162.
[80] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 66; French, 136; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 132.
[81] Elices Ocón, 'Teatros, circos y anfiteatros', 135.
[82] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 43; French, 93.
[83] According to Lane's *Lexicon* both ʿaẓm and ʿiḍāda may refer to wooden supports and the latter indicates door posts or jambs. It is unclear what structure or material al-Idrīsī is referring to here.

masonry of a quality unlike any other. At the top of each arch is a circular niche [*baḥr*] and in the niches of the lower arches are various wondrous images and statues fixed in the stone, depicting people, craftsmen, animals and ships using the finest workmanship.[84]

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi: In Carthage there is a *dār malʿab* which the people of the area call the Theatre. It is completely made of arches mounted on marble columns, with around four similar rows above, surrounded by another building [*dār*] which is circular and of most marvellous construction. It has many doorways, each with an image of an animal above it. On the walls there are images of every type of craftsman holding their tools. In this building there is so much marble that if the people of Ifrīqiya gathered to transport it, they would not be able to do so.[85]

These precise descriptions do not explore the usage of the building but, as with the description of so-called 'palaces', they focus on the architectural symmetry, workmanship, size and copious use of marble, widely recognised in Arabic sources as royal material. They also detail the decoration, including figural depictions of various kinds, statuary and/or mosaics, which elicit further wonderment and no evident distaste for pagan figural representations. As a group, these structures were deemed wondrous because of the technological prowess that they exemplified. In the case of aqueducts and associated structures such as basins, cisterns and reservoirs, Muslim observations of the achievements of their predecessors show elements of competitive emulation in which Islamic-era structures at Qayrawān figure as worthy successors to pre-Islamic marvels. Structures identified as palaces similarly stand alongside Islamic examples, a category which to an extent encompassed those buildings described using the term *dār malʿab* which lacked direct Islamic equivalents.

Appropriating the splendour of past civilisations

Many of the observations made in the previous sections relate to the pre-Christian landscape and a past distant from medieval Muslim experience. The traces of the late antique Christian environment which immediately preceded the Islamic era receive a slightly different treatment. On the one hand, the Christian imprint on the Maghrib is underplayed in medieval Arabic texts, as indeed was the presence of an indigenous Christian community more generally.[86] The only section in al-Bakrī's description of north Africa which deals extensively with Christian churches is his opening discussion of a church complex at Minya in Egypt. In a rare acknowledgement of the importance of Christianity in the Maghrib, he comments that ʿAnnāba (Būna, Hippo) was 'the city of Augustine, the great scholar of the Christian religion'.[87] He also refers to ongoing local Christian use of a 'grand' church in Tlemcen (Tilimsān, Pomaria), information that may have been outdated by the eleventh century, and is not repeated by Ibn

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[84] al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum*, fasc. 1–4, 286–287.
[85] *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 122.
[86] See Prevost, 'Communautés chrétiennes autochtones'.
[87] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 54; French, 116.

ʿAbd Rabbihi.[88] This near silence partly reflects the attenuated nature of the Maghribī Christian community by the eleventh century but also perhaps its political status which wavered between peripherality in Ifrīqiya, where the number of bishoprics had dwindled to two by 1076,[89] and suspicion as a fifth column in the Iberian peninsula.

On the other hand, the Islamic conquest of north Africa, like other regions, was a source of immense Muslim pride which often found expression in the appropriation of elements from preceding civilisations whether tangible, material objects or intangible expertise and symbolism.[90] As we saw above, the Islamic conquest of the Maghrib was the subject of popular medieval legends and places from the late antique Christian past appeared within this mythico-historical framework. One also finds a number of incidental references to ruined and converted churches scattered through the geographies of this period, particularly in al-Bakrī's work. After his description of Bāja in Algeria, al-Bakrī comments that in the nearby village of al-Mughīriyya, there are 'many mighty, amazing traces of the ancients including churches of fine workmanship that are still standing as if the labourers' hands stopped working only yesterday, all of them decorated with carved marble'.[91] He also notes that there are remains of churches in Ceuta, where the great mosque is a converted church, and that Muslims have reused part of a church in Algiers as a *muṣalla*, a statement repeated by Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi.

> In Madīnat Banī Mazghanna, there is also a grand church with a wall running from the east to west still in place which serves as the *qibla* for the two festivals [*ʿīd al-fiṭr* and *ʿīd al-aḍḥā*], and is decorated with carving and pictures.[92]

Although chronicles which report the recapture of towns by Muslims in zones of conflict such as the Iberian Peninsula use a strident vocabulary, comparing the cleansing of mosques to their 'pollution' by Christian use, pride in the Muslim conversion of churches to mosques is muted in geographical works. A stronger note of triumphalism is evident, however, in the description of the reuse of masonry and columns from Christian buildings in Muslim structures, especially great mosques. One of the best known such stories appears in al-Bakrī's account of the construction of the Great Mosque of Qayrawān which has several chronological holes but nonetheless conveys an eleventh-century pride in the victory of Islam over Christianity.[93]

> [The Great Mosque of Qayrawān's] first founder and locator of its *miḥrāb* was ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ then Ḥasān [b. Nuʿmān] destroyed it except for the *miḥrāb* which he rebuilt using two red columns with yellow tracery, the like of which observers have never seen, that were

[88] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 76; French, 155–156.

[89] Bennison, *Almoravid and Almohad Empires*, 165–166.

[90] This is, of course, not an exclusively Muslim practice or attitude. Similar processes took place in areas conquered by Christians, most notably in the Iberian peninsula.

[91] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 57 ; French, 120; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 160–161.

[92] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 66; French, 137; *Kitāb al-Istibṣār*, 132.

[93] For an assessment of the textual and archaeological information on the mosque's construction, see Mahfoudh, 'La Grande Mosquée de Kairouan'.

brought from a church built by the ancients in a place today called al-Qaysariyya by the Ḍarb market. People say that the master of Constantinople asked to exchange them for their weight in gold before they were carried to the great mosque, but they embellished the great mosque with them. Everyone who sees them says he has not seen anything to compare in any country.[94]

From the perspective of this chapter, the most noteworthy elements of this account are the uniqueness of the columns, their supposed provenance from a church in the vicinity, and the recognition of their value by the Byzantine emperor, disparagingly described as the 'master of Constantinople'. Here, these unusual porphyry columns, which still flank the *miḥrāb* of the great mosque of Qayrawān, become symbols for the victory of Islam over Christianity. Not only was the church denuded of its treasures, but the Byzantine emperor himself bargained for the columns, only to be turned down by Ḥasan b. Nuʿmān, the Umayyad governor of Ifrīqiya, who had the power to refuse and understood that the symbolic value of placing the columns in the great mosque was worth more than their weight in gold.

As Mahfoudh notes, a more down to earth account appears in al-Mālikī's *Riyāḍ al-Nufūs* which states that during the reign of the Aghlabid Ziyādat Allāh the columns were brought from a Byzantine fortress called Qamūniya built on the ruins of a church.[95] This creates greater chronological distance between the Christian and Islamic use of the columns and introduces an element of pragmatism in place of al-Bakrī's more ideologically charged account which fits in with his positioning of Qayrawān as the emblematic Islamic capital of Ifrīqiya and perhaps his more binary view of Christian-Muslim relations as an Andalusī Muslim. It also points to the repeated reuse of sites and materials over the centuries with spectacle buildings, palaces and churches becoming fortresses and mosques as time passed. Such patterns of reuse changed perceptions of materials and gradually endowed earlier Islamic materials with the same cachet as antique remains. While the Aghlabids of Ifrīqiya and the Umayyads of Córdoba prided themselves on their re-use of antique *spolia* from across the western Mediterranean, their Almoravid and Almohad successors in the Maghrib balanced references to the pre-Islamic past with conscious re-use of Umayyad artefacts that equally expressed their desire to make their imperial mark.[96] This reached its height in the late twelfth-century when Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi was writing.

Conclusion

The traces of the ancients were evident across the medieval Maghrib in the form of spectacular ruined sites in the countryside and larger or smaller fragments of walls and buildings in villages, towns and cities. Many mosques and palaces included re-used marble columns and panels, or stood on the site of previous churches,

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[94] al-Bakrī, *Description de l'Afrique*, Arabic, 22–23; French, 52–53.
[95] Mahfoudh, 'La Grande Mosquée de Kairouan', 169.
[96] Rosser-Owen, 'Andalusi *Spolia* in medieval Morocco', 178.

residences and forts. How medieval Maghribī authors chose to describe them depended in part upon the conventions of Arabic-Islamic literature and common understandings of the place of Muslims in a sacred history determined by God's plan. The repetition of material from one generation of geographers to another reinforced these conventions through the eleventh and twelfth centuries, while the perpetuation of certain routes across the Maghrib encouraged concentration on a particular set of sites, with Carthage, ancient capital of Ifrīqiya, and Qayrawān, its Islamic avatar, at the forefront, despite the vicissitudes actually faced by Qayrawān during the period in question.

Medieval Maghribī geographers often took on the role of antiquarians and casual visitors, commenting on fine workmanship and striking structures, drawing occasional lessons for their own times, and citing myths and local legends in their increasingly disinterested perusal of the traces of the ancients in the Maghrib. The material aspects of these sites that attracted most attention were those that evoked lasting admiration and wonder at the ingenuity of past builders, namely hydraulic constructions and large palatial and leisure spaces. In a period when walls were often constructed of rammed earth or packed, concrete-like rubble, the finely-cut masonry of antique walls and other buildings stood out, as did multi-storey arcades, whether they were part of an aqueduct or an amphitheatre. White marble, a luxury material widely (re)used in Islamic palaces, also attracted comment, as did mosaics and other types of figural representation which the geographers categorise as wondrous and marvellous without any sense of offended religious sensibilities, and which might likewise be incorporated in Islamic buildings.

Islamic marvels of construction appear as the contemporary counterpoints to ancient wonders without in any way diminishing the latter but in the narration of the late antique Christian environment a more strident note occasionally appears. The Islamic conquest itself involved conflict with the Christian 'Rūm' and some sites are remembered in terms of the legends of the battles of the conquest and the conversion of ancient churches into mosques, a phenomenon that the writers of this period had witnessed in reverse in their own times due to the changing boundary between Christian and Muslim power across the Mediterranean. Furthermore, use of the term Rūm for Christian rivals, past and present, created continuities between the late antique period and the eleventh to twelfth centuries which might otherwise have been much less evident. Simultaneously, however, regimes began to appropriate the heritage of their Muslim predecessors in place of pre-Islamic edifices which had begun to recede into the world of folklore and myth.

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Chapter 12

Rituals of memory at the Olympieion precinct of Athens

Elizabeth Key Fowden

In the context of a volume about remembering and forgetting the ancient city, this study of the Olympieion precinct focuses on rituals of urban memory that are enacted in a liminal topography. I am concerned with asking two questions: the first is how topography forms the matrix from which urban memory arises, and the second is how seemingly contradictory memories coexist in the same space. The Olympieion precinct in Athens is a gateway, a space between city and countryside, always near the city limits, even if today we understand that relationship with the help of the mind's eye. Throughout its history, the myths and cults associated with the precinct have bound the city's inhabitants to the natural environment on which the city depends. The myths and cults helped both to maintain and to revise memory of the precinct's significance as it has evolved over time. But the creation of meaning is not the exclusive preserve of local memory and practice, as newcomers to Athens also impose their own memories and interpretations. The result is a space with a deep history of accumulated associations that have emerged, receded and sometimes re-emerged transformed over the precinct's three millennia of use. Graveyard, temple, bath complex, church, workshops, threshing floors, *musalla*, archaeological site: the precinct and environs have attracted an unusually wide range of uses. While tracing the transformations of this suburban precinct the present study focuses on the interactions between local and alien interpretations of the area, and between written and enacted modes of preserving memories embedded there. This marginal space between city and countryside has been the stage on which scene after scene of extraordinary events have mixed with the ordinary – from the subsiding of the primordial flood survived by Deucalion and his wife, to the erection of a jinn palace for Solomon and his bride, hovering on top of the giant columns, to the present day coexistence of neo-pagan, Orthodox Christian and archaeological veneration.

I argue that it is the precinct's spatial orientation at the city's edge that facilitates the convergence there of multiple, sometimes contradictory, memories.

Natural and legendary origins of local memory

In a famous passage, Plato pictures Socrates and Phaedrus conversing about love as they stroll among the trees and shrines of the Ilissos river at the place where it ran close to the city walls of Athens. Phaedrus has spent the morning in a house near the Olympieion, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and is on his way to take a refreshing walk along country roads when he meets Socrates, who suggests they walk along the river. Phaedrus leaps at the idea: 'How lucky, then, that I am barefoot today – you, of course, are always so. The easiest thing to do is to walk right in the stream; this way, we'll also get our feet wet, which is very pleasant, especially at this hour and season'.[1] Along the way to the shady plane tree where they will read and discuss the speech on love Phaedrus has just been listening to, they pass a sequence of primordial shrines – to Boreas the north wind, on whom Athens' pleasant climate so depends, and to the river god Achelous and the nymphs. Phaedrus asks whether Socrates believes the local legends, to which Socrates replies that his time is better spent trying to know himself than debating the veracity of myths.

These legends and their cults related to the natural origins of the local memories that underlay the urban religious environment. Athens was girded with ancient cult sites on mountain tops where men and women offered supplications to Zeus, fundamentally a weather god from at least the Protogeometric period. The cult site of 'Showery' Zeus/Zeus Ombrios on the highest ridge of Mt Hymettos remained sporadically active until the late Roman period.[2] Springs in the mountain's foothills fed the today largely buried Ilissos river and through seasonal flow or violent flood shaped the environment of the Olympian Zeus precinct with its clustering of interconnected shrines devoted to nature deities, and located just where the mountain and its resources most immediately impinged on the city. And the urbanisation of Zeus did not erase his prehistory in the stormy sky.[3]

Thucydides had already drawn attention to this interrelation of the Acropolis as the city core and the Ilissos area in his description of the natural terrain and associated ancient cults that defined Athens from earliest times. Signs of this venerable relationship were the temples of Athena and other gods on the Acropolis and those consecrated in the area outside the Acropolis, to the south – the temples of Olympian Zeus, of Pythian Apollo, of Gea (Earth) and of Dionysos in the Marshes.[4] Thucydides

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[1] Plato, *Phaedrus* 229a–230d, transl. Nehamas and Woodruff. Ferrari, *Listening to the Cicadas*, 1–12; Chiotis, 'Springs'.
[2] Fowden, 'City and mountain', 55–57. On the sanctuary of Zeus on Mt Parnes, with brief mention of late Roman use, see Palaiokrassa-Kopitsa and Vivliodetis, 'Sanctuaries', esp. n.3 with bibliography for the Hymettos site.
[3] Langdon, *Sanctuary of Zeus*, esp. 79–81, 84–87, 100–106.
[4] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.15.

confirms the area's deep history with a pregnant reference to the celebration of the ancient Anthesteria at the Dionysos temple. For the Athenian historian, the Acropolis and the assemblage of shrines in the vicinity of the Ilissos constituted the two nodes in the city's primeval spatial identity, one a limestone capped hill and the other a river valley fed by mountain springs.

Thucydides goes on to mention in the same area the important fountain on the Ilissos, known anciently as Callirrhoe, and relates its place in local religious ceremonies. The Olympieion precinct was variously linked to water resources,[5] and ongoing archaeological excavation is investigating the waterworks within the Hadrianic *peribolos.* But long before Roman hydraulics, the precinct contained one of the city's revered holy sites, the crevice through which receded the primordial flood whose two survivors were Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha. Five hundred years after Thucydides, Pausanias in his *Description of Greece* attributed to the Athenians the view that Deucalion's grave near the Olympieion proved he had lived in their city and was the original founder of the temple to Zeus.[6] The discovery of graves dating to the Submycenaean, Protogeometric and Geometric periods confirm the antiquity of this area's use.[7] The associations between Deucalion, the Olympieion precinct and the well-watered city's edge illustrate how memory of the city's history is preserved through legend and associated rites oriented on the margins of the urban space. In 1672 the Jesuit Fr Jacques Paul Babin, a recent visitor to Athens, described the Olympieion (known then as the Palace of Hadrian) as 'in a field between the city and a little river', confirming that the precinct's marginal orientation to the city had not radically changed over the centuries.[8]

We should not forget that toponymns too can reach far back into the past. The place names ending in -ssos and -ttos that ring Athens – Mount Hymettos, the Ilissos river, Mount Lykabettos and the hill of Ardettos upstream and on the opposite bank of the Ilissos from the Olympieion – are considered to be pre-Hellenic survivals. Whether attested in the fifth century BC, or the twelfth or fifteenth century AD, our textual evidence is too thin to prove continuous use of Hymettos and Ilissos for more than three millennia, but it is not improbable.[9] What certainly remained was the character of the Ilissos to Olympieion area as a place of convergence, where water from the mountain formed a river and the ground rose north-westward from the river towards the Acropolis. With the exception of its almost impregnable citadel,

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[5] Hekimoglou, *Υδάτινη ιστοριογραφία*, esp. 37–41, 66–71.
[6] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.18.7–8. Strabo, *Geography*, 9.4.2 also mentions that Deucalion's grave is at Athens.
[7] Travlos, *Πολεοδομική ἐξέλιξις*, 32 n.4; Dimitriadou, *Early Athens,* 31, 41–42, 97–98, 421–424, fig. 51, fig. 52 and fig. 4.19; and esp. Papadopoulos, *Ceramicus Redivivus*, 297–302, on the antiquity of the area according to both archaeological evidence and Thucydides's testimony.
[8] Babin, *Relation*, 44–45.
[9] Koder and Hild, *Hellas und Thessalia*, 174 (Hymettos), 174–175 (Ilissos); Tzavella, *Urban and Rural Landscape*, 56, n. 309. Hymettos appears in para. 2 of *The Theatres and the Schools of Athens*, considered to be a cumulative text, fifteenth-century in the extant form: de Laborde, *Athènes*, 1.17; Tanoulas, *Τὰ Προπύλαια*, 1.43–44, 58; Tanoulas, 'Reconsidering'.

the lower city of Athens was not well-walled throughout its entire history.[10] It is significant that, when there was a wall, the area of the Olympieion was at the outer, south-eastern edge, included just within or just outside the circuit whether it was the fifth-century BC Themistoclean or the third-century AD Valerian wall, or the Haseki wall built in 1778, ingeniously incorporating the ready-made Gate of Hadrian as the 'kameroporta' for the road leading to the Ilissos area.[11] The city wall was not a rigid boundary and its porosity is essential to understanding the spatial significance of the area throughout its history. The various traces of walls in this part of the city still await proper investigation,[12] but enough is known – for instance, that there was a gate in the Themistoclean wall north of the Olympieion and another to the south of the Hadrianic *peribolos* in the Themistoclean and later Valerian wall – to understand the critical character of the precinct's orientation along lines of movement between city and countryside.[13] Regardless of the variations in different historical periods, the city's circuit wall served not to limit but to enhance the usefulness of the Olympieion area to the city's inhabitants as an open gathering place in proximity to natural resources and its monumentalised, and ritualised, reminders of the Christian and Muslim transformations of both topography and associated mythology. We will return to this point in the second part of this chapter. First, I want to consider the wider Olympieion precinct and what it embraced (Fig. 12.1).

Imported origins of urban memory

As is often the case, we rely on outsiders who visited the city for more detailed descriptions than any local, textual source offered of this complex, multi-layered space. And as usual, archaeology in the area has been text-driven, using above all Pausanias's description in order to interpret what was discovered once 'post-classical' accumulations were cut through, usually without much documentation. But there is no such thing as a neutral viewer. Pausanias, a visitor to Athens concerned with narrating local lore, had his own particular perspective that aspired to excise Roman intrusions into local space. On the sloping, rocky ground between the Temple of Zeus Olympios and the Ilissos there was a cluster of shrines mentioned in ancient sources and the subject of modern archaeological excavation: the *temenos* of Gea, and temples to Chronos and Rhea, Zeus Panhellenios and Apollo Delphinios.[14] To understand

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[10] Whether the archaic city was walled remains a hotly debated topic since little or no clear evidence has survived: Theocharaki, 'Ancient circuit wall', 71–76; Theocharaki, *Αρχαία τείχη*, 27–37; Dimitriadou, *Early Athens,* 212–225; Hekimoglou, *Υδάτινη ιστοριογραφία*, 73–75; Papadopoulos, 'Archaic walls'.

[11] Theocharaki, *Αρχαία τείχη*, plan and 37–39.

[12] Theocharaki, 'Ancient circuit wall', 88, 130, 132: Themistoclean wall segment (Th56) west of the Olympieion 'propylon'; Valerian section (V16) south of the Olympieion precinct.

[13] Theocharaki, *Αρχαία τείχη*, 275–276; Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 30.

[14] Travlos, *Pictorial Dictionary*, 101, fig. 130, map of shrines south of the Olympieion, 291, fig. 379, plan of the Ilissos area, 291, fig. 380, plan of Olympieion and surroundings; Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', 369–395, 423–426, 430–434.

Figure 12.1. Anonymous, 'Nouvelle Athènes. Morée'. View from slopes of Mt Hymettus with Ilissos River and Olympieion precinct in foreground, and citadel with lower city in background, pre-1687. Pen, brown ink, Indian ink wash and watercolor. Collection of François Roger de Gaignières (1642–1715), no. 6460 (Bibliothèque nationale de France).

the motivations for the erasure, and reassertion, of memory we need to focus on Pausanias's description of the temple and Hadrian's connection with it.

Hadrian passed three winters in Athens, in AD 124/125, 128/129 and 131/132. Probably on his last visit he established the Panhellenion and rededicated the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios, more than six centuries after the failed Peisistratid attempt to monumentalise the already ancient precinct in circa 515 BC.[15] Long ago the memory of the Peisistratids had been blotted out and their unfinished temple, damaged in the Persian sack of the city, had been used as a quarry for other building projects, most notably the Themistoclean wall.[16] In its Hadrianic form the temple had one hundred and four Corinthian columns. Thirteen survive today in the south-east corner and three near the north-east corner, one of which fell in a storm in 1852 and lies on the ground like a disjointed spine. Hadrian was careful to preserve the ancient cult spaces within the sacred precinct, which he had girded with a massive *peribolos* wall. Pausanias saw the Olympieion just fifteen years after its completion.

Tim Whitmarsh has analysed Pausanias's description of the precinct as a spatial expression of cultural difference. Pausanias limits the impact of the innovating Roman presence by treating it as merely preliminary to the meaningful core, which is Greek and ancient.[17] For example, the worshipper passed by Roman statues erected outside before entering the interior of the sanctuary of Olympian Zeus. Pausanias uses the singular form *peribolos*, 'precinct' to signify the whole sacred area that embraces what he is really interested in, the Greek *archaia*, 'antiquities', which he lists in his characteristically piled-up fashion: a bronze Zeus, a temple of Kronos and Rhea and a *temenos* of Gea surnamed Olympian. As we have noted, Pausanias pays special attention

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[15] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.18; Papahatzis, *Παυσανίου Ελλάδος Περιήγησις*, 1.270–276; Bevier, 'Olympieion'; Travlos, *Pictorial Dictionary*, 402–411, figs. 380–381, 521–531; Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 144–157; Willers, *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm*, 26–53; Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', esp. 369–395, 449–476. The Archaiologiki Etaireia sponsored excavation in the precinct from 1886 to 1907; Travlos and Threpsiadis resumed in the 1960s. For a selection of old drawings and photographs, see Tölle-Kastenbein, *Das Olympieion in Athen*.
[16] Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις*, 44–46, 48.
[17] Whitmarsh, 'Mnemonology', 51–56.

to Deucalion: 'The ancient sanctuary of Olympian Zeus the Athenians say was built by Deucalion, and they cite a grave which is not far from the present temple as evidence that Deucalion lived at Athens'.[18] Pausanias records that among the most venerable features of the sanctuary there was even a place where 'they say that along this bed flowed off the water after the deluge that occurred in the time of Deucalion, and into it they cast every year wheat meal mixed with honey'.[19] Pausanias represents the core precinct as a long-gestating accumulation of ancient sacred places, objects and accompanying rituals.

But Pausanias is discriminating in the information he gathers. As Whitmarsh observes, memory and forgetfulness operate as forms of resistance to Roman attempts to monopolise a precinct previously characterised by its multiple ancient *Greek* cult places. Part of this resistance is Pausanias's omission of both the gate and its inscription, features of an ancient space in ongoing use that conflicted with his preferred interpretation. The short inscription is located over the gate's arch. On the side facing the Acropolis it reads: ΑΙΔ' ΕΙΣΙΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΘΗΣΕΩΣ Η ΠΡΙΝ ΠΟΛΙΣ ('this is Athens, the ancient city of Theseus'). And on the side facing the Olympieion it reads: ΑΙΔ' ΕΙΣ' ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΟΥΧΙ ΘΗΣΕΩΣ ΠΟΛΙΣ ('this is the city of Hadrian, and not of Theseus'). Adopting Thucydides's conceptualisation, we see how the gate, built over a very ancient road, monumentalised the longstanding transition from the Acropolis to the southern region of the city. It has even been argued that the gate framed the archaic agora.[20] But Pausanias was not willing or interested to place Theseus and Hadrian in the same frame, whether it be political, mythical or monumental. In terms of urban history the gate was not an arbitrary or superficial imposition, but marked a functional and symbolic shift between city and suburb. As an outsider, Pausanias was less interested or able to conceive of the city as interrelating spaces than a local might be.

Pausanias's acts of forgetting led to great confusion among the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European antiquarians who tried to use his *Description of Greece* as a guide to what they found on the ground, combining it where necessary with local traditions to make sense of what they saw. The problem was that Pausanias could condense his descriptions to the point of obscurity, as he did when he described the Temple of Olympian Zeus, compressing it onto the end of his description of some of Hadrian's other benefactions in Athens – such as a temple to Hera and Zeus Panhellenios, in which he says books were kept, and a gymnasium. As a result, it took generations before James Stuart and Nicholas Revett finally understood that what was

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[18] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.18.8, transl. Jones. Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις*, 46, places the 'temenos' of Gea just above that of Pythian Apollo; Papahatzis, *Παυσανίου Ελλάδος Περιήγησις*, 276 n. 5 speculates that Deucalion's grave would have been in that 'temenos' and not far from the chasm; Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', 463–465.

[19] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.18.7, transl. Jones.

[20] Martin-McAuliffe and Papadopoulos, 'Framing victory', 354 with n. 145.

known locally as the Palace of Hadrian was Pausanias' Temple of Olympian Zeus.[21] By then Zeus had long disappeared from local memory. The fact that Hadrian was remembered locally thanks to the visible inscription, and Zeus forgotten, is a delicious irony, particularly in the light of Hadrian's uncharacteristically modest omission to portray himself as *synnaos*, a deity co-worshipped with Zeus in the temple.[22]

The Palace of Hadrian and modulations of memory

When the temple came to be known as a palace is not known. The destructive style of nineteenth-century excavation and urban development has bequeathed us a dismal archaeological record for the post-classical precinct and environs. Charalambos Bouras, an indefatigable researcher into excavation logs and archaeological reports, pronounced that, 'a short distance from the Olympieion is an area closely associated with the bed of the Ilissos river, where modern tampering with the physical context leaves no hope of future archaeological work'.[23] And the situation to the north of the Olympieion is scarcely better. There, an 'extensive medieval settlement' was removed without record in excavations hastily executed in the course of road-construction for the Olympic Games in 1896.[24] In the 1960s Threpsiades and Travlos conducted excavations on this northern side and identified what remained as middle Byzantine and Frankish.[25] Signs of change and adaptation abound, but we have no texts, whether by locals or outsiders, to help us understand how the still considerable traces of the ancient city in this area were interpreted and transformed. Already in the fifth or sixth century an early Christian basilica was built north of the *peribolos*. Little can be reconstructed of its life except that the space ceased to be used as a church long before the middle Byzantine period (tenth to twelfth centuries) since someone buried a small hoard of seventh-century coins in the debris that had accumulated over the church pavement.[26] Another basilica was built on the site of the Temple of Kronos and Rhea, but again by the middle Byzantine period its use as a church had been taken over, this time by graves, and the area was more generally absorbed by water-intensive workshops.[27] Evidence of Christianisation is also found along the west bank of the Ilissos where a mid-fifth-century subterranean martyr's shrine was built in honour of

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[21] Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities*, 1.38–39 (the identification was anticipated, but unpublished, by Johann Georg Transfeldt in 1674: Wachsmuth, *Die Stadt Athen*, 1.70–71). Most early travellers report the local name, 'palace', also calling it Hadrian's Columns or Pillars, e.g. Guillet, *Athènes*, 266; Spon, *Voyage*, 2.168; Wheler, *Journey*, 370–371; Francis Vernon drew a simple plan showing 19 columns and the southeast corner of the temple, labelled '27 August, Adriani Columna' [1675], see top, middle of the page, available at: pictures.royalsociety.org/image-rs-17324.

[22] Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities*, 153.

[23] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 99.

[24] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 97–98.

[25] Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις*, 142–144, briefly describes five early Christian churches in the wider Olympieion vicinity. Threpsiades and Travlos, ''Αρχαιότητες Ἀθηνῶν–Ἀττικῆς', 13–14.

[26] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 98 with n. 715.

[27] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 99. Threpsiades and Travlos, ''Αρχαιότητες Ἀθηνῶν–Ἀττικῆς', 13.
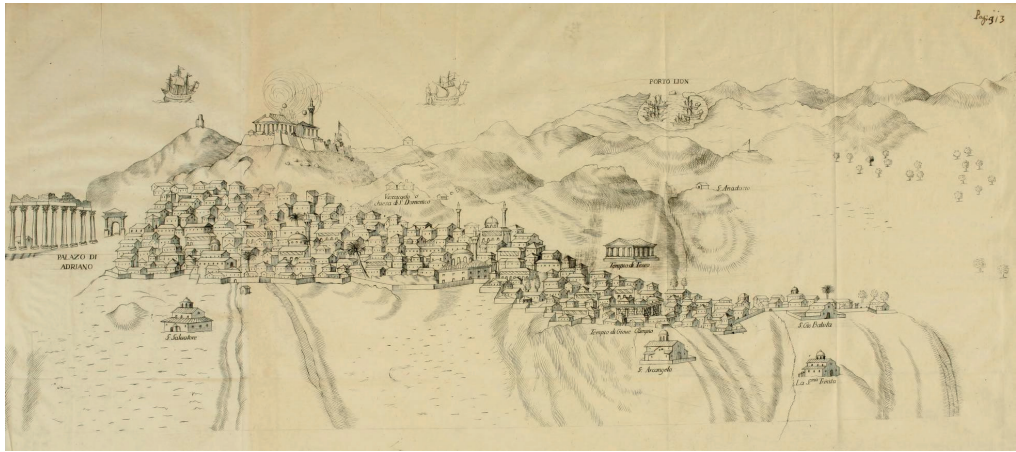
Figure 12.2. Engraving in Francesco Fanelli, Atene Attica, descritta de suoi principii fino all'acquisto fatto dell'armi veneti nel 1687 *(Venice, 1707), based on drawing by Captain Verneda (Wikimedia Commons).*

the local bishop Leonides, which remained in use in the Middle Byzantine and early modern periods and survives to this day under the early Christian Ilissos basilica.[28] Another church on the east bank of the Ilissos assumed the place of the Temple of Artemis Agrotera, an early conversion that was reworked in various periods before its destruction in 1778.[29] When a church was first built inside the ruined Temple of Zeus is not clear. Cuttings into the columns of the Temple of Olympian Zeus can still be seen at various heights, traces of ongoing use. A church 'at the columns' was observed by the earliest European visitors, attributed to both St. George and St. Nicholas, and to St. John on John Travlos's plan for 1456–1687.[30] Fr Jacques Paul Babin mentions in 1672 that 'between four of these columns there is a small, entirely intact small chapel of the Greeks, but it is never closed and they do not use it'.[31] The portrait of the city that accompanied Babin's text was drawn by another hand and does not include the church Babin mentions. But a rare, if not unique, depiction of a building nestled inside the temple appears only a few years later in a drawing by the engineer Verneda (Fig. 12.2), an eye-witness participant in the bombardment of the Athenian citadel in 1687.[32]

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[28] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 210.

[29] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 45, 95; Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', 490–494. See Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.19.5–6 on the Ilissos shrines.

[30] Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις*, plan X identifies the church as ῞Αγ.Ἰωάννης στις Κολῶνες; Spon, *Voyage*, no. 32 on his plan of Athens identifies 'Agios Georgios sur les colonnes'; Francis Vernon in his unpublished journal, fol. 28r, noted on 16 October 1675 an inscription 'at αγιο Νικόλα at Adrian's pillars' [exact transcription].

[31] Babin in *Relation*, 'entre quatre de ces colonnes il y a une petite Chapelle des Grecs toute entière, mais qui n'est j'amais fermée et dont ils ne se servent point', 45.

[32] In the unnumbered Preface to *Relation*, Spon attributed the drawings he included to Vaillant, about whom see Meyer, 'Non pas Athènes mais Épidaure'.

There is enough evidence to confirm that the former holy sites between the river and the Olympieion were the focal points of change. Access to water was a constant feature in the urban evolutions from the Roman bath complex excavated to the north of the *peribolos* to middle Byzantine workshops to the south – both olive presses and open vats for dying or tanning.[33] As for the Temple of Zeus itself, its position at the city's edge left the structure vulnerable to attack (the Heruls in 267 are credited with the onset of abandonment) and quarrying for building materials as well as lime.[34] What remained of the colossal temple would have continued to challenge those who lived around the columns, their foundation and the *peribolos* wall. The enormous structure, even in ruins, was a vestige of power to which successive inhabitants had to relate even if their new mythologies decoupled the building from its original historical meaning. A palace was a reasonable guess for both Christian and Islamic viewers of monumental ancient ruins across the Mediterranean and west Asia, and Athens in particular was full of wondrous marble structures, points of reference in the city as well as triggers for dimly remembered past and newly-created memories.

The Holy Land pilgrim Niccolò da Martoni passed through Athens on his return to Campania in early 1395. He was shown the ruinous 'magnum hospitium' of the Emperor Hadrian and nearby the entrance gate, 'made of marble, beautifully wrought, as beautiful as the tower of the city of Capua, but it did not seem to me to be as tall'.[35] His rapid tour goes on to mention the bridge over the Ilissos before heading to the citadel. Niccolò tells us that he had local guides in Athens, making this our first written attestation of the local name 'Hadrian's Palace', conjured from the habit of identifying great buildings as palaces combined with the nearby large Greek inscription with the word ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΥ legible to anyone with knowledge of the Greek alphabet. Of course, the practice of teasing out traces of the past from inscriptions appears in medieval Latin, Greek and Arabic writers long before seventeenth-century European travellers started making a 'science' of it. Some forty years later, Cyriac of Ancona in 1436 copied inscriptions at the Olympieion, which he knew – again informed by local guides – as the 'domos Hadriani' as well as his 'palatia'.[36] A brief description in Greek of the city's monuments, ascribed to the mid-fifteenth-century and known as *The Theatres and the Schools of Athens* identifies the building as the 'royal residence' ('basilikos oikos').[37] Greeks continued to remember the ruin as a majestic abode well into Ottoman rule. In 1578 Symeon Kabasilas, a native of Arta who served in the

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[33] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 120–121 with fig. 65, a photograph showing an excavated workshop; in the background is the church of St Photeini, built on the opposite bank of the Ilissos, and to the right the modern bridge that crosses the Ilissos river bed.

[34] Zisis, Η μαγική τοπογραφία των Αθηνών, 61–92, assembles a wide range of materials, both archaeological research and local legends, on the Olympieion.

[35] Fol. 96r. Legrand, 'Relation du pèlerinage', 651; Paton, *Chapters*, 32–33.

[36] Bodnar, 'Athens in April 1436: Part II', 195. The local tradition represented in the brief Paris anonymous identifies the columns, exceptionally, as the theatre of Aristophanes: Wachsmuth, *Die Stadt Athen*, 742–743.

[37] *The Theatres and the Schools of Athens*, para. 6, de Laborde, *Athènes*, 1.19; Tanoulas, 'Reconsidering'; Tanoulas, Τὰ Προπύλαια, 1.58, for the history of the publications of the text.

patriarchate in Constantinople, replied to enquiries about the current state of Athens from Martin Crusius, the professor of Greek at Tübingen, by explaining that the city had three parts: the inner part (τὸ μὲν ἐσώτερον) was the Acropolis inhabited by the Muslims, the middle (τὸ ἀναμεταξὺ) was the city below inhabited by the Christians, and the outermost part of the city (τὸ μὲν ἐξώτερον), only a third of which was settled, was where the palace (βασίλεια) made of marbles and great columns was located.[38]

Through these few early modern glimpses we perceive a slippage from Hadrian to a more generalised king, a shift in local identification that would have elided nicely with the long-established Islamic tradition of associating great buildings from the past with the great builder-king Solomon of Jewish and Christian lore. Indeed, descriptions of the precinct by two Muslim viewers have survived and both associate it with Solomon and Belkis, as the Queen of Sheba is known in the Qurʾān.

From Hadrian to Belkis

Athens was absorbed into the Ottoman Empire in 1458. By the time of our first Ottoman description of the precinct, two centuries of accommodation and appropriation had reworked the space. While archaeology has discovered nothing of the building's life from this period, we possess two descriptions of the area in its reconfigured Ottoman form – more than from any other period of use. The Ottoman traveller and pilgrim Evliya Çelebi visited Athens in 1668[39] and provided a detailed account of the city in his ten-volume 'Book of Travels', the *Seyahatname*. Evliya fuses Arab, Persian and Greek elements to form a uniquely Ottoman account of his subject. In its accumulation of mythic associations – evoking Solomon and Belkis (the Queen of Sheba), the Qurʾānic Shaddad and Sasanian Khusraw – Evliya's capacity to accommodate multiple memories resembles Pausanias's accumulation of primordial Greek cult in the temple precinct in order to establish the sacred depth of the place. In Evliya's case, his description may deliberately exclude Christian memories and practices, which would have been still very much present in the overwhelmingly Christian city. Evliya opens his description of Athens by explaining that 'the original builder of Athens was Solomon, peace be on him!'[40] After Solomon's marriage to Belkis, he commanded the jinn to build a palace, or 'throne', for his bride at a place called 'Temaşalık', literally 'pavilion' or 'theatre',

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[38] Crusius, *Turcograecia*, 7, letter 18, 461. In Crusius's unpublished diary, there is a sketch map of Athens taken down from conversation with an Athens-born Athonite monk, Daniel Palaiologos in 1585. Presumably as a corrective to Kabasilas's comment on the tripartite city in 1578, Crusius has written in Greek 'it is one city not three cities' on the left side of sketch: UBT, Mh 466, vol. III, fol. 302. For discussion of the sketch map, see Calis, 'Reconstructing', 98, and Fowden, 'Portraits'.

[39] The date of Evliya's visit is sometimes calculated as 1667 (e.g. Kiel, 'Athens'). For the correct date of 1668, based on the autograph manuscript, see Ameen, 'The Küçük Cami', 76, n. 9, with Kolovos, 'Στὰ μετόπισθεν τῶν πολιορκητῶν τοῦ Χάνδακα', 359, and Loupis, *Ἐβλιὰ Τσελεμπί, Ὁδοιπορικὸ στὴν Ἑλλάδα (1668–1671)*.

[40] Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, 8.113 (transl. Dankoff and Kim, 278–279, with adjustments by Thomas Sinclair). For Evliya's Athens, see Fowden, 'The Parthenon Mosque', 70–78.

a term commonly used for ancient buildings more generally. Evliya explains that the soaring structure was Solomon's wedding gift to Belkis. But one association is not enough for such an ancient wonder and Evliya also compares the building with the 'garden of the many-columned Iram', an allusion to sura 89:7 of the Qurʾān that he frequently employs in his urban descriptions, following well-established literary convention when describing impressive ancient structures.[41]

Ruined ancient palaces were commonly imagined as borne aloft by columns,[42] so Evliya Çelebi's choice to apply the Qurʾānic allusion to the largely ruined, yet still impressive, Temple of Olympian Zeus with its remnants of structural elements above the columns and architrave, was an excellent fit. Evliya explains that Solomon had commanded the jinn to build the palace with 'variegated columns and vaults of Khusraw and lofty domes'.[43] Clearly Evliya was not describing what he saw, but doubling up the literary modes of evoking past grandeur to emphasise the wonder of what he observed. He also mentions one final piece of information from his own day, namely that the precinct functioned as an open-air mosque where Athenians prayed for rain, the rogatory *salat al-istisqaʾ*.[44] We will return to this comment once we have considered our second Ottoman description of the Olympieion.

Mahmud Efendi's Graeco-Islamic synthesis

Unlike Evliya Çelebi, our second Ottoman writer was not a traveller passing through Athens, but a native Muslim with family in Athens, Chalcis and Thebes named Mahmud Efendi, who went to Istanbul to study and returned to become mufti of Athens. During the first three decades of the eighteenth century Mahmud Efendi occupied himself sporadically with collecting materials for and writing a history of Athens in Ottoman Turkish which he entitled *The History of the City of Sages*.[45] Mahmud integrated Greek and Islamic history and mythology, aided by two local priests who helped him translate Greek, Latin and 'Frankish' authors, which he then fused with personal observation and local tradition to create a Greco-Islamic history of Athens from its foundation by Adam and the rule of Cecrops (Çaḳrūpū). He names some of his sources as Herodotus, Thucydides and Plutarch.[46] Mahmud weaves these accounts into the Ottoman historiographical tradition in which both legend and scripture played an authenticating role.

Mahmud's pages dedicated to Hadrian, whom he knows as Enderyanu, begin in this way:

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[41] Cobb, 'Iram', 559; Watt, 'Iram', 1270; Webb, 'Iram'; Neuenkirchen, 'Biblical elements'.

[42] Wheler, *Journey*, 370 expresses his scepticism. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1.199.

[43] Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, 8.118 (transl. Dankoff and Kim, 288).

[44] Fahd, 'Istiskaʾ', 4.269–270; Boratav, 'Istiskaʾ', 4.271

[45] Mahmud Efendi, *Tarih-i Medinetü'l Hukema*; see Tunalı, *Another kind of Hellenism?*; Fowden, 'The Parthenon, Pericles and King Solomon'.

[46] Tunalı, *Another kind of Hellenism?*, 89 and Tunalı, 'An 18th-century take', 99.

> A magnificent monarch by the name of Enderyanu, one of the kings of Rome, came here and, by reason of the city's mild air and water, stayed a fair length of time ... He contributed some fine buildings to the city of Athens. In particular, Enderyanu built an incomparable palace which is still known as the throne of Belkis. It was enormous ... It was constructed with a decorative charm and with a pure art which in the period were unequalled; all onlookers were filled with admiration and amazement.[47]

In Mahmud's description, we do not find Evliya's direct evocations of Solomon or Khusraw. The archaeological-historiographical solution he finds is to merge the Islamic 'Throne of Belkis' with the local memory of Hadrian. To this he brings personal experience, mentioning that 'the district's refreshing air is extremely pleasant and light'.[48] Mahmud describes the building as it appeared in Hadrian's day, noting in a long and baroque description its architectural features and its materials – especially the 'pure white marble', 'bronze lattices, bronze doors and bronze window shutters', chrysolite (*zeberced*), high-domed halls, smaller chambers with benches, and a double staircase. So far the description seems fantastical in that it describes not what he has seen, but primarily what he has imagined stimulated by well-established Arabic and Persian literary habits, exercised especially in the 'Virtues of cities' tradition, in which outstanding ancient buildings are described.[49] But there may have been more, and it is too early in our study of Mahmud's text and sources to exclude that he brought to his literary knowledge information gathered from other texts to which he had local access.[50] After describing the precious materials and architectural sophistication of the building, Mahmud mentions that 'inside the palace, treasury chambers and libraries were designed and built' and he goes on to describe various exotic objects, talismans, bronze tablets and books 'which were deposited in the libraries which at that point were under construction in the palace'.[51]

That ancient buildings were imagined as having been repositories of books of primeval wisdom is commonplace in medieval Arabic literature; one such Ottoman tradition claimed Aristotle's books had been stored in a 'well-known church' of Athens.[52] But in this context, Mahmud's insistence on the libraries in Hadrian's palace raises the possibility that, thanks to his priestly translators, he might even have known about Pausanias's reference to Hadrian's chambers in which 'are kept

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[47] Mahmud Efendi, *Tarih-i Medinetü'l-Hukema* 220a–220b, transl. Thomas Sinclair; Tunalı, *Another kind of Hellenism?*, 63–64.

[48] Mahmud Efendi, *Tarih-i Medinetü'l-Hukema*, 221a, transl. Sinclair.

[49] See Cobb, 'Virtual sacrality', esp. 35–41, for a study of this genre with Islamised Syria as its focus. For an overview of varied Muslim responses to antiquities, with bibliography, see Mulder, 'Imagining localities of antiquity', esp. 240–246.

[50] On his sources, see Tunalı, *Another kind of Hellenism?*, 89–102, and Tunalı, 'An 18th-century take', esp. 98–99. Thomas Sinclair is planning a study of Mahmud Efendi's possible early modern European as well as ancient literary sources.

[51] Mahmud Efendi, *Tarih-i Medinetü'l-Hukema*, 221b, transl. Sinclair.

[52] Nev'i Efendi, 'Yield of the Disciples', 77; Sariyannis, 'Ancient history'.

books'.[53] We have already noted how Pausanias's compressed recitation of Hadrian's multiple benefactions had confused early antiquarians. After his description of the Temple of Zeus, Pausanias runs together confusing allusions to the Temple of Hera and Zeus Panhellenios, columns of Phrygian marble, stoas, statues and chambers for books. Might Pausanias's deliberate compression of all Hadrianic buildings into a dense, minimising description also have influenced Mahmud to mix two Hadrianic buildings – the Library and the Temple– because he expected to find the elaborate rooms and decoration of the Library in the Throne of Belkis?

Obviously, such a suggestion must remain for now conjecture and much more work is required before we fully appreciate Mahmud's intellectually inventive 'reception' of Greek authors. Even at this early stage of research into his *History of the City of Sages* we recognise in Mahmud an observer of ancient Athenian monuments in continuing use who was concerned not with isolating and discarding unwanted, disesteemed or even seemingly contradictory memories, but with synthesising these into the complex urban past he knew from experience in the accretive Ottoman present. In many ways, Mahmud's *History* is just as literary and text-based as the accounts of the Europeans, allowing only a few eye-witness observations about contemporary practice to slip through. But near the end of his description, Mahmud draws a memorable comparison for his audience that pairs his likening of the Parthenon mosque (before the Venetian bombardment) with Ayasofya: 'the arch over the upper courtyard's door is still in place: it is so wide that it could accommodate four or five loads side by side. It has a volume and an amplitude equal to that of the arches upholding the domes of mosques in Istanbul. Of the columns described above, nineteen survive, and in their form and dimensions these are the equal of minarets'.[54]

Concluding his study of Pausanias's exclusion of Hadrianic innovations from the meaningful core of the precinct, Whitmarsh comments that 'the past is a repertory of narratives that tell the story differently'. In the first part of this chapter, we have been considering the multiple written narratives that preserve memories of the Olympieion's past. But the past is remembered and confirmed through not only what is said, but also what is done; through how individuals and communities have enacted their relationship to the past in the present, in a particular place and in a particular way. In this second part we will consider the past as a repertory of *rituals* that tell the story differently. In order to understand the modulations this repertory has undergone to the present day, we must return to the natural environment and the experiential aspect of memory.[55]

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[53] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.18.9, transl. Jones. Note other possible similarities in the two descriptions: 'οἰκήματα ἐνταῦθά ἐστιν ὀρόφῳ τε ἐπιχρύσῳ καὶ ἀλαβάστρῳ λίθῳ'.

[54] Mahmud Efendi, *Tarih-i Medinetü'l-Hukema*, 221a, transl. Sinclair.

[55] Raja and Rüpke, 'Appropriating religion', esp. 14.

Liminal topography

At the outset I characterised the Olympieion precinct as a gateway that should be understood in the light of its double orientation towards the natural terrain and the city. Practically speaking, the Olympieion offers a striking vantage point from which to view the Acropolis, as both the early sketchers and modern photographers have discovered. The location also offered enough space to make a statement – a fact that was understood by the Peisistratids and those who attempted to complete the temple, and by Hadrian who succeeded. At the city's edge, the precinct and environs offered security as well as space, natural resources as well as accessibility, all features that afforded a transitional character to the area, both spatially and metaphorically.[56]

The Ottoman *musalla* of Athens

One example of transitional topography that is a common feature of most Ottoman cities is the *musalla* or *namazgah*, an open-air prayer ground with few built architectural features, if any, used for a broad spectrum of activities that required space. It is a place where the entire community assembles for prayer. The prototype for the *musalla* was the point outside the city wall of Medina where Muhammad performed prayers at the start of the two major festivals, thereby establishing a precedent that was followed throughout the Islamic world from Morocco to Central Asia, with more architecturally elaborate examples attested in Iran and India.[57] Reduced to its barest minimum, a *musalla* could have only a *mihrab* to indicate the direction of prayer. This could be free-standing or set against or into a wall. One surviving example of a stone *mihrab* and *minber* can be found in Anadolu Hisar, the fortress built by Bayazid I with seventeenth-century additions; another stone *mihrab* and *minber* survive at a musalla established by Gürcü Mehmed Paşa in 1625 (restored in 1715 by Ahmed III) at Okmeydanı.[58] In another example, from beyond the capital, part of the brick and masonry, sixteenth-century qibla wall of the *musalla* survives today engulfed within the Lozenetz quarter of Sofia.[59] The *mihrab* could be accompanied by a *minber* or pulpit from which the *imam* could be seen and heard from afar, and sometimes the space where the faithful prayed was raised as a low platform. According to early traditions rain prayers were performed not inside the Prophet's mosque, but outdoors at the Medinan *musalla*, a practice that became widely attested in other places as well.[60] Other recorded activities also tied to the extra-mural situation included executions and services for the dead. The *musalla* could be adjacent to, or even identical with, a threshing floor, a location symbolic of fertility and also transformation, evoking

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[56] Pullan, 'Spatial discontinuities', 19–20.

[57] Northedge, 'Early Islamic urbanism', 157.

[58] Gündüz, 'Okmeydanı', 339–340. I thank Suna Çağaptay for this reference.

[59] Gruber, 'Selected Muslim historic monuments', 65. It is assumed that a wooden *minber* was attached against the same wall. I thank Elias Kolovos for drawing my attention to the Sofia *musalla*.

[60] See Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1.324–325, for examples.

the association between liminal spaces and urban practices linked with both life and death.[61]

A rare medieval *musalla*

As cities expanded beyond their walls, most medieval and early modern *musalla*s were absorbed and built over, with new ones appearing outside the new city limits. Because few Islamic architectural historians have studied Athens,[62] it has been overlooked that despite the city's uncontrolled expansion in modern times its *musalla* has been inadvertently preserved until the present day thanks to its establishment as an archaeological site showcasing Greek and Roman buildings. From the few drawings that record its existence, the Athens *musalla* belonged to the relatively simple variety, with what appears to have been a fused *minber* and *mihrab*, with a low wall demarcating the prayer space, though this does not appear in all the depictions. It was located alongside the temple, to the south-south-east, and spread out in the direction of the Ilissos ravine. Establishing a *musalla* made a double impact on a city. It fulfilled a practical need and it also established the city's Islamic credentials by reproducing the Prophet's first extra-mural mosque. By imprinting onto this space of a new layer of memory through the ritual recollection of the Prophet, the *musalla* became part of the Islamification and Ottomanisation of the Athenian landscape, and in particular one of the city's most distinctive spaces. We witness this process at a literary and imaginative level in Evliya Çelebi's identification of the ruined temple as the Throne of Belkis. Memory of the classical past, often in its Christianised form, was densest in the heart of the ancient city where we find Evliya's exuberant identification of buildings with ancient Greek philosophers or kings – Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras and of course Alexander – all of whom were embraced within the Ottoman cultural inheritance. But as he moves to the city periphery and into the Attic countryside, the memories and associations he evokes are drawn noticeably less from the Hellenic world and more from the Qurʾān and Islamic tradition.[63]

Before we examine the surviving drawings of the *musalla*, let us quote Evliya Çelebi in full. Having introduced the Throne of Belkis, Evliya remarks that 'these days it serves as the public prayer-ground of Athens. All the Muslims of the city resort to it, fully armed, for the prayer of rain and for the two festivals; because there are hardly any Muslims left – the city has been left to the infidels. It is a sight worth seeing, an open air prayer-ground palace with soaring columns in praise of which the tongue falls short'.[64] The bearing of arms was indeed permitted at *musalla*s, both because the area was often used by soldiers on campaign, and also because such assemblies of the entire urban community outside the city walls were a widely-perceived security

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[61] Wensinck, 'Muṣallā'.
[62] Kiel's 'Quatrefoil plan' is a notable exception, but is not concerned with the Olympieion *musalla*.
[63] Arrigoni, 'Fasti attico-Salomonici', esp. 62–63.
[64] Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, 8.118 (transl. Dankoff and Kim, 288, with adjustments by Sinclair). Evliya uses the Persian *namazgah* instead of Arabic *musalla*.

risk. But arms-bearing at a *musalla* could also involve entertainment, as at Shiraz where archery practice is attested.[65] In 1675 George Guillet described the space as an 'esplanade' where the Turks exercised their horses.[66] We might recall the Acciaiouli duke who, according to the fifteenth-century *Theatres and Schools of Athens* went to amuse himself in the area of the royal residence and bathe in the Ilissos at the Callirhoe spring.[67] The convergence of such a range of uses in the vicinity of the Olympieion is typical of a *musalla* especially when, as at Athens, it was near a water source to provide for ablutions, and enjoyed a pleasant view. In 1810 Lord Byron's traveling companion, John Cam Hobhouse, wrote of the Olympieion that 'the solitary grandeur of these marble ruins is, perhaps, more striking than the appearance presented by any other object at Athens, and the Turks themselves seem to regard them with an eye of respect and admiration. I have frequently seen large parties of them seated on their carpets in the long shade of the columns'.[68]

Not only the marginal position with space for large gatherings, or availability of water, but also the majesty of the ancient building and the reputation for sanctity,

Figure 12.3. Nointel artist, 'Veue d'une porte et d'un Édifice Antique d'Athènes bastis par l'Empereur Hadrien, avec une partie de la ville d'Athènes', 1674, red and black pencil, 26.6 × 45 cm (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Cabinet des Estampes, album Fc 3a (Réserve), unnumbered, fol. 28 (Bibliothèque nationale de France)).

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[65] Hillenbrand, 'Muṣallā'.
[66] Guillet, *Athènes*, 267–268.
[67] *The Theatres and the Schools of Athens*, para. 7, de Laborde, *Athènes*, 1.19; Tanoulas, 'Reconsidering'.
[68] Hobhouse, *Journey through Albania*, letter 22, 322; Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, 1.134 with n.7.

encouraged its adoption as the *musalla* of Athens. In 1674, less than a decade after Evliya's visit, the ambassador of Louis XIV to the Sublime Porte, Charles-Marie-François Olier, Marquis de Nointel, paid a visit to the city.[69] Two drawings of the precinct made by an artist in his suite have survived as our earliest visual representations of the Muslim holy place. Both drawings include a rectangular prayer enclosure at the south-east end. The first view shows the musalla in its wider context, its extra-mural setting and its adjacency to the Ilissos ravine and Mt Hymettos, its source, further eastward (Fig. 12.3).

The more detailed drawing shows not only the low wall but also the combined *mihrab* with *minber*, most likely constructed from reused marble found *in situ*. Not only Evliya but European visitors too observed the sacred space in use. Like other contemporary European visitors, the merchant Bernard Randolph describes antiquities he encounters, but he is unusual in his attention to the contemporary situation. His description of Athens includes this passage on the Olympieion precinct, known at the time as the Palace of Hadrian:

> To the South East part of the Castle are Seventeen Marble Pillars, being the remainder of One Hundred and Twenty, on which the Emperor *Adrian* had his Palace: And upon some of the Pillars which stand towards the East, is to be seen part of the Foundation. These Pillars are of a pure White Marble, with blewish Waves, Schollop-work, being Fifty Foot in height, and Nineteen and a half round. The Ground is very even about them, which they say was formerly Paved with Marble. Close to these Pillars Eastward, is a square Piece of Ground, which is Walled in with a low Wall, being Green: It is kept very smooth and free of Stones; at the South End close to the Wall, is a place (raised by two steps) about Two Foot high, almost in Form of a Throne. In the time of their *Byram*, the *Turks* come to this place, where their Emam or Priest (sitting on the raised place,) Preacheth to them, shewing them the Vanity of the World, the Greatness of the Emperour, and the Valour of the *Ottoman* Forces, concluding with a Prayer for the Grand Seignior, which is answered with Three Shouts from the Auditors, with a loud Voice crying, *Amen*.[70]

Randolph's vivid description adds the practical detail that it is kept clear of stones, since unlike other *musalla*s the enclosed space for prayer was not raised. Both the enclosure wall and stepped *minber* must have been disassembled, leaving no trace in drawings or photographs from after the time of the uprising against Ottoman rule, or later in archaeological records. One hundred and thirty five years after Randolph's description, Hobhouse described the *musalla* from the direction of the Ilissos: 'Just above the ravin are the ruins of a Turkish fountain; and near this, is a pulpit of white stone, whence the Imaums, on particular occasions, harangue the assembled multitude'.[71] But turn the page of the 1813 edition of his *Journey through Albania* and the coloured engraving shows a stripped down, philhellenic Olympieion without any traces of the 'pulpit of white stone'.

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[69] On Nointel, Fowden, 'Portraits'.

[70] Randolph, *Present State of the Morea*, 22–23, original orthography retained.

[71] Hobhouse, *Journey through Albania*, letter 22, 321–324 on the Olympieion and environs, original orthography retained.

Hobhouse had more to say about the area. Both he and a fellow traveller, John Galt, describe the severe drought of 1810 and mass rain-prayers at the *musalla*, concurring with Evliya's report. Galt writes in a letter dated 13 March 1810 that:

> The alarm with regard to the crop is becoming general, and some of the pious Turks are every morning heard praying at the dawn of day, among the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Olympius, where they usually assemble for this purpose when the droughts happen to continue long.[72]

In a letter written nearly two weeks later, when the drought still parched the land and the price of corn continued to rise, Galt records that:

> Public prayers for rain are now ordered for nine successive days, and this morning they commenced. The first three are allotted to the Ottomans, the next to the Arabians[73] and slaves, and the last three to the Christians.

He continues to describe what he calls

> one of the most extraordinary ceremonies I ever witnessed or heard of. A flock of ewes and lambs was driven together in the neighbourhood of the worshippers, and soon after the close of the sermon, the lambs were separated from their mothers, and all the Turks standing up began a loud and general supplication, in the most pathetic tones. The divided flock at the same time began to bleat. It is not easy to convey to you in words the effect of this simple and expressive accompaniment, which infinitely, in my opinion, excelled the lead and leather popery of all the organs of Christendom.[74]

The mass supplications were also mentioned by the French diplomat François Pouqueville, who described the scene more poetically, as if the earth itself, animated by the assemblage of creatures, was crying out to Jupiter to fertilise it.[75] John Hobhouse was more detailed than Pouqueville and more subtle in his judgment than Galt:

> Prayers and holy rites were performed in this place for nine successive days, three of which were devoted to the Mahometans, three to the Christians, three to the strangers and slaves. The people were collected in the ravin, on the corn-fields, and under the columns. The Mahometan priest supplicated for all, and the whole assembly, of all conditions and persuasions, were supposed to join in the prayers: but it was contrived by a little address, that the animal creation should appear to second the entreaty of the Turks, for, just as the turbaned worshippers bowed themselves with one accord to the ground, and called upon the name of their god, the lambs of a large flock collected near the spot, who had just at the instant been separated from the ewes, began to bleat, and were answered by their dams. I know not that any one was deceived by the scheme; but the devouter Musulman may perhaps have believed that the distresses of the sheep were just as worthy to be made known, and as likely to move the compassion of the deity, as the complaints of the Christians.[76]

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[72] Galt, *Letters from the Levant*, 167, original orthography retained.
[73] Kambouroglous, Ἱστορία, 3.125–126, and Kambouroglous, Μνημεῖα, 1.312.
[74] For the entire description, written on 26 March 1813, see Galt, *Letters from the Levant*, 227–229.
[75] Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce*, 5.83.
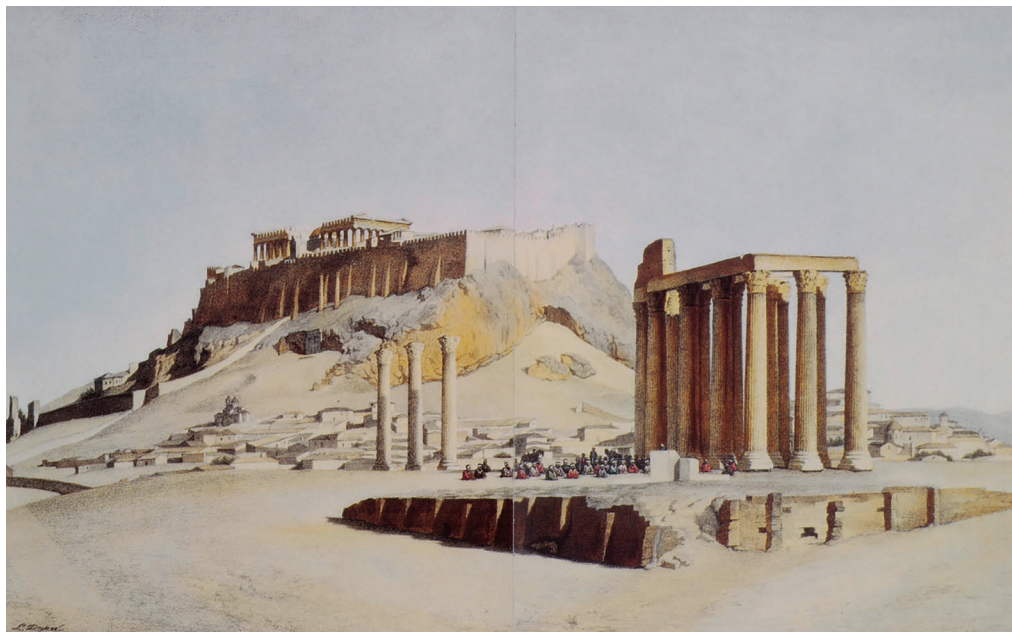[76] Hobhouse, *Journey through Albania*, letter 22, 323 [misprinted 332].

Figure 12.4. Louis Dupré, 'Le Temple de Jupiter Olympien et l'Acropolis d'Athènes', 1819, in L. Dupré, Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople *(Paris 1825), pl. 22 (American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Gennadius Library).*

Hobhouse's description reinforces how the Olympieion precinct strictly defined by its Hadrianic *peribolos* wall belongs within the broader terrain that stretches as far as the Ilissos. In times of crisis the *musalla*, set in this expandable situation, reached its fullest capacity so that 'the people were collected in the ravine, on the corn-fields, and under the columns'. Our sole depiction of the *musalla* in use was drawn only a few years after the rain prayers witnessed in 1810. Louis Dupré's drawing (Fig. 12.4), inspired by his 1819 visit, shows a smaller body of worshippers seated within the enclosure and at the top of the *minber* the imam's turban is just visible.[77]

A contemporary of Dupré, Colonel William Leake, one of the greatest topographers of classical Athens, represented the current conditions of the ancient ruins faithfully and included in the south-east corner of the *peribolos* what looks like a rather more derelict *minber* than Dupré's. Whether or not Leake recognised it as a pulpit is difficult to surmise, though it may not have captured his attention for long, since in his accompanying text his focus is the ancient remains.[78]

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[77] In the same year, Joseph Thürmer, in *Ansichten von Athen*, fig. 9, depicts the Olympieion with grassy, undulating ground and Oriental figures at play, rather than the bare, levelled earth of the prayer enclosure.

[78] Leake, *Topography of Athens*, pl. 7, 'South view of the Acropolis of Athens in its present state from the left bank of the Ilissus'.

The archaeologist John Travlos, who commanded an almost unrivalled historical overview of Athenian topography, excavated in the precinct in the 1960s. In his discussion of urban development in the Ottoman period he noted the outdoor prayer space mentioned by Evliya Çelebi and remarked on the 'amazing coincidence' that the Muslims had chosen to pray for rain in the same place that 'tradition associated with the Flood of Deucalion'.[79] But it seems less of a coincidence and more a characteristic conjunction of special orientation and human exploitation if, as in this study, we consider the architecture in the light of the precinct's location as the gateway to the Ilissos at the place where in times of sudden rain the river was known to swell into a violent torrent, a place where many of the other constructions in the vicinity were linked with water – from the Roman bath, to the medieval dyeing facilities, to the Ottoman prayer ground for rain. The gaps in memory are huge. We know more about Ottoman use of the precinct than that in any other period. Except for Pausanias's information that Athenians offer oat cakes at the fissure, we would be ignorant of that ritual. To find a source that mentioned Christian rain prayers in the area before the Ottoman period would seem in no way coincidental or surprising. On the basis of what we know about medieval Orthodox practice, we could quite reasonably imagine that litanies for rain could have processed around the humble church built amidst the imposing columns. The only known legend about Christian use of the precinct seems to have been stimulated by speculation about the awkwardly built structure raised on top of a remaining architrave. Some claimed it had been the perch of a Christian stylite,[80] others the airy home of a dervish,[81] or even the repository of a treasure guarded by a black jinn.[82] More sober archaeological study has identified it with an observatory in the city's defenses.[83]

The *musalla*'s erasure

Although our access to the accumulated past of the Olympieion is severely limited by the exiguity of both literary and archaeological evidence, from what does survive we are made acutely aware of how contingent that evidence is on the eye and interest of the

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[79] Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις*, 210. Travlos describes the open-air prayer ground as on the 'southwest' side of the temple twice on page 209, but correctly as 'southeast' in the legend to figure 144. Other than these few early modern depictions there is no evidence for the location of the *musalla*. Cohen, 'Explosions and expulsions', 90–92; Zisis, Η *μαγική τοπογραφία των Αθηνών*, 65, n.15.

[80] Bouras, 'The so-called cell of an Athenian stylite'; Kaldellis, *Christian Parthenon*, 171–172. Recent journalism keeps the legends alive: Leonard, 'Stylite Monks'.

[81] Byzantios, *Ἡ Κωσταντινούπολις*, 2.94, n.3, a Muslim twist to the hermit legend that has not, to my knowledge, been noted in debates about the structure's use. The source of this version is the learned historian and linguist Skarlatos Byzantios, who was resident in Athens in the mid-nineteenth century when the stylitic legends still circulated. The mysterious structure was removed by archaeologists in 1870. The Gravier d'Ortières album in the Bibliothèque nationale de France includes a rarely illustrated drawing, probably from the 1680s, available at: gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525117604/f378.item.

[82] Dodwell, *Classical and Topographical Tour*, 389–390, visited Athens in 1805 to 1806 and reports both the stylite legend and an encounter on site with an old Albanian woman who called the brick structure a 'habitation of a black'.

[83] Bouras, *Byzantine Athens*, 22; Bouras, 'The so-called cell of an Athenian stylite'.

viewer. In his narrow focus on classical remains, Wiliam Leake was typical of European visitors, if among the most scholarly. Long before the early nineteenth century, visitors had been omitting contemporary features from their written descriptions and their depicted views. Sometimes they inserted features that they imagined instead, creating a sort of enactment of an imagined memory into which they might even insert themselves. One example of this practice set at the Olympieion is of special interest because in the place where contemporary Muslims (and Christians) prayed, the artist has imposed an Orientalising fantasy. French draughtsman turned *artiste-voyageur* Louis-François Cassas visited Athens in the 1780s as part of an ambitious project to capture the ruins of the Orient. He painted several views of Athens from memory a decade later, using the contemporary city as the backdrop for his own encounter with a fusion of ancient past and Oriental present in which women look like Caryatids and men like generic Oriental toughs (Fig. 12.5). None are wearing local Athenian dress.[84]

He situates scenes of his own exoticised encounter in the place real Muslim and Christian inhabitants of the city gathered for rain prayers. He blots out current usage with his private fantasy. Before we lose all physical trace of the *musalla*, it was already erased from memory in the work of Cassas and other artists whose depiction of Athens had no place for current, local use of the space.

Conclusion

As a gathering place between city and countryside, the Olympieion precinct is a rich case study of 'urban religion' by which 'religious change is constituted by the ongoing interaction between space and different agents, temporary inhabitants, voluntary and involuntary immigrants, residents and administrators, people living off religion or employing religion for realising their own hopes'.[85] The 'different agents' who each created their own meaning in the space around the Olympieion included Pausanias visiting from Asia Minor, local Christians who built their churches in and around the precinct, the local workers who laboured within view of the monumental columns as they drew water from the Ilissos, the traveller Evliya Çelebi who imported into the precinct a Qurʾānicised and Islamised mode of viewing ancient ruins, European visitors who stripped away local legend to reinvest what is now perceived as a 'monument' with its original meaning, the various local Muslims and Christians of Athens who prayed there for rain, and the local mufti, Mahmud Efendi, who attempted to make a synthesis of these views. The interaction between a space and those parties who make that space

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[84] I thank Benjamin Anderson for sending me a copy of Anderson and Rojas, *Antiquarianisms*. The stimulating discussion of this Cassas depiction in Anderson, 'Forgetting Athens', nonetheless shares the European viewers' blindspot for the mosque; see 205, n. 5 for similar drawings by Cassas. See also Fraser, *Mediterranean Encounters*, 47–94.

[85] Jörg Rüpke, 'Religion and urbanization: From polis to urban religion', lecture delivered 3 May 2018, Budapest, Central European University; cf. Rüpke, 'Religion als Urbanität'. Cf. Rose-Redwood, 'Genealogies of the grid', 49, on the challenge of ancient urban morphologies.

Figure 12.5. Louis-François Cassas, 'Acropolis of Athens and Temple of Olympian Zeus', watercolour on paper, 67 × 103 cm (Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation Orientalist Paintings Collection, Pera Museum, Istanbul).

meaningful has a competitive aspect that should not be overlooked even when our evidence does not help us to flesh out the particular conflict that underlies each change.

By way of conclusion I want to add a further use for a *musalla*, namely execution and burial, and an additional group of urban religionists who still today at the Olympieion precinct are 'employing religion for realising their own hopes'. This use is not recorded in any of the known drawings of the Olympieion, but perhaps we have not been looking for it.

In his description of Athens published in 1675 and based partly on local Capuchin description of the city, Georges Guillet mentions a Turkish cemetery, called locally 'Ta Mnimouria', adjacent to the Palace of Hadrian.[86] In the early twentieth century it was possible to read an inscription scratched onto a column at the south-east corner of the temple. It read: 1771 Ἰουλίου 9 ἀποκεφαλίσθη ὁ Πακνανᾶς ('On 9 July 1771 Paknanas was beheaded').[87] Michael Paknanas, or Baknanas, was a poor gardener who took goods on his donkey to sell in the villages around Athens. One day the men whom the voivode of Athens had positioned at the city gates to patrol movement accused Michael of supplying insurgents with gunpowder. Michael was imprisoned, interrogated, tortured over many days and finally publicly executed. Local legend

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[86] Guillet, *Athènes*, 262–263, 267; a 'Turkish cemetery' is marked outside the walls near the Olympieion precinct on various maps of the period.
[87] Kambourglous, *Μνημεῖα*, 1.192; Kambourglous, 'Νεομάρτυρας κηπουργός', 1.

Figure 12.6. Icon of Neomartyr St Michael Baknanas of Athens (Spyros Papageorgiou, Orthodoxia info).

recounts that under cover of darkness, Michael's parish priest buried the body, carved the inscription and took a bloodied garment as a memorial to the young martyr's proud resistance against repeated pressures for him to apostatise. The account of his martyrdom at the hands of an Ottoman executioner is recorded in the *New Martyrology* assembled in his entry for 30 June by Nikodemos the Hagiorite and first published in 1794.[88] In the early twentieth century the inscription was included among the 'stories in stone' by the historian of Athens, Demetrios Kambouroglous.

In recent years, the neo-martyr's memory has been revived at the site revered in local tradition as the place of his martyrdom and burial thanks to the efforts of the archimandrite Fr Maximos Kappas, parish priest of the nearby church of St. Photeini, alongside the Ilissos river, near the site of the ancient Callirrhoe fountain.[89] Since 2014 Fr Maximos has been given permission by the archaeological service to celebrate an open-air liturgy within the Olympieion precinct on the feast day of St. Michael Baknanas.[90] Several new icons depicting the neo-martyr's execution on the steps of the temple have been produced (Fig. 12.6).

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[88] There are many abbreviated versions of the Μαρτυρολόγιον, ήτοι Μαρτύρια των νεοφανών μαρτύρων των μετά την άλωσιν της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατά διαφόρους καιρούς και τόπους μαρτυρησάντων. Συνταχθέντα εκ διαφόρων συγγραφέων; see Perantonis, 'Μιχαήλ Πακνανάς', 354–358; also Arnaud, 'Néo-martyrs orthodoxes', 396–400; Ferousi, *Μιχαήλ Μπακνανάς*. On neomartyrs, see also Greene, *Edinburgh History of the Greeks*, 146–151.

[89] Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', 476–483.

[90] Other groups assert their own rival claims: once a year the worshippers of the twelve Olympian deities enter the temple to sing hymns with official permission.

The fact that the site where St. Michael is standing in this icon was in the vicinity of the Muslim prayer ground, or that there were other, Muslim, graves nearby, is not part of the narrative told or the ritual enacted at the archaeological site by those involved with the cult's propagation. Cassas visited the site less than a decade after Michael's martyrdom, but given his interests we can be fairly certain that he would not have noticed the unmarked grave, even if one had been visible.[91] The modern icon shares with Cassas a selecting out – or ignorance – of Muslim details in preference for highlighting the ancient ruins; they also share a predilection for stereotyped costume, of both the Turkish executioner and Michael himself, rather than any attention to local detail.[92] The archaeological site as maintained today and the icons accompanying Fr Maximos's revival of the martyrdom's memory present a barren, quite literally erased, space, although he mentioned in an interview that it was a public place where people gathered for a market.[93] At present, veneration is necessarily from a certain distance since the area of the alleged, inscribed column and presumed grave is fenced off to protect the ongoing conservation project. Fr Maximos would like one day to translate the relics from what local tradition holds as their original resting place beside the column to the nearby church of St. Photeini. In this way, Fr Maximos explains, the neo-martyr can receive the veneration he deserves, in a more appropriate and accessible setting.

The local antiquities theme highlighted in the story of St. Michael is also emphasised in the icon of St. Photeini that appears on the tympanum over the central, west-facing door of the church. This is surprising since she is none other than the Samaritan woman with whom Jesus spoke at the well in the Gospels, and who according to tradition took the name Photeini upon her baptism. In her iconography, she is depicted in front of her town, but here the powerful attraction of the location next to the Ilissos has induced the icon painter to add local colour. St. Photeini stands as an *orans* between Hadrian's Gate and the Olympieion columns to her right, and red-tiled houses of Athens to her left. And yet, while cultivating one association with the ancient city, another has been neutralised. The shrine of Pan mentioned in the *Phaedrus* was upstream from the church, but the site where the church now stands was also sacred to Pan and faint relief carvings can still be worked out by the patient visitor.[94] The large blue cross painted onto the live rock adjacent to the church can be perceived as an attempt to exorcise these pre-Christian memories, while the

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[91] The ground at the southeast corner would not have been particularly suitable for burials and no archaeological support for such a burial has been recorded.

[92] Because no icons of the neomartyr could be found, Fr Maximos commissioned three new icons, drawing on details regarding costume from eighteenth-century icons. The three icons are kept in the church of St Photeini (pers. comm.). Another new icon is illustrated in Fig. 12.6.

[93] In the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth, the open space continued to serve a variety of purposes, just as the *musalla* had, from a market, to a place for dancing and feasting, to a café. For illustrations, see Karidis, *Athens from 1456*, fig. IV.37 and Tsigakou, 'Visual narration', 635, pl. 29. In keeping with this tradition, in 2001, the choral symphony *Mythodea* by Vangelis was performed at the site.

[94] Travlos, *Pictorial dictionary*, 289, 296, figs. 386 and 387; Marchiandi, 'L'area meridionale della città', 484–486; Chiotis, 'Springs'.

information board near the entrance to the church precinct enforces the co-existence of archaeological memory at the site.

This returns us to the Ilissos where we began and Socrates' prayer that closes the dialogue: 'O dear Pan and all the other gods of this place, grant that I may be beautiful inside.'[95] The late Platonist Hermias of Alexandria, fellow student of Proclus, had been taught to interpret the *Phaedrus* in Athens by Syrianos, the head of Plato's Academy in the early fifth century AD. His commentary on the *Phaedrus* pays close attention to the dialogue's setting between the city, the Olympieion precinct and the Ilissos. Hermias evokes the processional connections between Socrates' teaching, on the one hand, and his movement with his disciple along this transitional topography where Socrates demonstrates by practice how to discern the links between the particular, local gods and the noetic truths towards which the philosopher is always striving.[96] The spiritual potential of local commemoration and spatial association could not be more poignant.

'Digression incarnate' is how Karl Galinsky has described memory.[97] We might well describe this litany of recalled erasures and forgettings as digression within digression, as we have followed the multiple uses of this primordial pole of Athens from the grave of Deucalion, through to the Hadrianic Temple of Olympieion Zeus, to its reinvention as a medieval neighbourhood clustered around the church at the Columns, to a classic Ottoman *musalla*, an archaeological site and now also a cult centre for the neo-martyr Michael Baknanas, the Gardener. In a city that shows on its skin the marks of endless change and adaptation, the Olympieion precinct stands out. Because of its liminal topography, the precinct is not just a place with a deep history, but a metamorphic space where local populations have used the ancient structures, even in a 'state of shattered dilapidation and mouldering decay',[98] as fixed reference points in a digressive production of urban identity that is rooted in a multitude of memories waiting to be recalled, and reworked, to fit evolving urban needs.

Acknowledgements

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[95] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 279b–c, tranl. Nehamas and Woodruff.
[96] Baltzly, 'Journeys in Plato's *Phaedrus*'.
[97] Galinsky, 'Introduction', 12.
[98] Dodwell, *Views in Greece*, description facing his drawing 'Temple of Jupiter Olympios and River Ilissos'.

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Chapter 13

Afterword: Ancient cities in new presents

Javier Martínez Jiménez and Sam Ottewill-Soulsby

In the spring of 2017, the members of the Impact of the Ancient City Project embarked on a research trip to the Iberian Peninsula. During this expedition we had many chances to explore and understand different monuments in their successive historical phases interacting with a living city. We visited a handful of cities (*urbes*) and lived with their urban communities (*civitates*), and unsurprisingly it soon became very evident that these cities lived with constant links to their ancient past, consisting of both visible monuments and intangible ideas, stories and expectations. Naturally, the Age of Discovery and its Manueline architecture were prominent in Lisbon, while the Umayyad Caliphate seemed to define the city of Córdoba. More unexpectedly, in Cádiz the Phoenicians were the favoured phase. Perhaps we, as travelling scholars, might have been predisposed and trained to see these links with the classical past; to read antiquity in every corner, nook and cranny of the urban fabric, but in most cases these were elements that the city through its municipal authorities promoted and highlighted – these were elements that the city wanted to remember mostly because they had proven to be durable and relevant.

This was especially clear in Mérida.

The city of Mérida in Spain was established as a veteran colony under Augustus at the crossing of the Guadiana river. Today it is famous for its Roman theatre, largely reconstructed in the 1910s, and its national museum of Roman archaeology. The head of the Roman bridge is where the Gate of the Bridge (the *Porta Pontis*), the main entrance to the city and symbol of the colony, was once located. Such was the symbolic importance of this gate (which appears in local coins of the Imperial period) that when the Umayyads needed to supress the constant rebellions of the Hispano-Romano-Gothic locals, the emir decreed the destruction of the walls and of the gate,

and the construction of a new fortress where the old symbol of the city had stood. In fact, the commemorative inscription of the citadel (the *alcazaba*) reads:

> In the name of God, the Clement, the Merciful. Blessings of God and His protection for those who obey God. The emir Abd al-Rahman [II], son of al-Hakam – may God give him glory – ordered this fortress [*hisn*] to be built as a place of refuge for the obedient, by the means of his governor [*amil*] Abd Allah, son of Kulayb bin Talaba, and of his servant [*mawla*] and Master Builder [*sahib al-bunyan*] Hayqar bin Mukabbis, on the moon of the last rabi of the year 220 [= April 835].

In this case, 'those who obey God' and the 'obedient' are the Umayyad troops stationed there, not the citizens of Mérida. The *alcazaba* was built to protect the garrison, not the city, and it was built with the dismantled remains of Roman and Visigothic monuments that had defined the local identity. This deliberate dissociation between the Umayyad power and the inhabitants of Mérida was, naturally, further accentuated by the destruction of a local symbol (the gate) and the imposition of a reminder of the new order on the remains of the gate (the *alcazaba*, Fig. 13.1).

The fortified access to the citadel was eventually pulled down. For many years, the location of the *Porta Pontis* and the entrance to the citadel was marked by a petrol station, but in 1997 the area was re-developed, turned into a roundabout, and

Figure 13.1. View of the Capitoline wolf of Mérida at the end of the bridge, on top of the demolished remains of the Islamic citadel (author).

decorated with a statue of a wolf and twins. The Capitoline she-wolf with Romulus and Remus was set up with an inscription that celebrated how 'the city of Rome [gave it] to the city of Mérida, Augusta Emerita yesterday',[1] making a clear political statement in which the inhabitants of Mérida celebrated their Roman past as the descendants of these original settlers. This is a symbolic connection shared by other cities with Capitoline wolves of their own, like Tarragona and Segovia,[2] and there are other hopeful cities like Sagunto that want to lay claim to their Roman past by having their councils ask Rome for a wolf-and-twins statue.[3] With a she-wolf, the memory of the Roman origins of the city was restored and its antiquity praised. A direct and conscious connection was established for Mérida, ignoring the important post-Roman, Visigothic past and the patently visible Islamic phase. The fact that this was done over the demolished remains of the entrance to the Umayyad citadel might not have been done with malicious intent, but it was a deliberate choice.

For the inhabitants of Mérida, Tarragona, Sagunto and Segovia, Rome has become a desirable past, useful for attracting tourists who are normally more knowledgeable and aware of the Roman period than about other local phases; either the fifteenth-century might of the Castilian nobles of Segovia or the strength of the Berbers who fought for the Umayyads in ninth-century Mérida. Moreover, this perception of the Roman past as more politically or economically useful than others is deeply ingrained in the modern history of Mérida: dictator Francisco Franco had plans to relocate the modern inhabitants of the town to the other side of the river in order to unearth the original Roman city, turning Mérida into the Spanish Pompeii.[4]

This example is a convenient starting point for the closing pages of this volume, as it shows the deliberate choice of modern political authorities to promote a partisan understanding of one of the community's pasts over the others (the ancient city in particular). In this twentieth-century context, the classical phase has been reduced to a Capitoline wolf that links to the monumental remains and highlight the illustrious past. Unsurprisingly, the political authorities chose Moneo's design for the National Museum of Roman Art, which is modelled and inspired by the Great Hall of the Markets of Trajan (himself a Roman *and* a Spaniard), while they relegated the Visigothic collection to the much smaller and less celebrated environs of the Church of St. Claire, where it has been displayed for over a century. They also encased the standing remains of the temple of the imperial cult in a white-concrete interpretation of the colonnaded *temenos* (Fig. 13.2).[5] Today in Mérida, local businesses from heating engineers to crisp makers embrace their classical past and use the Roman name of their city (Emerita) in their logos and brand names (Fig. 13.3), showing how deeply ingrained this connection with the ancient past in the

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[1] The inscription reads: 'La ciudad de Roma a la ciudad de Mérida, ayer Augusta Emerita. 20 junio 1997'.
[2] The inscription reads: 'Roma a Segovia en el bimilenario de su acueducto, MCMLXXIV.'
[3] Arribas Sagunt, 'Instan a Sagunt'.
[4] Márquez Pérez, 'La arqueología en Mérida', 125–140.
[5] Barrero Martín, 'El Museo Nacional de Arte Romano'.

Figure 13.2. Concrete structures around the Temple for the Imperial Cult, the new 'forum' of Merida (author).

local population. But in Mérida this need to link back to the Roman past has been taken to unexpected extremes.

In 2019, a researcher from a university in Madrid publicly proposed in a conference an alternative chronology for one of the four aqueducts, suggesting that it could be Tetrarchic rather than Flavian, based on thermoluminescence dating performed in 1993 and typological similarities. This was taken up by the press, and completely misunderstood. On the 8th of November, under a section on 'Byzantine art', a bizarre and very misleading headline in *El País* (the most-read Spanish newspaper) read:

> The Roman monument that was Visigothic. Analyses by experts reveal that the Los Milagros aqueduct in Mérida was built after the 4th century with Byzantine influences.[6]

This underlines the utter and embarrassing lack of understanding by the journalist, who took 'Tetrarchic' to mean 'fourth-century' and then extrapolated that, since this was 'late antique' with 'Byzantine' comparisons, it had to be 'early medieval', and thus

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[6] Olaya, 'El monumento romano': 'ARTE BIZANTINO. El monumento romano que era visigodo. Los análisis de expertos revelan que el acueducto de Los Milagros de Mérida fue levantado a partir del siglo IV con influencia bizantina.'

Figure 13.3: Local businesses from Mérida celebrating their Roman past (author).

bizarrely concluded that the aqueduct was 'Visigothic'.[7] This news was later repeated on the 12th of November by *El Español*, although this time nuanced by comments from the director of the Mérida Archaeological Consortium, who underlined that the thermoluminescence date was only one point of data, sampled over twenty years prior, and that there were many other pieces of archaeological evidence dating the conduit to the earlier Roman period.[8]

While journalists misunderstanding and misquoting archaeologists is not necessarily news itself,[9] the impact of that article underline how central and important the right sort of Romanness is for the political authorities of Mérida. Soon after this article was published (16th November) the political authorities threatened to *sue* archaeologists who dared put the Roman chronology of some monuments in doubt:

> The municipal spokeswoman, Carmen Yáñez, repeated yesterday that there is 'no doubt' that the Los Milagros aqueduct is Roman and thus the Mérida City Council has requested the two scientists who date the monument between the 4th and 6th centuries (Visigothic period) 'to retract what they have said because they have no trustworthy or scientific proof'. If this apology is not made, Yáñez assured, the council will use whatever means at its disposal to 'go against whichever persons or institutions that defend that the aqueduct is not Roman'.[10]

The same spokeswoman underlined later, quite embarrassingly, that the aqueduct 'is Roman, and very Roman at that'.[11] The scholars in question did not retract, but

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[7] Personally, I should say that none of that is true. Martínez Jiménez, *Aqueducts and Urbanism*, 188–190.

[8] Anonymous, 'El acueducto de Mérida'.

[9] Cf. McManamon, 'Archaeological messages and messengers'.

[10] Lamenta, 'El ayuntamiento exige una rectificación': 'La portavoz municipal, Carmen Yáñez, reiteró ayer que "no hay duda" de que el Acueducto de los Milagros es romano y por ello el Ayuntamiento de Mérida ha pedido a los dos científicos que datan el monumento entre los siglos IV y VI d.C. (época visigoda) "que se retracten de lo que han dicho porque no tienen pruebas fehacientes ni científicas". Si no se produce esa disculpa, aseguró Yáñez, el ayuntamiento utilizará las vías que tiene a su disposición para "ir contra estas personas o contra las entidades que defiendan que el Acueducto de los Milagros no es romano"'. The same news was reported on the 18th by ABC: 'El Ayuntamiento de Mérida tomará medidas'.

[11] Lamenta, 'El ayuntamiento exige una rectificación': '[E]s romano, muy romano.'

other, better informed news agencies highlighted after this (19th November) the insane situation where public institutions threatened to take legal action against scientists over journalistic misunderstanding.[12]

National newspapers dropped this issue then, but at a regional level, this question was still hot. On the 25th of November, the Archaeological Consortium had to underline, yet again, that the archaeological data overwhelmingly pointed to a Roman date and that it was plausible that the aqueduct had had a late antique repair, but the director, Félix Palma, had to say that the Consortium 'is not there to say if the aqueduct is Roman or Visigothic, [but to say that the] archaeological data [say] that it is Roman in date'.[13] The matter was settled for the press on the 2nd of December, when the Extremaduran Academy of Arts and Letters issued an official report confirming that the aqueduct was, indeed, Roman in date.[14]

In Mérida, the ancient city has become an almost two-dimensional background that explains many 'wheres' and 'whens' of the modern city, but also a lot of 'whos' and 'whys'; a gold standard and benchmark to measure the present, as long as the ancient city in question is the correct (Roman) ancient city. This is similar to what we witness in Naples in Greaves' chapter, where the ancient past is also distant and has been idealised to such an extent that it is re-imagined rather than remembered. In this way, the idealised ancient city as a legitimising past has proven to be extremely resilient, since viewing antiquity and its paradigmatic city in particular in this manner goes as far back as the end of antiquity itself. But the resilience of the ancient city, as we have seen throughout this volume, fans out in many other different directions, always relevant to understand the present.

It was easy to insist on the goodness of the old days in Ostrogothic Italy, as Cassiodorus does in Wallace-Hadrill's chapter. For Cassiodorus, old-time *civilitas* was the urban way of thinking, something nostalgic that appealed to the urban elites which he used whilst trying to co-opt them into the Ostrogothic regime. While we do not know his actual birth year, we know that in 538, when he had most likely finished compiling his *Variae*, Cassiodorus was in his early fifties; he was born closer to Majorian's Novels than to Justinian's Civil Code, and closer to Attila's invasions than to that of Belisarius. In his case, the ancient city was a living memory and the continuity of some of its elements do not necessarily speak about the inherent resilience of the ideals and infrastructure of the ancient city. Yet chronological proximity alone did not determine how the ancient city was engaged with. Whiting explains that the earthquake damage done to Petra provided the inhabitants with a perfect opportunity to distance themselves from a past that, even if it was equally close to them as it was to Cassiodorus, did not define them as a community any longer. And while the Hellenistic veneer of the ancient city was no longer useful, the form

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[12] Casco, 'Juicio al godo'.

[13] Anonymous, '"No hay ninguna duda"': 'ellos no están "para decir que es romano o es visigodo" sino que "los datos arqueológicos" han dicho que "es de época romana"'.

[14] Anonymous, 'Un informe de la Academia de Extremadura'.

and loci of civic cult that was deeply embedded in the urban mind of the Petrans did continue by linking new, powerful connections to the biblical past with traditional sites of civic worship like Jabal Hārūn.

Later in the early Middle Ages, antiquity continued to offer an idea of the city that was still a valid way to understand urban culture (see Langley and Ottewill-Soulsby, this volume), even in contexts far removed from the Graeco-Roman past (see Zychowicz-Coghill and Blanke and Walmsley, this volume). Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī highlighted the role of Sasanian urban monumentality in his writings because it gave Islamic Iranian elites a common background after a period of fragmentation; in the same way, for Christian ninth-century scholars the same distance allowed them to embrace classical urban ideals while combining them with biblical references into a grand historical narrative (as Frechulf did) and to use the kind of civic language that would have carried authority but in ways that did not echo with the actual practices that such language used to refer to (as we have seen in the deeds of the popes preserved in the *Liber Pontificalis*).

Even later, in the high Middle Ages, the visible remains of the ancient city were still prominent, albeit dwindling. The Romanesque churches of southern France are a valuable example of the destruction and reconstruction of five-hundred-year-old buildings with the purpose of preserving them as key loci for the living community (see Martínez Jiménez, this volume). The Arabic writers of the Maghrib, roughly coeval with the church builders of Romanesque-period France, lived surrounded by visual remains of the ancient past, but these were imbedded with Roman and Christian connotations and a language of rivalry (see Bennison, this volume). This is why the memories associated with those ancient remains were soon embellished and re-defined according to early Islamic stories, adding a new but useful layer to the past.

From then on, we see an increasing divergence between the ideals of the ancient city as preserved in the literature and the imagined and reconstructed city that derived from the surviving remains. This dissociation is visible in the different understandings of the Olympieion of Athens by locals and visitors (see Fowden, this volume), and even still in the late nineteenth century, when the urban planners of Naples promoted their own interpretations of what the city might/should have been like above the evidence on the ground (see Greaves, this volume). Naturally, with the development of new scholarly approaches to both urbanism and monuments (and the role of the latter in the former), the classical past earns a new position. From the 1950s, as we have seen with Piccinato and Bursa (see Çağaptay, this volume), the current trend is to see the ancient remains as a living part of the modern urban tissue especially, as we also see in Mérida, if they have a story to tell.

This partisan use of the past is intrinsically interesting and relevant, but if we return to Merida we find more to this particular story of remembering and forgetting the ancient city. The Capitoline wolf from Mérida is set at the Plaza de las Méridas del Mundo, the square that commemorates the other existing Méridas of the world (one in Yucatán and another in Venezuela; Fig. 13.4). When conquistadors from the

Figure 13.4. Monument to the Meridas of the World (author).

surrounding region of Extremadura ventured to the New World, they found Mérida waiting for them. Confronted by the magnificent ruins of Maya and Olmec cities, they reached for the only familiar comparison. In his account of the voyage of Juan de Grijalva in 1518 to what is now the Mexican state of Vera Cruz, the expedition's chaplain, Juan Díaz, noted that they found 'some very large buildings of mortar and sand, and a piece of a building also made of that material, resembling an old arch that is in Mérida'.[15] When in 1542 Spanish conquistadors founded a new city in the ruins of the Maya settlement of T'Hó in Yucatán, in the words of Diego de Landa 'they called it Mérida, from the strangeness and grandeur of the buildings'.[16] The memory of the ancient city served to make a strange and intimidating space familiar.

The Spanish also brought their ideas of what the ancient city meant with them. The association drawn between the cities of the Americas and the Roman past came into arguments about the correct treatment of the indigenous peoples. In his defence of their humanity in 1536, Bartolomé de las Casas said of them, 'They cultivated friendship and, bound together in common fellowship, lived in populous cities in which they wisely administered the affairs of both peace and war justly and equitably'.[17] His audience would have caught the comparison to Cicero and Augustine's definition of a city as a community of people bound together by common law and goals.[18] These ideas that belonged in the ancient city and were still relevant mattered as they could be the difference between being regarded as fully human and as a natural slave.

The memory of the ancient city and the accompanying ancient ideas of what a city was were replicated in Yucatán, and while the memory of the actual past of the Maya city was deliberately forgotten, it was not completely lost: the layout of the pre-Hispanic city is still partially visible in the slight asymmetries of the grid, derived from

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[15] Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, 236.

[16] De Landa, *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*, 85.

[17] Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Bartolomé*, 91.

[18] Cicero, *De Re Publica*, 6.9.13: 'acceptius quam concilia coetusque hominum iure sociati, quae civitates appellantur'; Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 15.8: 'quia nec constitui tunc ab uno poterat civitas, quae nihil est aliud quam hominum multitudo aliquo societatis vinculo conligata', 464.

the location of the pre-Hispanic temples.[19] The new Méridas testify to the lingering power of the Greco-Roman city even when grafted onto a new environment. As in the Old World, the physical city and the lived city were inherently connected. The spectacle of the indigenous city helped convince observers of the humanity of those who lived within it. The new communities of Spanish America communicated their beliefs and values through their buildings.

Back in the Old World, the much more immediate presence of classical ruins or monuments remains to this day a defining characteristic of a city. They proclaim the antiquity of the site and serve as a tribute to the pre-existing inhabitants, the predecessors that lived in the same shared space as the current dwellers. The Gestalt psychologists of the earlier twentieth century did not pioneer memory studies, but they were the first to underline how communities formed groups because our innate needs to be-with-other and be-for-other, and that the 'other' that defines the group is not necessarily the surrounding peer; it could also be the ancestor who laid the foundations for the current community.[20] This psychological basis for ancestor cult can be used to understand the necessary interaction between communities and their past – especially (as it is the case with the ancient city), when its ideals and visible remains plague the understanding of what a city is or should be.

Thus, Augusta Emerita becomes 'yesterday' in the she-wolf inscription even as its monuments show the toll of the centuries, and anyone who puts this in question risks not only the rage of the locals (and legal action), but also endangers the way a community understands itself. The proximity that the words of the past create can blind the reader to the intervening years, as it did to Western travellers to Greece and Rome, who ignored the more recent living past in favour of that of classical civilisation. But this immediacy could also be used to clarify. The power of texts to annihilate centuries was wielded by Las Casas in his battles for the rights of the American Indians. Seeking to justify the resistance to Spanish colonisation, Las Casas turned to the description of the Spaniards in the first century BC contained in Justinus's *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* as 'barbaric and wild', [21] before challenging his opponent:

> I would like to hear Sepúlveda, in his cleverness, answer this question: Does he think that the war of the Romans against the Spanish was justified in order to free them from barbarism? And this question also: Did the Spanish wage an unjust war when they vigorously defended themselves against them?[22]

The buildings of Mesoamerican cities inspired conquistadors to compare them to those of the Romans, but it was the words of the ancients, applied in a new context, that allowed Las Casas to punch through the distances in space and time to create a

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[19] Paredes Guerrero and Ligorred Perramon, 'Configuración urbana de Mérida-T'Hó'.
[20] Lersch, *La estructura de la personalidad*, 223–224; Richard, *Los dominios de la psicología*, 275; Freud, *Psicología de las masas*.
[21] Justinus, *Epitome*, 44.5.8, 'populumque barbarum ac ferum', 302
[22] Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, 193.

sympathy for his cause and wrongfoot Sepúlveda. In moments like these, the memory of the ancient city was felt directly and immediately.

The Mérida city council may be ready to sue archaeologists who deny the city from its Roman past, but the heritage authorities, on the contrary, have always had a different approach. With the 'aqueductgate', they underlined that they were there to let the archaeology speak for itself. But already in the 1990s they had put forward an all-encompassing, multi-period bid for UNESCO World Heritage Site status, presenting Mérida as one large archaeological continuum.[23] Within this institutional framework, the Archaeological Consortium has preserved the seventeenth-century palace built on the temple of the imperial cult, and have left visible the Visigothic and Umayyad remains that were built around it without undermining the centrality of the Roman original structures. The excavations, publications and displays of archaeological remains are multiperiod. The political powers that be and the public archaeologists have different (and sometimes conflicting) agendas, but whilst the general public can acknowledge the many phases that conform their monumental past, in the case of Mérida, Rome is the one true past to remember.

The past may be a foreign country, but in old urban environments, it is one which the present inhabitants have to live in. Cities are in a constant dialectic interaction with their past, and celebrating it, destroying it or ignoring it – remembering or forgetting it – are conscious choices based on how we understand a particular present. In this volume we have explored eleven case studies where the echoes of the ancient, urban past could be heard by later inhabitants – sometimes as distant voices in out-of-context architectural remains, sometimes as a clear discourse bellowed loudly by local authorities. The decisions made by those inhabitants, whether they chose to listen to those echoes and what they chose to do with what they heard, would have enormous repercussions for the future.

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[23] *UNESCO*, 'Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida'.

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