

Der Fall Roms und seine Wiederauferstehungen in Antike und Mittelalter

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Herausgegeben von
Henriette Harich-Schwarzbauer
und
Karla Pollmann

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Inhalt

Einleitung	1
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I. Rom als universaler Diskursort

<i>Karla Pollmann</i>	
The Emblematic City: Images of Rome before AD 410	11
<i>Henriette Harich-Schwarzbauer</i>	
Die ‚Mauern‘ Roms in Claudians <i>De bello Gildonico</i> und <i>De bello Getico</i> – Diskurse der Angst in den Jahren 398–402	37
<i>Therese Fuhrer</i>	
Rom als Diskursort der Heterodoxie und Stadt der Apostel und Märtyrer: Zur Semantik von Augustins Rombild-Konstruktionen	53

II. Historische Perspektiven auf Rom nach 410

<i>Beat Näf</i>	
Kaiser Honorius und der Fall Roms: Zur Macht des Glaubens	79
<i>Umberto Roberto</i>	
Alarico e il sacco di Roma nelle fonti dell’Oriente romano	109
<i>Rita Lizzi Testa</i>	
Rome During the Ostrogoth Kingdom: Its Political Meaning as Apostolic See	131

III. Der Fall Roms als Lehrbeispiel

<i>Marco Formisano</i>	
Grand Finale. Orosius’ <i>Historiae adversus paganos</i> Or the Subversion of History	153

Maijastina Kahlos

Divine Anger and Divine Favour: Transformations in Roman Thought
Patterns in Late Antiquity 177

Étienne Wolff

La prise de Rome de 410, une étape dans la christianisation de la ville 195

Cristina Ricci

L'eco letteraria del declino di Roma nel commento a *Ezechiele* di
Girolamo e di Gregorio Magno 209

IV. Poetische Wiederauferstehungen Roms nach 410

Petra Schierl

... *quod sine fine placet*. Roma renascens bei Rutilius Namatianus und
Prudentius 233

Chiara O. Tommasi

Imperium sine fine after 410. The Attempt at an Impossible
Accomplishment in Some Latin Poetical Sources 265

Seraina Plotke

Par tibi Roma nihil. Rom-Bilder in lateinischen und
mittelhochdeutschen Dichtungen des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts 293

Anmerkungen zu den Autorinnen und Autoren 313

Index Nominum 317

Index Rerum 321

HENRIETTE HARICH-SCHWARZBAUER und KARLA POLLMANN

Einleitung

Par tibi, Roma, nihil („Dir gleich, Roma, ist nichts“) – lauten die einleitenden Worte Hildeberts von Lavardin (1056 – ca. 1133) erster Romelegie, mit welchen er zum Ausdruck bringt, wie sehr ihn der Anblick der Ruinen Roms überwältigt. Um 1106 hatte Hildebert Rom besucht, welches von den Verwüstungen der Eroberung durch die Normannen 1084 immer noch schwer gezeichnet war. Erschüttert zeigt er sich von den Spuren der Zerstörung und ruft aus: *Roma fuit* (20: „Rom ist gewesen“). Die Überreste zeugen von Roms heidnischer Vergangenheit und erscheinen ihm so prächtig, dass auch ein Wiederaufbau der Stadt diese nicht würde übertrumpfen können. Die Herrschaft Roms über die Erde ist geschwächt, aber – wie Hildebert in seiner zweiten Romelegie ausführt – Roms christlicher Glaube verweist auf den Himmel und damit das Unvergängliche.¹ In diesen Elegien spricht Hildebert die prägenden Zuschreibungen der Stadt Rom an, wie sie sich bereits über Jahrhunderte im kulturellen Gedächtnis Europas festgesetzt hatten: seine Fähigkeit, sich von Beinahe-Zerstörungen zu erholen, seine Transformation von der paganen zur christlichen Herrscherin der Welt, seine Einzigartigkeit und seine Unvergänglichkeit im Wandel. All diese Identitätsmerkmale der Metropole² oder Kosmopolis³ Rom haben sich in der Spätantike herausgebildet und verfestigt. Entscheidend für diesen Kristallisationsprozess war das Jahr 410 n. Chr. – diesem Epochenjahr und der Vielstimmigkeit der Wahrnehmungen von Roms ‚Fall‘ in den nachfolgenden Jahrhunderten ist dieser Sammelband gewidmet.

Im August 2010 jährte sich zum 1600. Mal der *sacco di Roma*, die Plünderung Roms durch den Westgoten Alarich, ein Ereignis, das bei den Zeitgenossen vielfältig dokumentiert wurde und in der Rezeption eine unvergleichliche Aufmerksamkeit fand. Die Einnahme des *caput mundi* wurde von Paganen und Christen gleichermassen zu einem Weltereignis stilisiert, fand ein vielfältiges Echo in der zeitgenössischen Literatur und wurde weit über Rom hinaus wahrgenommen und kommentiert. Vor allem durch Augustins Konstruktion der Unheilsgeschichte der ‚heidnischen‘ Vergangenheit und durch die nachfol-

1 Bernhard Kytzler (1972), *Roma Aeterna. Lateinische und griechische Romdichtung von der Antike bis in die Gegenwart*, Zürich/München, 344–353, 620; vgl. auch Plotke in diesem Band.

2 Walter Ameling u. a. (2006), *Antike Metropolen*, Darmstadt.

3 Catherine Edwards/Greg Woolf (Hgg.) (2003), *Rome the Cosmopolis*, Cambridge.

gende Rezeption seiner Interpretation schrieb sich das Jahr 410 in die Annalen des Abendlands ein. Die Wiederkehr dieses Ereignisses erwies sich als trefflicher Anlass, die Konstruktionen dieses ‚Falls‘ Roms aus der Sicht unterschiedlicher Disziplinen zu analysieren und die Bedeutungshorizonte des Jahres 410 auszu-leuchten.

Eine von den beiden Herausgeberinnen vom 7.–9. Oktober 2010 organisierte Tagung am *Istituto Svizzero di Roma* setzte sich das Ziel, die Stadt Rom als Symbol für Zerfall und Erneuerung aus literarischer, geschichtswissenschaftlicher und theologischer Sicht in den Blick zu nehmen. Dabei ging es nicht so sehr um die Verifizierung der historischen Fakten, als vielmehr darum, die Polyphonie, den Zusammenklang oder auch die Dissonanz der Konzepte von Fall und Wiederauferstehung vernehmbar zu machen und ihre unterschiedliche Funktion in verschiedenen Texten herauszustreichen. Ein leitender Gedanke war dabei, die Stimmen, mit denen die Gefährdung Roms thematisiert wurde, zu integrieren und ihnen im Rahmen des Konzepts der Dauerhaftigkeit, das den Ton vorgab, einen Ort zuzuweisen, um nachfolgend das Ereignis bis hin zu den späteren Byzantinern zu verfolgen sowie ausgewählte Reaktionen der lateinischen und volkssprachigen Literatur im Westen zu Wort kommen zu lassen. Ein wichtiges Augenmerk galt der Transformation der Bedeutung der *urbs aeterna* sowie der Anwendbarkeit des Paradigmas der ewigen Stadt in verschiedenen Zusammenhängen. Nicht zuletzt wurden auch die vielen und facettenreichen Präfigurationen der Bedrohung Roms in die Diskussion einbezogen. Das Auf und Ab der Geschichte Roms und die erstaunliche Widerstandskraft dieser Stadt wurden dabei ebenso deutlich wie die bemerkenswerte Tatsache, dass Rom – sieht man von seiner Unvergänglichkeit einmal ab – im Gegensatz zu anderen Metropolen und kulturell oder politisch herausragenden Städten wie z. B. Babylon, New York oder Dresden nicht für eine spezifische Sache allein steht.

Der Unterschied zwischen dem ‚Fall‘ von 410 und dem des Jahres 476, in welchem Odoaker das Amt des weströmischen Kaisers abschaffte, ist bezeichnend und hat zur Arrondierung des Themas des Sammelbandes wesentlich beigetragen. Während die Ereignisse von 476 an historischen und politischen Konsequenzen reich und einschneidend waren, aber literarisch kaum greifbar blieben, setzte die Einnahme Roms von 410, obgleich sie historisch ungleich weniger wichtig war, enorme literarische Kräfte frei. Diese Beobachtung lässt sich durch die einzelnen Beiträge des vorliegenden Bandes erhärten und an Beispielen präzisieren. Der Sammelband ist in vier Abschnitte unterteilt. Mithilfe dieser Anordnung soll näher verdeutlicht werden, wie unterschiedliche intellektuelle Temperamente der ‚Katastrophe‘ des Falls der ewigen Stadt begegneten.

Im ersten Teil, „Rom als universaler Diskursort“, skizziert das Einleitungskapitel von Karla POLLMANN, *The Emblematic City: Images of Rome before AD 410*, typologisch sechs Möglichkeiten der Charakterisierung des Wesens der

Stadt Rom: 1) den Aufstieg von kleinen Anfängen zum Haupt der Welt, 2) den Preis Roms in materieller, geographischer und moralischer Hinsicht, 3) Troja als Roms emblematisches Gegenbild, 4) die Selbstzerstörung Roms aufgrund seiner Grösse, 5) das alternde Rom zwischen Verfall und Wiederverjüngung und schliesslich 6) Rom als ‚Gegenstadt‘ zu Jerusalem. Diese Analyse führt zu der Erkenntnis, dass Rom enorme Möglichkeiten der kulturellen Usurpation anderer Kulturen hatte, nicht zuletzt der griechischen, was sich sowohl in der Bezeichnung Roms als ‚neues Athen‘ als auch in der Bezeichnung von Byzanz als ‚neues Rom‘ niederschlagen konnte. Das Christentum stellte in dieser Hinsicht eine besondere Herausforderung dar und verwies Rom letztendlich und vornehmlich auf einen *irdischen* Platz der Dauer im Gegensatz zum ewigen *himmlischen* Jerusalem.

Henriette HARICH-SCHWARZBAUER unterzieht die stärker historisch orientierten Epen Claudians einer *rélecture*. Sie fragt nach der Wahrnehmung, die es zu den Bedrohungen Roms in den Jahren vor 410 durch innere und äussere Gegner gab. Ihr Beitrag *Die ‚Mauern‘ Roms in Claudians De Bello Gildonico und De Bello Getico – Diskurse der Angst in den Jahren 398–402* dekonstruiert den Optimismus, den Claudian als Panegyriker auf den Lippen trägt, mithilfe von Intertexten, mit denen neben mythischen Helden prominente Vertreter der römischen Republik aufgerufen werden. Harich-Schwarzbauer legt dar, dass sich hinter Claudians panegyrischer Euphorie für die Rom schützenden ‚Mauern‘ in Gestalt Stilichos Skepsis, ja sogar tiefe Sorge verbirgt, da die Sicherheit Roms nur noch auf einer einzigen Person, Stilicho, gründe.

Mit *Rom als Diskursort der Heterodoxie und Stadt der Apostel und Märtyrer: Zur Semantik von Augustins Rombild-Konstruktionen* geht Therese FUHRER der Frage nach, wie Augustin die Stadt Rom, die für ihn die Stadt der Ablösung von den Manichäern und der Heterodoxie wurde, in seinen Werken konstruiert. Das ‚alte‘ Rom mit seinen paganen Bauten, welches vor seiner Bekehrung eine Rolle spielte, lässt er nach seiner Bekehrung beiseite zugunsten suburbaner Denkmäler wie Kirchen und Märtyrergräber. Doch selbst diese christlichen Denkmäler werden von dem Prediger Augustin in ihrer Bedeutung auf eine Verweisfunktion reduziert, um dem Ort Raum zu geben, auf den es ankommt, nämlich dem Inneren des Menschen, welches den Aufstieg zur Gotteserkenntnis ermöglicht. Eine Verallgemeinerung bewirkende Resemantisierung ‚Roms‘ trägt dazu bei, alle ihre Bewohner zu Bürgern (*cives*) von Gemeinschaften zu machen, die eine Romideologie transzendieren.

Im zweiten Teil, „Historische Perspektiven auf Rom nach 410“, nimmt der Beitrag von Beat NÄF, *Kaiser Honorius und der Fall Roms: Zur Macht des Glaubens* die These von der geringen historischen Bedeutung sowie der Degeneriertheit des Kaisers Honorius kritisch in den Blick. Näf zeigt auf, dass diese Annahme auf allgemeinen Vorurteilen gegenüber dieser Epoche beruht. Durch die Analyse verschiedener Quellen zeichnet er ein differenzierteres Portrait dieser

Herrschergestalt in einer Phase des Umbruchs. Durch umsichtige politische und gesetzgeberische Aktivitäten, so Näf, gelang es Honorius, sich über den Fall Roms hinaus zu halten. Gerade weil wirklich stabile politische Verhältnisse nicht zu schaffen waren, versuchte er, den Glauben an die Grösse Roms auch in einer christlichen Perspektive zu stärken.

Der Gestalt Alarichs und der Rezeption von Roms Fall 410 aus der Warte des griechischen Ostens widmet sich der Beitrag von Umberto ROBERTO, der in *Alarico e il sacco di Roma nelle fonti dell'Oriente romano* verdeutlicht, dass in der paganen wie in der christlichen Historiographie des Ostens stets ein religiöser Diskurs mitlief. Je nach weltanschaulicher Herkunft wird Honorius für den Goteneinfall verantwortlich gemacht, wobei der negative Tenor überwiegt. Die Goten und mit ihnen Alarich werden als Wahrer der traditionellen römischen Herrschertugenden und daher als Vertreter einer vermittelnden Integrationspolitik stilisiert. Der Fall Roms wird allmählich auf ein lokales Geschehen herabgestuft, bis Georgius Cedrenus im byzantinischen Mittelalter dem Ereignis eine neue, aus der hellenistisch-römischen Historiographie hergeleitete Interpretation gibt.

Rita LIZZI TESTA, *Rome During the Ostrogoth Kingdom: Its Political Meaning as Apostolic See*, führt aus, dass der Primatsanspruch des römischen Bischofs, der sich im sechsten Jahrhundert konsolidierte, nicht nur im Interesse der Kirche Roms lag, sondern darüber hinaus auch die politischen Interessen der ostgotischen Herrscher ab Theoderich widerspiegelte. Somit wurde die ursprünglich in vorchristlicher Zeit legitimierte politische Vormachtstellung Roms benutzt, um nun in christlichem Kontext seine kirchliche Vorrangstellung zu etablieren – dies aber wiederum mit weltlich-politischer Zielsetzung. Denn ein starker Papst, der die Kirchen des Westreiches kontrollieren konnte, bedeutete auch eine Stützung der weltlichen Macht des Westreiches gegenüber dem erstarkenden Byzanz.

Im dritten Teil, „Der Fall Roms als Lehrbeispiel“, zeigt Marco FORMISANO in seinem Beitrag *Grand Finale. Orosius' Historiae adversus paganos Or the Subversion of History* in einer innovativen Analyse dieses Geschichtswerkes, dass Orosius die ‚Katastrophe‘ von 410 in ihrer historischen Bedeutung abwertet und die Gegenwart insgesamt als der geschichtlichen Erzählung enthoben auffasst. Gerade das Ereignis von 410 erlaubt es Orosius aber, die Vergangenheit als literarisierbare Geschichte des Verfalls ohne grossen erzieherischen Wert darzustellen. Insofern ist Orosius zu einem wesentlich stärkeren Grad ein getreuer Schüler Augustins, als gemeinhin angenommen wird.

Maijastina KAHLOS, *Divine Anger and Divine Favour: Transformations in Roman Thought Patterns in Late Antiquity*, erläutert, dass die pagane Auffassung, nur ein genaues Einhalten religiöser Rituale garantiere die Ordnung und den Erfolg einer Gemeinschaft, auch von Christen geteilt wurde. Ferner gingen beide Gruppen davon aus, dass in einem ‚moralisierten Universum‘ menschli-

ches Fehlverhalten göttliche Strafen heraufbeschwört, eine Auffassung, die sich in anderen Kulturen ähnlich wiederfindet. Dies bedeutet in der Folge aber auch, dass diese Ansicht von jeder religiösen Gruppe gegen eine andere ausgespielt werden kann, deren ‚falsche‘ religiöse Überzeugungen dann für jegliches von Menschen oder Naturgewalten hervorgerufene Unglück zur Begründung wird. In der Spätantike wurde dieses Erklärungsmuster der vorwurfsvollen Anklage auf paganer wie auf christlicher Seite verwendet.

Etienne WOLFF stellt mit *La prise de Rome de 410, une étape dans la christianisation de la ville* unterschiedliche Positionen zur Debatte, die von Paganen wie Christen über die Einnahme Roms durch Alarich eingenommen wurden. Er beleuchtet, wie unterschiedliche politische und/oder theologische Positionen zu gleichen Argumentationsstrategien oder auch – insbesondere bei Augustin und Orosius – zu höchst gesuchten Begründungen führen konnten. Das Spektrum der Funktionalisierungen von Alarichs Einfall in Rom ist breitgefächert und lässt nichts aus, was sich als Argument zur Übertrumpfung des Gegners nur irgend aufbieten lässt. Dessen ungeachtet, so das Fazit Wolffs, nutzte Alarich letztlich den Christen und festigte die Spiritualität und die Vorherrschaft des Bischofs gegenüber einem schwachen Kaiser.

Cristina RICCI widmet sich in *L'eco letteraria del declino di Roma nel commento a Ezechiele di Girolamo e di Gregorio Magno* der Funktionalisierung des Buchs *Ezechiel* – Ezechiel trat in einer Zeit der Krise des jüdischen Volkes als Prophet hervor – durch Hieronymus und Gregor den Grossen. Der Kirchenlehrer aus Stridon bezog aus dem fernen Jerusalem, wo nun statt vornehmen Pilgern vermehrt bettelnde Flüchtlinge eintrafen, zum Goteneinfall Stellung, während sich Gregor in Rom aufhielt, als die Langobarden die Stadt einnahmen. Von einem ersten Sprachverlust ob dieser Bedrohung, den beide Autoren Ezechiel nachempfinden, gelangen sie dann zu unterschiedlichen Erklärungen des Krisenereignisses aus theologischer Sicht. Hieronymus sieht es als aufrüttelndes Warnsignal und drängt zur Konversion zum Christentum und zur Askese. An die 200 Jahre später ist Gregor hingegen unerbittlich in seinem Urteil über das pagane Rom. Er nimmt den Verfall als gegeben an und betont die ultimative Jenseitigkeit des christlichen Glaubens.

Den vierten und abschliessenden Teil, „Poetische Wiederauferstehungen Roms nach 410“, eröffnet ein Beitrag zu Rutilius, der in *De reditu suo*, seinem Bericht über die Heimreise von Rom nach Gallien im Jahr 417, wie kein zweiter die Erneuerung Roms nach dem ‚Fall‘ inszeniert und sich in einem Hymnus an die Göttin Roma wendet. In ... *quod sine fine placet. Roma renascens bei Rutilius Namatianus und Prudentius* weist Petra SCHIERL nach, dass Rutilius mit seinem Rom – personifiziert in Gestalt der Göttin und verkörpert durch die Beamten, denen er auf der Reise begegnet, – ein Gegenbild zu dem im christlichen Glauben erneuerten Rom des Prudentius entwirft. Durch die literarische Auseinandersetzung mit Prudentius' *Contra Symmachum* schreibt sich Rutilius in

die durch den ‚Streit um den Victoria-Altar‘ ausgelöste Rom-Debatte ein, zielt jedoch nicht auf eine Repaganisierung Roms ab. Er zeigt Rom vielmehr als eine identitätsstiftende und das Handeln der Elite bestimmende Grösse, die er als eine göttliche Macht über andere religiöse Bindungen stellt. Schliesslich ist Rom für Rutilius die ewige Quelle dichterischer Inspiration.

Chiara Ombretta TOMMASI, *Imperium sine fine after 410. The Attempt at an Impossible Accomplishment in Some Latin Poetical Sources* wählt Passagen von Dichtungen des sechsten Jahrhunderts aus, mit denen Stimmen aus Provinzen vernehmbar werden, die den Topos der Fortdauer Roms als Wunsch und als Erwartung artikulieren. Gerade die immer wechselnden Herrscher in den instabilen politischen Umständen dieser Zeit können erfolgreich mit dem Hinweis auf die vom Schicksal vorherbestimmte ‚Ewigkeit‘ Roms, sei es als politisches Gebilde, sei es als Idee, gepriesen werden.

Seraina PLOTKE bestätigt mit ihrem Beitrag *Par tibi Roma nihil. Rom-Bilder in lateinischen und mittelhochdeutschen Dichtungen des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts* die literarische Produktivität, welche Rom als ewige Stadt zu generieren vermochte. Mit der geographischen und politischen Distanz zu Rom schwindet zusehends die Denkfigur von Zerfall und Zusammenbruch. Die Kontinuität und die Beständigkeit Roms werden nunmehr wieder und immer neu erdichtet. Anhand des mittelhochdeutschen *Annolieds*, des *Eneas-Romans* Heinrichs von Veldeke, mittels Hildeberts von Lavardin *Romelegien* und Walters von Châtillon Satire *Propter Sion non tacebo* wird die Beständigkeit Roms vor Augen gestellt. Die Wurzeln der deutschen Kaiser direkt in Caesar und im römischen Grossreich zu verorten, die Ästhetisierung der Ruinen, die alle Widersprüche Roms in sich tragen, zu betreiben, durch formale Iteration den Aufstieg und Abstieg Roms poetisch nachzuempfinden, die antike Stadt mit dem verkommenen Rom der Kurie zu kontrastieren und schliesslich auf den Fremden Aeneas zurückzugreifen, um die Herrschaft Friedrichs Barbarossas in der Fremde, in Italien, zu legitimieren, alles dies leisten diese Dichtungen und bestätigen so eindrücklich die Macht von Texten über die Geschichte.

In Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse lässt sich festhalten, dass es keine Katastrophe an sich gibt. Entscheidend ist, *ob* etwas und in der Folge, *was* aus einem Ereignis gemacht wird. Wenn ein als Katastrophe begreifbares Ereignis zu einer historisch besonders brisanten Zeit eintritt, kann es als Symptom bzw. Anlass gesehen werden, durch welchen eine bereits länger schwelende Krise plötzlich in den Brennpunkt rückt: Für Rom 410 ist dies die noch nicht ausgestandene Auseinandersetzung zwischen Christen und Paganen um die politische, religiöse und kulturelle Vormachtstellung im Römischen Reich, die sich zunehmend vollziehende Trennung in Ost- und Westrom und nicht zuletzt ein sich verstetigender kultureller Polyzentrismus. Kulturträger diverser ‚Netzwerke‘, sei es, dass sie physisch oder intellektuell mit Rom verbunden waren, ob sie Rom bejahend oder auch in skeptischer bis ablehnender Distanz begegneten,

zeichneten für die Konstruktion der Bedeutsamkeit des Ereignisses verantwortlich. Die hier vorgelegten Analysen führen darüber hinaus zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Katastrophe nicht als Endpunkt begriffen werden musste, sondern auch als Neuorientierung, etwa zur Schärfung der eigenen Identität, dienen konnte. Wie der Sammelband insgesamt aufzeigt, inszenieren Texte die Bedeutungszuschreibungen des ‚Falls‘ der ewigen Stadt als unterlegen gegenüber Roms Wiederauferstehungen. Bildhaft ausgedrückt konnten somit die symbolischen Ruinen Roms zum Stratum für einen neuen Weg werden.

Die Beiträge nehmen westliche und auch östliche Reaktionen auf den ‚Fall‘ Roms in den Blick. Sie erhellen, dass die griechischen, zumeist etwas späteren Quellen eine andere Einschätzung des Ereignisses und der Akteure bieten, wobei die lateinischen Berichte bei weitem nicht homogen sind. Insbesondere religiös motivierte Deutungen benutzten die ‚Katastrophe‘, um jeweils die Schuld der Gegenseite zu erweisen. Daneben gebrauchte man zur Überwindung antagonistischer Positionen von paganer Seite das Plädoyer für religiöse Toleranz, von christlicher Seite die Relativierung der Einzigartigkeit Roms durch den Hinweis auf andere mächtige Städte oder Reiche. Auffallend ist in diesem Zusammenhang auch, dass sich im Angesicht der politischen Transformation der Spätantike die Romidee von einer national-imperialistischen hin zu einer transnational-kulturellen verlagerte, wenngleich durch die Jahrhunderte hindurch beide Formen Bedeutung besitzen konnten.

Die dialektische Spannung zwischen den zahlreichen Bedrohungen oder gar ‚Zerstörungen‘ Roms und der Gedankenfigur der *urbs aeterna* erweist sich in den Beiträgen insgesamt als höchst ertragreich. So wurde die strittige, doch eben deswegen nie leugbare Funktion Roms als Kulturträgerin immer wieder deutlich: Die Vorstellung der ewigen Stadt Rom, sei sie als Möglichkeit oder als Anspruch formuliert, reicht mindestens in die Augusteische Dichtung zurück. Sie kann republikanische Vorläufer, eventuell selbst eine hellenistische Matrix geltend machen. Damit wurde die Frage vordergründig, wie die ‚Ewigkeit‘ Roms begriffen werden kann. Die Beiträge dieses Bandes geben darauf eine Antwort. Sie legen dar, dass es in der Spätantike kaum Versuche gab, Rom als transzendent ewig zu porträtieren. Im Gegensatz zum himmlischen Jerusalem war Rom der Inbegriff der Ewigkeit und des andauernden Anspruchs in dieser Welt – eine Position, die Rom bis heute für sich in Anspruch nimmt.

* * *

Der hier vorliegende Band vereint ausgewählte Beiträge der Tagung *Der Fall Roms und die Wiederauferstehungen der Ewigen Stadt* am *Istituto Svizzero di Roma*

von 2010.⁴ Ergänzt werden sie durch die Beiträge von Rita Lizzi Testa und Maijastina Kahlos, die in Zusammenhang mit einer zweijährigen akademischen Kooperation zwischen den Universitäten von St Andrews und Pisa stehen, welche dem Thema *Roma Aeterna. L'antica Roma come città emblematica. Costruzione, eredità, significati* gewidmet war. Nicht zuletzt resultieren aus der Zusammenarbeit mit dem Basler Kompetenzzentrum *Kulturelle Topographien* wichtige Einsichten zur Themenstellung.

Unser besonderer Dank gilt dem *Istituto Svizzero di Roma* unter der damaligen Leitung von Prof. Dr. Christoph Riedweg. Im prächtigen Ambiente der Villa Maraini in Rom, aber auch bei der Tagungseröffnung an der *British School of Rome* wurde die Atmosphäre der ewigen Stadt zum Erlebnis. Für grosszügige finanzielle Unterstützung der Tagung danken wir dem *Istituto Svizzero di Roma*, dem *Schweizer Nationalfonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung*, der *Freiwilligen Akademischen Gesellschaft*, Basel und dem *Fonds zur Förderung der Studien auf dem Gebiete der ägyptologischen, orientalischen und klassischen Altertumskunde*, Basel. Für finanzielle Unterstützung bei der Vorbereitung der Drucklegung danken wir dem *Leverhulme Trust* und dem *Département Altertumswissenschaften*, Basel, sowie Alexandra Drayton und Sina dell'Anno für die redaktionelle Arbeit bei der Vorbereitung der Manuskripte für die Drucklegung. Die Herausgeberinnen sind den beiden anonymen Gutachtern der Manuskripte für wesentliche Hinweise und Verbesserungen dankbar.

Henriette Harich-Schwarzbauer und Karla Pollmann
Basel und Canterbury im August 2013.

4 Die Tagung wurde in wissenschaftlicher und organisatorischer Verbindung mit der Tagung *410 – Die Eroberung Roms. Das Ereignis, seine Vorgeschichte und seine Auswirkungen* angelegt, die am *Deutschen Archäologischen Institut Rom* vom 4. – 6. November 2010 stattfand und deren Schwerpunkt vornehmlich auf historisch-archäologischen Zeugnissen zum Ereignis von 410 und auf deren Bewertung lag. Die Beiträge dieser Tagung werden, herausgegeben von Philipp von Rummel, Carlos Machado und Johannes Lipps, demnächst vorliegen.

I. Rom als universaler Diskursort

KARLA POLLMANN

The Emblematic City: Images of Rome before AD 410¹

... and a second Rome will rise, a Teutonic empire,
as transitory as Rome and just as bloody ...

Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *Romulus the Great*, Act Four²

I. Preliminary Remarks

In several European languages Rome is the proverbial *universal* city, hence the saying: “all roads lead to Rome”. Even in Antiquity, Rome already had attributes that are reminiscent of modern, even postmodern qualities, as it was *global* and multicultural. In Claudian’s characterization of the city, he refers to Rome’s peaceful, benevolent reign, like a mother uniting all nations (*cons. Stil.* 3.151 f. *humanumque genus communi nomine fovit, / matris, non dominae ritu*); because of *pacificis moribus* (‘peaceful law and order’) everyone can consider each part of the empire as his or her home and has the freedom to move everywhere (and Claudian himself was a good example for that):

*huius pacificis debemus moribus omnes
quod veluti patriis regionibus utitur hospes,
quod sedem mutare licet [...],
quod cuncti gens una sumus. nec terminus umquam
Romanae dicionis erit*

1 This investigation was conducted in connection with my large interdisciplinary and international project on the reception of Augustine of Hippo from his death in 430 until the present day, which was generously funded by the Leverhulme Trust (for further details see <www.st-andrews.ac.uk/classics/after-augustine>). The Leverhulme project also concentrated, as this volume as a whole does, on general modes and patterns of reception and some of their implications. – I am grateful for the inspiring discussion of this paper during the conference at the wonderful *Istituto Svizzero di Roma*. I am especially indebted to its then director, Christoph Riedweg, who was not only an excellent host but also made me aware that I had to include section VII. I am also very grateful for the lively and incisive comments I received at the University of Leipzig, at the *Geisteswissenschaftliches Kolleg der Studienstiftung* in Wittenberg, and at the annual meeting of the South African Classical Association in Cape Town, where I was kindly invited to deliver earlier versions of this contribution.

2 Dürrenmatt 1982, 64.

(to whose peaceful law and order we all owe it that a stranger has the use of all regions as if they were his fatherland, that it is easily possible to change one's place of living [...], and that we are all one nation. Nor shall there ever be a boundary for the Roman tongue³). (*cons. Stil.* 3.154–156, 159 f.)

Here, Rome is described as being multicultural, imperialistic, and colonizing, in the sense that it is cosmopolitan: an all-embracing “global village”, a cultural, civilizing, and driving force that embodies positive progress and expansion. In the rest of this paper we will explore some of the main features of this diverse and complex city, which has been described as “the oldest continuous political-religious symbol in Western civilisation”.⁴ Apart from a few remarks in the following section, I will for the most part concentrate on images of Rome in literature, rather than pictorial or visual representations of the city, as the title of this paper might suggest.

Perhaps the best-known epithet of the city of Rome is “eternal”.⁵ It became Rome's public epithet from around the time of Hadrian († 138) onwards, and Rome was the only city in Antiquity to be honoured with it.⁶ The emblematic quality of *Roma aeterna* has endured through the ages. One of the earliest visual instances stems from the base of a lost column dedicated to Antoninus Pius (AD 86–161), which has military connotations.⁷ The notion returns much more recently on a bronze plate for the marble base of the statue of a she-wolf suckling the twins Romulus and Remus, which bears the following inscription:

ROMAE NOVAE
AUSPICIIUM PROSPERITATIS
ET GLORIAE
LUPAM CAPITOLINAM SIGNUM
ROMA AETERNA
CONSULE BENITO MUSSOLINI MISIT ANNO MCMXXIX

(“This statue of the Capitoline Wolf, as a forecast of prosperity and glory, has been sent from Eternal Rome to New Rome, during the consulship of Benito Mussolini, in the year 1929”).

3 All translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

4 Mellor 1981, 950.

5 Cancellieri 1882 claims to be the first per se investigation of the Romans' belief in the eternity of their city. Since then there have been a good number of further studies, see especially Koch 1952, Vittinghoff 1964, Dopico Cañzos 1998, and for Late Antiquity in particular, the magisterial study by Paschoud 1967. For a collection of Greek and Roman poetry in praise of Rome through the ages see Kytzler 1972. For an interdisciplinary exploration of the legacy of Rome in the Middle Ages, both as a physical city and as an idea, see Bolgia/McKitterick/Osborne 2011.

6 Gernentz 1918, 40 and 45.

7 See Plate VII in Mellor 1981, after p. 1014.

Here we find a clearly political emphasis on Rome's eternal quality, which, in Mussolini's case, had fatal consequences.⁸

The notion of the "Eternal City" also serves as the brand name of a modern-day accessory, namely an elegant writing pen, which is advertised in the following way:

Most of the pens that we encountered in the past using are inspired by one thing or a theme. *Montegrappa Roma Aeterna* draws the inspiration for its remarkable decoration from two places, which with the great strength of symbolic imagery speak to people today of *the grandeur of Ancient Rome*: the Roman Forum, the pulsating centre of the city's political and military power, and the city of Pompeii, the extraordinarily vivid and expressive evidence of the daily life of the great patrician families.⁹

Here, the emblematic quality of Rome is used in a clichéd, kitsch way to suggest that success and superiority will be conferred on the potential buyer of this pen.

The phrase *aeterna urbs* to denote Rome finds its first mention in Tibullus, *Elegy* 2.5.23, and seems to be, as far as we can tell, a Tibullan invention:

*Romulus aeternae nondum formaverat urbis
moenia, consorti non habitanda Remo;
sed tunc pascebant herbosa Palatia vaccae
et stabant humiles in Iovis arce casae.* 25

(‘Romulus had not yet built the eternal city’s walls,¹⁰ which were not to be inhabited by his twin-brother Remus; but at that time cows were feeding on the grassy Palatine Hill, and there stood humble huts on Jupiter’s Capitol.’)

Tibullus develops what could be called a *progress model*, that is, one praising Rome's rise from humble, agrarian origins to the capital of the world, a notion also familiar, for instance, from Vergil's *Aeneid*, particularly in book 8. In this section of the *Aeneid*, more space is dedicated to the notion of small beginnings, which we also find in Propertius 4.1 A and, somewhat ironically, in Ovid's *Ars amatoria* 3.113–120.¹¹ The idea of humble origins is normally used to exploit the contrast of Rome's progress from lowly beginnings to wealth, splendour, and power, and the implicit or explicit emphasis on the Roman virtues that enabled this stunning development to take place successfully. But the contrast is also used to hint at a deterioration of Roman morals in the present wealthy times, because wealth is seen as a corrupting influence. Tibullus 2.5 hints at the tragic

8 Cf. Rietbergen 2000; Johrendt/Schmitz-Esser 2010; Mazzoni 2010.

9 See <http://houseofpens.blogspot.com/2010/01/roma-aeterna-limited-edition.html> (last accessed 15/01/2012; emphases mine).

10 For city walls as an important topos see below p. 19, and the contributions by Harich-Schwarzbauer and Fuhrer in this volume.

11 Gernentz 1918, 32–40 also lists among others Propertius 4.4.9–14; Ovid, *Fasti* 1.243–246, 2.391 f., 5.93 f., 6.261–264.

foundation of what was to become an illustrious city: fratricide is inextricably bound up in Rome's genetic make-up, as it were. Thus, Rome rules and is successful, but also excludes and eliminates members of its community, a behaviour that is at the core of its very self.

Another relatively early instance of the expression *aeterna urbs* can be found in Ovid, *Fasti* 3.72:¹²

*iam, modo quae fuerant silvae pecorumque recessus,
urbs erat, aeternae cum pater urbis ait:
'arbiter armorum, de cuius sanguine natus
credor et, ut credar, pignora multa dabo,
a te principium Romano dicimus anno:
primus de patris nomine mensis erit.'*

75

(‘Already there stood, where there had been before just forests and retreats for cattle, a city, when the founder [Romulus] of this eternal city said: “Lord of Armour, from whose blood I am believed to have been born and whom I, in order to be believed, shall give numerous pledges, after you do we name the beginning for the Roman year: the first month shall have its name from my father.”’)

We have already seen this formula for progress (which we will also see below in II), but here it is linked to a foundation myth with an aetiological function – in this case, naming the first month of the Roman year after Romulus' father, Mars. Remus is not mentioned at all, thus suppressing all tragic undertones. So, from the very beginning when this phrase is first employed, there are various possibilities of how to exploit it, something that becomes characteristic in later developments of this idea.

The phrase *Roma aeterna* is first found in Hadrianic times. The Temple of Venus and of Rome was the largest known temple in ancient Rome. Located at the far east side of the Forum Romanum near the Colosseum, it was dedicated to the goddesses Venus Felix and Roma Aeterna.¹³ The construction of the temple began in 121; it was officially inaugurated by Hadrian in 135 and finished in 141 under Antoninus Pius. Damaged by fire in 307, it was restored with alterations by the emperor Maxentius. The religious veneration of *Roma Aeterna* and its mention in a military context is also found in inscriptions, as, for instance, in CIL III 1422 (Dacia), 3368, 5443, V 4484, 6991, VI 370, 1736 (under Gratian and Valentinian), VII 370, 392 (both Great Britain) and VIII 2934 f., 6965, X 16, etc. Jerome, *ep.* 121.11 mentions *Roma aeterna* in combination with the *imperium Romanum*, as does Augustine, *civ.* 20.19.

While the phrase occurs only later, first traits of a concept of Rome as “eternal” are found in Cicero, *De lege agraria* 1.24, when Cicero convincingly

12 Cf. for *urbs aeterna* also e.g. Amm. Marc. 14.6.1, 15.7.1, 15.7.10, 16.10.4 and 14.

13 See Mols 2003, who convincingly demonstrates that Roma Dea was meant here as the deity of the city of Rome in particular, and not of the Roman Empire in general.

promises that under his consulship “there would be no other Rome and no other seat of the Empire, and there would be the tranquillity of peace and leisure” (*nullam alteram Romam neque aliam sedem imperii nobis consulibus futuram summamque tranquillitatem pacis atque otii*). Similarly, Cicero proclaims the name of the Roman people to be eternal (*Phil.* 2.51 *sempiternum*), and the state to be immortal (*Pro Marcello* 7.22 *cum res publica immortalis esse debeat*; Rab. perd. Frag. 33 *si immortalem hanc civitatem esse vultis, si aeternum hoc imperium, si sempiternum ...*, and especially *Rep.* 3.34 *debet ... constituta sic esse civitas ut aeterna sit*). Both in his speeches and in his theoretical work, Cicero is consistent in postulating that it is human beings and their character, values, and decisions that form a city. The value and stability of the city depends on the quality of these values, decisions, etc. Because humans are mortal, however, the institution will outlive them, provided the political constitution is a sound one. In this sense, *aeternitas*, *immortalitas*, and *diuturnitas rei publicae* all have the same connotation in Cicero. Moreover, it has to be emphasized that, for Cicero, such appellations are not meant as idle flattery but are the expression of his sincerely held ideals, which, towards the end of his life, he also applied to Caesar.¹⁴

Accordingly, in this context it is important to notice¹⁵ that in late republican times the appeal to Rome’s eternity is delivered in the form of a hope, expectation, prayer, or request – in one word, as an ideal. This has to be separated clearly from the notion of the eternal city as a divine promise, a prophecy and a revelation, a notion found from the time of Augustus onwards, and first expressed by the Augustan poets. The most well-known instance is, of course, Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.278 f.: *his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; / imperium sine fine dedi*.¹⁶ Thus, there is a clear turning point in the development of the concept of Rome as eternal from the late republic to the Augustan period.¹⁷

So far, we have concentrated exclusively on the Latin tradition. Another text, not that well-known and one that is easily overlooked, stems from the Greek part of the Roman Empire, more precisely the Magna Graecia, where, from the second century BC onwards, Greek cities began to venerate the personified deity of Roma. Unfortunately the exact date of the composition of this text, a hymnal poem (“Ode to Rome”, Ant. Lyr. Gr. Diehl II.6.209 f. = *Supplementum*

¹⁴ Dopico Caínzos 1997, 393–404 correctly emphasizes this.

¹⁵ As Koch 1952, 135–137 has already pointed out rightly, although not everyone is aware of this.

¹⁶ Criticized in the Christian poet Iuvencus, praef. 1 f. *immortale nihil mundi compage tenetur, / non orbis, non regna hominum, non aurea Roma*, cf. Paschoud 1967, 9 f.

¹⁷ Cf. Livy 4.4.4 *urbs dis auctoribus in aeternum condita* (cf. 28.28.11), 5.7.10, 6.23.7, and also later Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.84 and *Ann.* 3.6 *principes mortalis, rem publicam aeternam esse*; Silius Italicus 7.476 ff., and Rutilius Namatianus 133 ff.; for the latter cf. also Schierl in this volume.

Hellenisticum 541) by the female poet Melinno, written in Sapphic stanzas and in Doric dialect, is highly controversial: dates for the poem range from the third century BC, via the second part of the second century BC and the Augustan age, up to the second century AD.¹⁸ Melinno praises the goddess Roma as having been bestowed with military power to rule on earth in perpetuity; its claim to yield dominion is acknowledged as being unlimited in time. If the early dating were correct, this would be the first extant instance mentioning Rome's perpetuity as a fact.¹⁹ Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 3.7.12, where this poem is transmitted, seems to imply an etymology of "Rome" (Ῥώμη) from Greek ῥώμη ('strength'), which can be found more often and is presumably antiquarian knowledge.²⁰

χαῖρέ μοι Ῥώμα, θυγάτηρ Ἄρηος,
 χρυσεομίτρα δαΐφρων ἄνασσα,
 σεμνὸν ἃ ναίεις ἐπὶ γᾶς Ὀλυμπον
 αἰὲν ἄθραυστον.

σοὶ μόνα, πρέσβιστα, δέδωκε Μοῖρα
 κῦδος ἀρρήκτω βασιλῆϊον ἀρχᾶς,
 ὄφρα κοιρανῆον ἔχοισα κάρτος
 ἀγεμονεύης.

σᾶ δ' ὑπὰ σδεύγλα κρατερῶν λεπάδων
 στέρνα γαίης καὶ πολίης θαλάσσης
 σφίγγεται· σὺ δ' ἀσφαλέως κυβερνᾷς
 ἄστεα λαῶν.

πάντα δὲ σφάλλων ὁ μέγιστος αἰὼν
 καὶ μεταπλάσσω βίον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλως
 σοὶ μόνα πλησίστιον οὖρον ἀρχᾶς
 οὐ μεταβάλλει.

ἡ γὰρ ἐκ πάντων σὺ μόνα κρατίστους
 ἄνδρας αἰχματὰς μεγάλους λοχεύεις
 εὖστοχον Δάματρος ὅπως ἀνεῖσα
 καρπὸν ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν.

18 Bowra 1957, 22 and 28, who himself pleads for the first half of the second century BC, followed, e.g., by Kytzler 1972, 576. Ossner 1969, 494 speculates that Melinno was presumably a citizen of the Greek colonial city of Locres (Magna Graecia), modern-day Locri in Calabria, and wonders (495) why the notion of *urbs aeterna* disappears after Augustus and only reappears under Hadrian. More recently, suggestions date it into the early principate (Gauger 1984), or into Hadrianic times (Lloyd-Jones/Parsons 1983). As far as I can see at the moment, the strongest argument against imperial times is the lack of mentioning the emperor. But as Hadrian re-inaugurated the cult of the Dea Roma, he would perhaps not have minded.

19 I hope to come back to this controversial issue in a different context, as it is important for the history of thought.

20 Cf. e.g. Lycophron, *Alexandra* 1233; Plutarch, *Romul.* 1.1; *Origo gentis Romanae* 21.4, and Festus 326 L. For other etymologies see Maltby 1991, s.v. Roma.

(‘Hail, Roma, daughter of Ares, golden-mitred warlike queen, who inhabit upon earth awesome Olympus, for ever indestructible. To you alone, most revered goddess, Fate has given the royal esteem of a power not to be broken, so that you may rule with sovereign strength. Under the harness of your powerful yoke-straps the chests of the earth and of the grey sea are bound together; and you govern steadfastly the cities of peoples. Time supreme, which overthrows everything and remodels life in constantly changing ways, for you alone does not alter the wind that swells the sails of your sovereignty. For indeed you alone among all bring forth the strongest men as great warriors, making them spring up from men like Demeter’s rich corn.’)²¹

This hymn also clearly refers to a military and imperial context, describing Rome as a conqueror and ruler, rather than as a mother and nurse.²² When this topos returns in Late Antiquity it is noteworthy that, in comparison to its earlier version, the supranational dominates the national aspect of *Roma aeterna*, and its cultivating and civilizing powers are more prevalent than its imperial and military concerns. Already, before Late Antiquity, the knowledge of Roman literature and history could confer *romanitas* to those not born in Rome.²³ But by the time of Late Antiquity, Rome has developed into the symbol of a living, continuing, universal culture.²⁴ As we shall see below under VII, this optimistic view of Rome’s role in the world did not remain unchallenged.

II. From Small Beginnings to *Caput Mundi*

A particular characteristic of the Augustan period is the concentration on founding stories that, following the Hellenistic tradition, tell about a famous event or human hero in the past that was instrumental in setting up a city, or an institution, which continues into the present.²⁵ These stories are not concerned with historical facts²⁶ and use the projection of an origin into a mythical past, firstly as a safe intellectual place in which to develop an ideal, and, secondly, to exploit the “safe” mythical distance, peculiarly, as a particularly immediate

21 In line 20, it is perhaps not necessary to follow Bergk’s conjecture ἀπ’ ἀγρῶν (‘from the fields’), cf. Bowra 1957, 21 n. 5, instead of the transmitted ἀπ’ ἀνδρῶν, which could seem to be influenced by ἄνδρας from line 18. Lloyd-Jones/Parsons 1983 resort to an obelus. I am grateful to my colleague Stephen Halliwell for his valuable input in my attempt to come to terms with this unique poem.

22 Bowra 1957, 26.

23 Edwards 1996, 17.

24 Döpp 1980, 191, referring to Claud. *cons.Stil.* 3.159b–173 with allegorical deities protecting it; Prud. *c. Symm.* 1.541–3; 2.598–618 with Christ as guarantor; see also Brodka 1998, 257 f.

25 Pausch 2008, 40 n. 13; 58 f.

26 Ibid., 41.

comment on the present: the mythical past is thus of direct contemporary relevance. The story of Romulus and Remus is, of course, one such founding myth. The problematic element of the fratricide has already been mentioned.

The *Aeneid* can rightly be called an aetiological epic and is in a way the most ambitious intellectual and literary project to cope with this problem. As E. A. Schmidt has rightly emphasized,²⁷ its main characteristic is that it looks at Rome's foundational past with a strong view to the present, while at the same time paying only fleeting attention to the centuries that lie between these two points in time. So, the past is not so much understood as a developing continuum culminating in the present, but as a typological narrative matrix that has the effect of illuminating the present. It has been argued in recent scholarship that Vergil is partly ambivalent and not a one-dimensional flatterer of the Augustan state, despite Servius' statement that the two main goals of the *Aeneid* were to praise Augustus and to imitate Homer; one can argue that the latter goal serves to mitigate or differentiate the former.

In the *Aeneid*, Romulus, as the son of Mars, as the founder of the city walls, and as the name-giver to the Romans, is only briefly hinted at in 1.276 and in 6.777–789 – in the latter case with a direct link to Caesar and Augustus. Vergil passes over the tradition of the quarrel and the murder of Remus. Instead, in the *Georgics* Vergil had already depicted the simple, honourable, and idyllic life led by the early Romans, including Romulus and Remus (2.533 *Remus et frater*). Likewise, and in sharp contrast to a tradition that highlights the fratricide, in the *Aeneid* the *imperium sine fine* will be governed by virtues and lawful harmony between the twin brothers: *cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus iura dabunt* (1.292 f.), where Romulus is referred to as divine Quirinus, the name given to him on his apotheosis and from which the denotation of the Romans as Quirites is derived. This perspective contrasts sharply with the young Horace, who in *epod.* 7.17 ff. exploits the *ambivalence* of Romulus and designates him as the arch-cause of Rome's propensity for self-destruction: *acerba fata Romanos agunt scelusque fraternae necis, ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi sacer nepotibus cruor*.²⁸ Ten years later, however, after the end of decades of Roman civil war, the same Horace in *Ode* 3.3 could emphasize Romulus as the divine Quirinus, whose virtues were so impeccable that he was able to atone the former sins of Troy and mark with the Roman Quirites a new beginning.²⁹ Thereby, he also foreshadows the future apotheosis of Augustus. So we note again the ambivalence and flexibility of the story, which can be exploited even in one and the same author.

27 Schmidt 1991, 74–79.

28 See Fuchs 1964, 9–11; Krämer 1965, followed by Schmidt 2003, 98–108, 111.

29 Koch 1952, 203 f.

As already mentioned, the setting up of walls was one of the traditional tasks of the founder of a city.³⁰ Their protection is so successful that they withstand attacking enemies, as, for example, in the traumatic event when the Gauls attempted to storm Rome in 387 BC, but failed to take the Capitol. Cicero, *Rep.* 2.10 f. refers explicitly to the city walls (*muri*) that are an intelligent reinforcement of Rome's natural fortifications. In Livy, these walls are already important at Rome's foundation: Remus scorns Romulus by light-heartedly jumping over Romulus' new city walls which are, at that point, very low. The ensuing killing of Remus is then seen as a punishment for trespassing. The point of this founding story is that it will serve as a cautionary tale for all of Rome's enemies. Although this sounds at first like an honourable justification, Livy characterizes it negatively: in 1.6.3–1.7.3 the inherited evil, that is, the desire for power (*avatum malum, regni cupido, foedum certamen coortum a satis miti principio*), sparked off by a trifling incident, leads to murder (*caedes, Remus interfectus*); even family members can turn into outsiders. As with the trespasser Remus, all trespassers will be killed (*sic deinde, quicumque alius transiliet moenia mea*); the implication is that family bonds are less important than Rome's interests as a political community and its commitment to measures enabling its self-defence.

Somewhat different is the story's accentuation in Ovid, *Fasti* 4.807–862. Remus does not know about his brother's order to kill everyone who would dare to jump over the low walls of the newly founded city. When he does it and is killed accordingly by Romulus' men, Romulus is sad but publically follows the *raison d'état* and his argument is reminiscent of Livy's: *sic ... meos muros transeat hostis* (4.848). Only afterwards does Romulus bury his brother and shows his tears. So, the walls can be used to develop an aetiological story about Rome's willingness to defend itself by highlighting various different nuances. Slightly outside our timeframe, but worth mentioning briefly, is that a new, religious rather than military, reason for Rome as *caput mundi* is offered by Prosper of Aquitaine († 445), in his *Carmen de ingratia* 1.40–42, combining its religious authority with the notion of increasing imperial rule: *Sedes Roma Petri: quae pastoralis honoris / facta caput mundo, quidquid non possidet armis / religione tenet.*

30 See also the contribution by Ricci in this volume.

III. *Laudes Romae*

The praise of cities, the so-called *laudes urbium*, was a rhetorical figure of thought going back to the Greeks, but it can also be found, for instance, in Egyptian texts.³¹ As Carl Joachim Classen has demonstrated impressively, in such praise the emphasis is almost exclusively on the importance of place, both geographically and with regards to the concrete locality of the city, as well as its buildings and fortifications. However, its population and the activities occurring within a city are never mentioned. The praise of Rome is no exception to this pattern.³²

A striking example is Livy 5.53.9–54.7, where Camillus pleads for staying in Rome and rebuilding the city that had been damaged by the Gauls in 387 BC, and not to leave for the neighbouring Veji. He offers various reasons for this, namely, a) that the Capitol and the temples of the gods are still undestroyed; b) love for the homeland (*caritas patriae*); c) the geographical location of the place provided excellent conditions for a city that would thrive again, and should not be given up for another, potentially less suitable location. This place was tried and tested; while virtues can be transported elsewhere, the *fortuna loci huius* cannot.³³ The speech was so effective that the Roman citizens rebuilt the city and its walls after the attack by the Gauls, thus documenting again Rome's resilience, and explicitly making it a positive counter-example to Troy, which was never rebuilt.³⁴ Therefore, Livy felt justified in calling the period in Rome's history that followed the Gallic attack Rome's *secunda origo* (6.1.3). Augustus claimed progress of a different kind, transforming a city of bricks into a city of marble (Suetonius, *Aug.* 28.3–30.2).

The longevity of Rome could be connected to the endurance of the Capitol, as, for instance, in Horace, *Ode* 3.30 and Statius, *Silv.* 1.6. In the Christian era, Rome became the city of apostles and martyrs, evidenced by its catacombs, churches, and the like.³⁵ Particularly in Late Antiquity, the city of Rome was also seen as a symbol for the empire,³⁶ and the allegory of Rome became a

31 See Ragazzoli 2008 (Egyptian praises of cities in verse), Classen 1980, 4–9, and the chapter on Thebes in Hose/Levin 2009.

32 See Classen 1980, *passim*, especially 9–15, 30–36, 67. An exception is the fact that Rome can be symbol for the Roman Empire and its expansion, which includes, of course, the “activity” of imperialism; see Gernentz 1918, 98–145 and below n. 36.

33 Fuchs 1964, 12 f.; Classen 1980, 11 f.

34 See Kraus 1994, and also below under IV.

35 Classen 1980, 30; Kasper 2010, who 126 f. emphasizes that despite all these “lieux de mémoire” Rome is not a museum intended to restore the past, but an encouragement and benchmark for future endeavours.

36 Classen 1980, 27 f. points this out for Ausonius and Claudian. It is also true for Aelius Aristides' praise speech to Rome (*or.* 26, from AD 155), for whose highly complex and

prominent feature, especially in poetry. While still indebted to the literary tradition of the *laudes Romae*, authors of the late fourth and early fifth centuries AD found new ways to inflect the image of Rome that mirror their different religious and cultural allegiances. Accordingly, in the works of Claudian, Prudentius, and Rutilius Namatianus, Rome appears in two guises. It may be personified as a woman, whose attributes indicate the power and status of the city and empire, as well as the contemporary circumstances within the Roman state. Alternatively, the city may be represented by certain topographical details in an epitome of its urban geography that stands in a metonymic relationship to the city as a whole.³⁷ In general, it has to be borne in mind that the *laudes Romae*, as well as the *laudes Italiae*, can have either an optimistic or a pessimistic tone, or even a combination of both.³⁸

IV. Prototype: Troy, Another Emblematic City³⁹

It was a particular challenge to create a victory out of defeat and to depict how the losers of the Trojan War, who had to face the utter destruction of their home city, would go on to be the founders of a new city that would, ultimately, defeat the Greeks, the victors in the Trojan War. This task was managed most superbly in Vergil's *Aeneid*, which manages to portray Rome as the second Troy, in a development that had been intended by Fate all along. Here, the resilience of Rome, its ability to rise from defeat, hardship, and unpromising beginnings to something great, is contained in a nut-shell. Another strong quality can also be observed in the *Aeneid*. The future Rome is culturally flexible – the “Proto-Romans”, i.e. the Trojans, are not afraid to land in Italy and mingle with the natives (the Latini) to form a new race: they keep the Trojan Palladium, but add to it the language of the Latini.⁴⁰ Aeneas' journey, which is full of errors and corrections, with divine prophecies and signs only gradually becoming clearer, is a strong plea for an historical, flexible, but determined attempt to find a (new) home.

Already in his epyllion *Alexandra*, the Greek poet Lycophron (third-century BC) has Cassandra make a prophecy that the descendants of the Trojans will conquer the present victors over Troy (viz. the Greeks), especially in lines 1226–1280 and 1446–1450. Even if one assumes this poem to be interpolated or not

ambivalent meaning see the contributions by Laurent Pernot and Francesca Fontanella in Harris/Holmes 2008.

37 See Roberts 2001, *passim*.

38 Cf. also above n. 36.

39 For an overview see Fartzoff 2009.

40 Later the Romans continued with this policy, not always without violence, as in the case of the Sabines, cf. Pausch 2008, 56.

written by Lycophron at all, the material is Hellenistic. It may well have served as a model for Propertius' elegy 4.1A.39: *huc melius profugos misisti, Troia, Penates*, and 87 f. *dicam: "Troia, cades, et Troica Roma, resurges;" / et maris et terrae candida regna canam*.⁴¹ Here Rome is seen as an improvement, as a better future for Troy, again adopting a model of progression, which is echoed in Ovid, *Fasti* 1.523–526. Similarly, in *Metamorphoses* 13.623–721 and more explicitly in 15.431–452, Ovid includes the metamorphosis of Troy into Rome as a pertinent episode that allowed Troy a cultural and historical continuation in a different context.⁴²

This, however, is only true up to a point, and there are also interesting differences between the two great emblematic cities of Troy and Rome. Troy was destroyed by others (*halosis Troiae*), whereas Rome potentially collapses under her own weight (see below under V). In Horace, *Ode* 3.3.57 ff., Rome is warned not to rebuild Troy, as it could develop into a potential rival. Here Troy has turned into a symbol of the corrupt East, which had just been conquered successfully by Augustus in the battle of Actium (31 BC). Thus, Rome is indeed the reborn Troy, but now firmly placed in the Western part of the Mediterranean. Horace emphasizes the separation of Rome from Troy as necessary by employing a striking reversal in *Ode* 3.3.33 ff.: Rome has risen from agrarian village to city, whereas Troy developed from mighty city to uncivilized wilderness. In general, Vergil is keen on seeing the origins of Rome in Troy in a more positive light, that is, as revenge against the Greeks.⁴³ But although his and Horace's respective accentuations are different, they nevertheless both agree that the new Troy is safely located in the Western part of the Mediterranean, in Rome, ideologically as well as geographically.⁴⁴ Thus, Troy has no independent institutional future – which in the *Aeneid* hints at Carthage, another great rival of Rome – but the city of Rome does. Whereas Troy remained a Near Eastern place, however famous and wealthy, Rome became universal and global, both in its actual military dominion and as an idea. The reason for this is that it had a willingness to adapt to new circumstances and absorb new ideas, and thereby change to a certain degree. In Rome, there is a close connection between its location, the empire it governs, and its rulers that yield this governance, on the one hand, and on the other between its rule and

41 I quote the text after Heyworth 2007. The positioning of these two verses is controversial, see Murgia 1989, *passim*, especially 258, 262, 265, who endorses the decision of Lucian Müller to place them after verse 52, which is followed by Heyworth 2007, 420 f.

42 It shall only briefly be mentioned that this is also possible with other cities. For instance, Gregory Nazianzen, *De vita sua* 562 ff., proclaims Constantinople as a second Rome, following the line of its founder Constantine; see also Classen 1980, 87.

43 Stahl 1999, *passim*.

44 For all this still helpful is Klingner 1952, 131 f.

eternity and globalization, i. e. two axes of both a spatial and a temporal infinity. Thus it combines a clear local – geographical and national – identity with global, universal, and supranational ideals.⁴⁵

A striking example of the versatility of this idea is demonstrated by Lucan. In his *Pharsalia* books 1 to 8 he intentionally models Pompey's journey on Aeneas' journey in the *Aeneid*. Whereas Aeneas goes from east to west, that is, from Troy to Rome, from capitulation to foundation, Pompey goes from west to east, back to Troy, as it were, and to his own eventual defeat.⁴⁶ But, this parallelization by contrast can change into a parallelization by analogy, as evidenced in *Pharsalia* 9.964–999, where Caesar visits the former site of Troy and displays a deviously selective memory of Troy's story.⁴⁷ This now decayed city, in Lucan's imagery, is representative simultaneously of Troy and Rome, blending concrete and psychological ruin.⁴⁸ In Lucan, both Rome and Troy are in the past perfect and both cannot be rebuilt.⁴⁹

V. Rome's *moles*: Destruction from Inside

Vergil's famous statement at the beginning of the *Aeneid* (1.33 *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*) added a problematizing quality to Rome's very essence. Austin (1971) ad loc. has rightly observed that "formally the reference is only to the founding of the city; but it inevitably brings to mind also the long, gradual, difficult but inexorable process by which Roman supremacy was established". This aetiological verdict on Rome's origin as being a process not without "difficulty", or "effort" is matched by the problematic quality of its ensuing expansion, which can also be described with the term *moles*, then denoting its 'massive structure, heavy bulk' that will eventually cause its downfall. This notion of the necessary collapse of a large structure was generally recognized and took on an almost proverbial quality. In Horace, *Ode* 3.4.65, it is force without wisdom that collapses under its own weight (*vis consili expers mole ruit sua*), and in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.151–162, the fighting Titans will be overwhelmed by their own massive size (*obruta mole sua cum corpora dira iacerent* [156]).

The idea that the Roman Empire suffers from its own size, which makes it more prone to collapse under its own weight, is a topos found in Livy, praef. 4:

45 I mention only briefly that Rome could also 'absorb' Athens in this way, as e.g. Dionysius of Halicarnassus could portray Rome as the new Athens, on which see for more details Wiater 2011, especially 76, 81, 87, 89 f.

46 See Rossi 2000.

47 See Rossi 2001.

48 Spencer 2005, especially 51–56.

49 Hui 2011, 156–159.

*eo creverit, ut iam magnitudine labore sua.*⁵⁰ A bit more than a century later, the historiographical epitomist Florus says that because Rome had practically conquered the entire world it could not be oppressed by any external forces (*Epit.* 4.2 *ut ullis externis viribus opprimi posset*), but its own weight had to be its downfall (*Epit.* 4.11.5 *ipsa moles exitio fuit*). This is then taken up again by Claudian, *De bello Gildonico* 108 *ipsa nocet moles* Only few emperors were able to cope with the *moles* of the vast Roman Empire to rule it properly, most notably Augustus (Tac. *Ann.* 1.11.3).

The satirists treat the notion of *moles* in a very different way, and have a relatively disrespectful view of Rome's urban grandeur. Ovid, in his *Ars amatoria*, develops an erotic topography for Rome, making fun of its buildings and places that are supposed to document her august past and mighty present⁵¹ by portraying them as conveniently offering occasions and opportunities to start an amorous adventure. Martial is an example of a critique of Rome's social problems. In epigram 4.64 he praises a small land estate above Rome as being hospitable, clean, surrounded by fresh air and quietness, in contrast to bustling Rome, and thanks to the panoramic view: *totam licet aestimare Romam* (12). In epigram 12.57, only a rich person living in the right quarters is declared to be able to enjoy a quiet, safe, and beautiful Rome, an idea that is echoed in Juvenal 3.235. Both poets also emphasize the social discrepancies in the city and the resulting increase in crime – for the ancestors *one* prison sufficed – that makes the streets unsafe. This essentially *internal* criticism can be contrasted with a seemingly external criticism in the famous speech of the British leader Calgacus in Tacitus' *Agricola* 30 f., where the imperializing Romans are called robbers, who are greedy and disguise their murdering by calling it *imperium*, and who created a desert that they call peace (30 *raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terrae, mare scrutantur. Si locuples hostis est, avari, si pauper, ambitiosi, quos non Oriens, non Occidens satiaverit: soli omnium opes atque inopiam pari adfectu concupiscunt. Auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*). In other places, Tacitus sees the expansion of the Roman Empire as a laudable activity, showing Roman virtues at their best; this criticism of Rome is here carefully placed as a rhetorical device in his antinomic historiography.⁵² It is impossible to determine with certainty whether this statement is an authentic opinion of Rome's

50 Döpp 1980, 134; Olechowska 1978, 154 on verse 108.

51 On Rome's architectural setting as a "Gedächtnislandschaft", cf. Pausch 2008, 43 f.

52 Cf. for a similar phenomenon the two speeches of Roma in Prudentius' *Contra Symmachum*, see below.

opponents.⁵³ Naturally, when later taken out of context, this speech could and can be used for regime criticism all the same.

VI. *Vetus Roma*: Internal Decay and Rejuvenation

Especially from the later empire onwards, Rome's longevity became a topos of praise. In Ammianus Marcellinus 16.10.13–17, Julian is overawed on his visit to Rome by its architectural splendour, both from republican and from emperors' times (*haec decora urbis aeternae*). "Old" is often synonymous with good quality, and the past is an obligation and a point of reference and orientation. Ammianus proclaims that as long as Romans stick to their ancestral virtues and the traditional (pagan) religion, Rome will be eternal, even after defeat at Adrianopolis (Turkey) in 378 against the Goths.⁵⁴ Similarly, Claudian, in his Panegyric *De consulatu Stilichonis* 3.160 f., argues that Rome is unlimited in space and time, because of its virtues (no luxuries, or *vitia, odia, superbia*). The idea of eternity is used in Claudian to substantiate Rome's capability to reconstruct itself.⁵⁵

But being an "eternal city" also makes one vulnerable, as this can also be seen as being simply old, i.e. doomed to perish (see also below under VI). Possibly the oldest reference to Rome being destined to perish is Scipio in Polybius 38.21–22, who is reported to be in tears when seeing the destruction of Carthage, once the most powerful city in the Mediterranean. He predicted in a *vaticinium ex eventu* that this would also be Rome's fate one day – as all great cities (including Troy) were to suffer destruction at some point.⁵⁶ This topos gained immediate relevance again in Late Antiquity.⁵⁷ In pagan writers, Rome's advanced age can be an issue of concern, as in Claudian, *De bello Getico* 50 ff., and in Ammianus Marcellinus 14.6.4–5.⁵⁸ Similarly, in the *Panegyricus Latinus* 2.11.4–7, the Panegyric to Theodosius by Latinus Pacatus Drepanius (AD 389), the sense of a major crisis in the Roman Empire shines through. The panegyric's major theme is Theodosius' suppression of the usurper Maximus, who was put to death on 28 July 388. A bit belatedly, around a year later, Theodosius came to Rome to celebrate a triumph for his victory over Maximus.

53 Gärtner 1996, 1156, similarly Fuchs 1964, 17. For further external criticism from Hellenistic times see Fuchs 1964, 5 ff., but here the notion of Rome's eternity is not yet present.

54 Sabbah 1979; Gärtner/Ye Min 2008.

55 Brodka 1998, 116–118; Rutilius Namatianus employs this idea *after* 410 in a similar way, cf. Brodka 1998, 123–126.

56 See also Lugaresi 1952.

57 Döpp 1980, 133 n. 2; see also Roberto in this volume.

58 Döpp 1980, 218.

This speech is held in front of Theodosius, after his arrival at Rome but before the triumph had taken place.⁵⁹ As already in *Panegyricus Latinus* 7.11.1–4 (from AD 307), the personified Roma is used to expostulate with the emperor, in this case now Theodosius, because he was hesitant to resume power when invited to do so (2.11.7). Although we can never be entirely sure how much truth and how much “staging” is contained in such a *recusatio imperii*, it is still of great interest to compare the rhetorical efforts made in both cases.

In Pacatus, the external threat of the Roman Empire is emphasized to a great degree, something entirely missing in the anonymous *Panegyricus Latinus* 7. Even if Theodosius will be active immediately, it will take a long time to get things right again. As a piece of hyperbole, Roma then claims that she was waiting for Theodosius as her true master and saviour when she was still “in a flourishing state”, under the emperors Nerva, Titus, and Antoninus Pius, as well as Augustus, Hadrian, and Trajan, all of whom, when ruling, brought her prosperity, law and order, political expansion, and safety to the city. Here, a universal spectrum of the Roman Empire’s imperial past is sketched: Titus, for instance, is called “the darling of the human race” (2.11.6 *amor generis humani*). Its institutional continuity is emphasized, and the foundation story of Romulus is hinted at when Augustus is described as adorning the city of Rome with walls (*moenibus*).⁶⁰ Some scholars did not understand this topos and suggested as a conjecture *moribus*.⁶¹ Of course, Augustus was also famous for his ‘moral’ legislation, but this would be a strange position next to Hadrian instructing Roma in the law, and, moreover, misses the point. Although Augustus had not literally (re)built Rome’s walls, he was fashioning himself as a new founder of Rome, by establishing internal and external peace, and thus new prosperity for Rome, with the *pax Augusta*. Hence, he was modelled as a new Romulus, just as with Julius Caesar before him: in 46 BC, Caesar put up a statue in the temple of Romulus-Quirinus with the inscription *deo invicto* (Cass. Dio 43.45.2), which had the function of designating him as a second Romulus and founder of the city.⁶² With regards to Augustus as a second Romulus, texts that are of particular relevance in this context are Propertius 4.6.43 f., where Apollo says before the battle of Actium to Augustus: *quam nisi defendes, murorum Romulus augur / ire Palatinas non bene vidit aves*, and Suetonius, *Aug.* 28.2, where Augustus says, looking back on his life’s achievements and hoping that the foundations he laid would last: *moriens feram mecum spem mansura in vestigio suo fundamenta rei publicae, quae iecero*.

59 Nixon/Saylor Rodgers 1994, 441–444.

60 For the importance of walls see also above p. 19.

61 Nixon/Saylor Rodgers 1994, 462 n. 43.

62 Koch 1952, 202 f.

In a strikingly different evocation of Rome's past, Claudian in his poem *In Gildonem* belittles Augustus by alluding to the *pax Augusta* in verse 51 as in *gremium pacis servile*, and passes over the Julian-Claudian and the Flavian emperors in silence, a pattern also occurring in other poems by Claudian. On the other hand, *libertas* is elevated to the core value, which reminds one of ideals of the Late Roman Republic. All this amounts to a disguised criticism of the Christians who connected the *pax Augusta* with Christ's birth.⁶³ Here we note again the flexibility of choice for an author to take from the past what is convenient for the present: the pagan writer Claudian favours the republican past; the Panegyrist prefers to focus on the institutional continuity of the imperial dynasties; while Ammianus favours examples from both, although all three have mainly the pagan elite as their targeted audience.

Another approach that exploits one of Rome's characteristics concerns the notion of the city's longevity. Seen positively, an ageing Roma (*Roma senescens*) can also be rejuvenated (*Roma revirescens*), a topos we encounter first in the *Odyssey* as regards Odysseus, who is rejuvenated by the goddess Athena before he encounters princess Nausicaa, the daughter of Alcinous, king of Phaeacia (*Od.* 6.229–231; 23.156–8), and in Vergil, *Aen.* 1.588–593, where Venus rejuvenates her son Aeneas, when he goes ashore in Carthage and encounters Dido. A deity is not described as ageing and as being rejuvenated in these poets, but in Claudian's *De bello Gildonico* the old goddess Roma, when complaining about her diminishing political powers, has youth breathed into her by Jupiter (*adflavit Romam meliore iuventa* [208]), and immediately her hair loses the colour of age. Already by the early second century AD, Florus, *Epitome* praef. 8, employs the panegyric figure of thought that the old woman Roma regained her youthful strength though Trajan (*a Caesare Augusto in saeculum nostrum haud multo minus anni ducenti, quibus inertia Caesarum quasi consenuit atque decoxit, nisi quod sub Traiano principe movit lacertos et praeter spem omnium senectus imperii quasi reddita iuventute reviserit*). In the same vein, Roma becomes blond again in both the Christian poet Prudentius, *C. Symm.* 2.656b–658a, and in the pagan poet Rutilius Namatianus 1.115 f.⁶⁴

It is not surprising that parties that became the victims of the pagan "Rome ideology" would be tempted to attack it (see below under VII). The Christian Tertullian sneeringly relativizes Rome's old age by referring to the much greater age of the cosmos (*pall.* 2.5) and to other more ancient cultures (*apol.* 26.2).⁶⁵ A more complex technique is encountered in Prudentius. In *C. Symm.* 2.83–90 the personified Roma, with snow-white hair and wrinkled brow, is allowed to plead on Symmachus' behalf in a brief speech that echoes the core value invoked

63 Cf. Gärtner 1996–1997, 280–283.

64 Döpp 1980, 134 f.

65 Gärtner 1996, 1173. For further Judaeo-Christian criticism, see below under VII.

by Claudian:⁶⁶ Roma wants *libertas* that in this case is synonymous with religious tolerance. Christians should accept that Roman pagan syncretistic monotheism is a path parallel to the Christian monotheistic faith to search for the same divine power. Later, Prudentius will plead for progress that is in favour of the Christian religion (2.303 f.), a thought model also familiar from tradition (see above under II). Later still, Roma delivers a second, much longer speech (2.655–768) that Prudentius thinks is a more appropriate opinion to be put into her mouth (*nempe aptior ista / vox Romae est*, 2.649 f.). Unsurprisingly, here Roma declares herself to have been rejuvenated (see above), her grey hair turns again to gold; she has a new life (*aliud aevum*) and is now rightly called head of the world (*caput orbis*), as she has officially accepted the true faith of Christianity under Theodosius. It is Christ, not the pagan gods, not old-age tolerance but youthful single-mindedness that has guaranteed and continues to guarantee Rome's greatness and successes.⁶⁷ The allegory of Roma envisages a truly eternal empire as a reward for Theodosius: *regnator mundi Christo sociabere in aevum, / quo ductore meum trahis ad caelestia regnum* (2.758 f.: 'As ruler of the world you will be made partner with Christ for ever, for under his leadership you draw my realm to the heavens'). This means endlessness taken to a different, eschatological level,⁶⁸ and the Eternal City would then truly become a transcendental entity. This has to be clearly separated from Cicero (see above under I), who develops an immortal ideal of the perfect *res publica*, which, however, should be put into practice very much in this world. But Cicero also appears to think that a particularly virtuous citizen who contributed worthily to the earthly duration of such a state, may achieve transcendent immortality.⁶⁹

VII. Rome as Anti-City

We have seen that Horace could be critical of Rome, just as Lucan can be in his *Bellum Civile*.⁷⁰ But in these contexts the criticism is normally meant as a foil against which improvement, a better political situation, and a positive turn for Rome is desired implicitly. This is not necessarily the case when outsiders "deal" with Rome. For instance, the Judaeo-Christian apocalyptic literature is always hostile towards Rome and wishes for, or even prophesies, its more or less

66 See above p. 27; similarly Brodka 1998, 159 f.

67 In this context it is worth referring to the conclusions in Kahlos 2009, that it was normally the inferior party alone that pleaded for religious tolerance, and then only for themselves.

68 Pollmann 2011, 185 f.

69 Dopico Caínzos 1997, 408.

70 For further authors reflecting decadence in general and proclaiming Rome's decadence in particular, as especially Sallust, see Näf 2010, 162–165.