The Site of Rome
Studies in the Art and Topography of Rome 1400–1750
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*Melbourne Art Journal 13*

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Second Frontispiece: Giovanni Battista Cingolani dalla Pergola, Topografia geometrica dell’Agro Romano: ovo la misura pianta, e quantità di tutte le tenute, e casali della campagna di Roma con le citta terre, e castelli confinanti ..., Rome, 1704, detail. (British School at Rome Library.)

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256 Contributors and Abstracts
This volume, number 13 in the *Melbourne Art Journal* series, brings together nine scholars who each explore an aspect of the art and architecture of Rome situated within the topography—or map—of Rome in the Renaissance and Early Modern periods. These are studies of sight and site: about how the appearance of different regions or aspects of the city intersect with complex systems of political, economic, social and artistic institutions and customs. Beginning with the marble slabs of the fish market, and ending with the elegant facades of its eighteenth-century churches, the topography of Rome is explored through time and space.

In the first chapter Julie Rowe explores the functioning of the medieval fish market at S. Angelo in Pescheria, an area dominated by the ruins of the Portico of Octavia. It is a site that was a nodal point on the medieval road networks, and close to the principal artery of Rome, the Tiber River. A different road system is explored by Joan Barclay Lloyd: the stretch of one of the Roman Consular roads, the Via Appia, between the Servian and Aurelian walls. Here inscriptions, place names, ruins (such as the Baths of Caracalla), medieval monasteries (such as S. Sisto) and churches (including S. Cesareo and SS. Nereo ed Achilleo, restored during the Counter-Reformation) are set in a green and spacious valley, the legacy of the nineteenth-century vision of an archaeological park.

Louis Cellauer looks at the sixteenth-century cartographic recreation of the image of Rome as a whole, which oscillated between attempts to correlate early lists of the Antique regions with the reality of the Renaissance city, and the skilful use of the device of the bird’s-eye view by artist-antiquarians like Pirro Ligorio to show what the whole of ancient Rome might have looked like. A more conceptual map of Rome is explored by Donato Esposito, who looks at the response of an artist who visited Rome—Sir Joshua Reynolds—not through his diaries, recollections or sketchbooks, but through those works in his extensive collection that are associated with many of the most famous works of Roman art of the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Lisa Beaven, too, sees Rome through the eyes of an artist, but this time an artist who devoted his life to observing and recording the countryside around Rome and who used this data to create images of places that seemed both physically real and historically remote. She follows Claude Lorrain’s favourite itinerary up the Tiber Valley north of Rome from the Porta del Popolo to the farmhouse of La Crescenzi, asking what the conditions were actually like there during the seventeenth century, a time when environmental degradation was an acute issue. Also addressing the question of the relationship between the ideal and the real is David R. Marshall, who examines the tradition of the representation of antique columns, capitals and entablatures in architectural painting, arguing that artists began by employing sixteenth-century treatises describing the classical orders but learned to respond to real ruins, particularly the ruins in the Roman Forum, with the help of the visual tricks of scene painters.

The next chapters consider the way Roman sites were used. Arno Witte examines the structures and spaces of the Quirinal hill, the seat of papal secular power in the eighteenth century. He argues that the papal government was in many respects ahead of other European states in the innovation of political and bureaucratic structures, not lagging behind them as is usually supposed. Tommaso Manfredi looks at another of Rome’s heights, the Pincio near the church of Trinità dei Monti above Piazza di Spagna, a site not of papal authority but of international diplomacy, where Maria Casimira, widow of John III Sobieski of Poland, and her sons performed lavish musical spectacles in the early eighteenth century. Manfredi shows how she reconfigured this area by the restoration of the Villa Torres (later Villa Malta) and the Palazzo Zuccari, including the construction of a bridge across the modern Via Sistina and the loggia of Palazzo Zuccari.

Finally, John Weretka addresses the question of how ecclesiastical institutions projected their presence in Rome by way of their church façades. Through an analysis of six church façades erected in the city of Rome in the 1720s and 30s, he argues that buildings of this period can be read as providing a lively commentary on one of the most persistent norms of architectural organisation in the Baroque church façade, the aedicule.

This volume is dedicated to Marchesa Alberta Serlupi Crescenzi, who has done so much to welcome foreign visitors to Rome.

David R. Marshall
Daylesford, January 2014
Fish featured regularly in the diet of medieval Romans. It was cheap and plentiful and, for the overwhelmingly Christian majority of the population, a readily available alternative to meat which religious observances forbade for close to a third of the year. Fish was caught in the Tiber, or brought to market from the coast and freshwater lakes in the Campagna. The main distribution point was the fish market (pescheria) at the church of S. Angelo, built into the ruins of the Porticus of Octavia (Fig. 1). Here fish was auctioned at the city’s only wholesale fish market and sold at retail stalls much the same as those Félix Benoist saw outside S. Angelo late in the nineteenth century (Fig. 2).

This chapter begins by outlining the reasons why the fish market’s location at S. Angelo was a particularly
favourable one. Exactly when the market became established there is unknown; it is mentioned in the historical record for the first time only in 1192. Two major archival sources, however, provide detailed information about its organisation and operation during the Middle Ages. These are the statutes of the fishmongers’ guild (Statuta ars pescivendulorum) and the records of notaries Antonio Scambi and his son who prepared numerous legal documents for S. Angelo and fishmongers (pescivendoli). Drawing on these records, I will focus on how fish was supplied to the market, and how its retail and wholesale sectors operated. Special attention will be given to the roles of the two major players in the market, the church of S. Angelo in Pescheria and the fishmongers’ guild. The chapter concludes by examining the activities of selected pescivendoli families and how their commercial interests expanded beyond the fish market.

In antiquity, Rome’s fish market lay north-east of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina in the Forum Romanum, probably moving to a location near today’s S. Giorgio in Velabro (Figs. 3 and 4 [1]) late in the empire. By the high Middle Ages, however, a flourishing fish market was operating in the tiny open space in front of the church of S. Angelo (later S. Angelo ‘in Pescheria’) (Figs. 3 and 4 [2]), within easy reach of the main body of Rome’s population which had gradually consolidated into the Tiber bend earlier in the Middle Ages. The church (DIV S ANGELI) and the market place in front of it are clearly seen in Bufalini’s map of 1551 (Fig. 3 [2]). They were at
the heart of medieval Rome’s commercial quarter. Not far away downstream, the cattle market (the Forum Boarium) (Figs. 3 and 4 [3]), continued to operate as it had done for centuries, and farmers from the nearby Alban Hills sold their produce in Piazza Montanara (Figs. 3 and 4 [4]). A short distance upstream was another market place, Piazza Giudea (Figs. 3 and 4 [5]). Like the fish market it too had developed during the Middle Ages, and was the focus of Rome’s medieval Jewish quarter, which was situated along the left bank of the Tiber immediately upstream of Pons Fabricius (Figs. 3 and 4 [6]). It had begun to develop late in the tenth century or early in the eleventh as the city’s Jewish community gradually transferred across the river from their traditional base in Trastevere, almost certainly...
drawn by the employment possibilities the area offered. It was a neighbourhood of small businessmen and artisans, where Jews constituted close to half the population, their concentration giving rise to several popular names: *contrada giudea* for the district (Figs. 3 and 4 [6]), and *pons giudea* for the nearby bridge, Pons Fabricius (Figs. 3 and 4 [7]), as well as the name of the market place itself.

The fish market site at S. Angelo was no doubt chosen because it was relatively central and accessible. It was close to the Tiber, source of some of its products; it was near the reliable river crossing provided by the Tiber Island bridges for delivery of fish catches off-loaded at Rome's port in Trastevere or brought in by road from the Campagna; and it connected directly with one of the main thoroughfares of Rome that ran directly past the church (Fig. 3 [2]). The location was considered a healthy place in which to sell foodstuffs: the 1481 Addendum to the 1405 *Statuta pescivendulorum Urbis* states that 'near S. Angelo is a clean place, sheltered from the heat of the sun, where...

(Below) Fig. 7. Map of Rome showing the Einsiedeln itinerary. After Bauer, 2004, fig. 9, p. 20.

(Right) Fig. 8. Remnant columns of the ancient Porticus Octaviae leading into and through its propylaeum, 2008. (© Julie Rowe 2013.)
meat, fish and other things ... are well preserved from spoilage, which is not possible in Campo de’ Fiori and all other markets.5

The church of S. Angelo had been established around the middle of the eighth century, built into the southern monumental entrance (propylaeum) of the ancient Porticus Octaviae (Fig. 5). The propylaeum then functioned as an entrance porch for the church and was approached from both sides along what remained of the portico’s colonnade (Fig. 8). The porch and colonnade continued to be used as a public street (via publica) throughout the Middle Ages, just as the propylaeum and colonnade had formed a section of the ancient Via Tecta in the Imperial era. Early in the Middle Ages, Via Tecta became known as via peregrinorum because it linked Saint Peter’s with S. Paul’s outside the Walls (Fig. 7), and later, via mercatoria, because it connected Rome’s main markets.8 The views of Rome by Pietro del Massaio (1469) (Fig. 9) and Alessandro Strozzi (1474) (Fig. 10) in the second half of the fifteenth century show via mercatoria quite clearly. It began at the market area in front of S. Celso at the head of Ponte S. Angelo (1) and passed through places that Massaio called Campus floris (2) and Area iudea (3) before reaching S. Angiolo ove si vende il pesce (4) and, finally, the Capitol (5). Strozzi’s view has similar labels: S. Celso (1), Piazza di Campo di fiore (2), [Piazza] Giudea (3), and S. Agnolo dove si vende il pesce (4). (S. Celso remains today as SS. Celso e Giuliano, totally rebuilt and with a different orientation to the medieval church: see the chapter by Weretka in this volume.) S. Angelo’s porch also served as a key connecting point for traffic arriving from a major overland route through the Porta Aurelia on the Janiculum or from the main river port in Trastevere across the Tiber Island bridges. On exiting Pons Fabricius (Fig. 6, left, and Figs. 9 and 10 [6]), pedestrians and vehicles would follow the narrow street leading off into the neighbourhood on the river’s left bank. It quickly deviated first left and then right to reach the tiny piazza before the church (Figs. 3 and 4 [2]).

Exactly when the fish market was established at S. Angelo is unknown, but recent excavations have uncovered a much earlier presence of fish sellers on the site than had previously been suspected.9 In the south-west inner corner of the porch, built straight onto the Roman paving, the walls and doorway of a small fish shop were uncovered (Fig. 11, left).10 The shop faced directly onto the thoroughfare across the porch and was identified as a fish seller’s by a large quantity of mollusc shells still sitting in a tub connected through a hole in its base to Rome’s sewer system.11 The discovery has moved documented fish selling at S. Angelo back at least three centuries and significantly closer to construction of S. Angelo, when use of the porch was evidently divided between commercial activities in the west half and the church in the east.12 A few decades after the church was founded, an anonymous monk from Einsiedeln referred to the church (Sanctum Angelum) in his guide book but made no reference to a fish market.13 It appears for the first time in the historical record only some four centuries later, when Cencio Camerarius used it to identify the church—sco. Angelo piscium ven(alium)—in his 1192 list of Rome’s churches.14 The term’s use in an official document suggests that, by then the market was well established.
While almost nothing is known about the fish market’s origins, a good deal is known about its operation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (and by extension, in the earlier Middle Ages) thanks to the fortunate survival of two groups of records: the 1405 statutes of the fishmongers’ guild, the Ars pescivendulorum, with several sets of addenda, and the invaluable records of notary Antonio di Stefanello Scambi and his son, Lorenzo, which cover a forty year period between 1363 and 1409. These records reveal much about the extent and nature of the involvement of the two major players in the market’s operation: the guild and the church of S. Angelo in Pescheria.

The guild statutes begin by outlining its administrative organisation (office bearers and the like), but then are devoted almost exclusively to the rules and regulations governing the wholesale selling of fish (coctigium). In the process, they provide other informative details, such as the types of fish sold in the market. The Scambi records, on the other hand, deal more with the supplying of fish to the market, and retail selling. Scambi and his son lived and worked in rione S. Angelo, preparing documents of lease, sublease, sale and loan for the day-to-day dealings of many of those associated with the retail market. Their records show the types of contracts, purchases, payments and loans fishmongers made in order to supply fish to the city and the supply networks established within Rome and beyond. They also reveal how some pescivendioli were able to expand their activities and supply game and birds to the market through the purchase or lease of forests and woodlands, or diversify into raising beef, sheep and crops on leased or owned farmlands. In this way they generated wealth and power for themselves and their families.

Supplying the Market

Fish arrived at the fish market in front of S. Angelo in Pescheria from three sources: fisheries in the Tiber, freshwater lakes and waterways in the Campagna, and the seas along the coast of Lazio north and south of Rome. Freshwater fish were trapped in fisheries (pescarie), often called loci ad piscandum in the documents. A pescaria was a fixed installation immersed in the waters of a river or lake, an enclosure made with a stone base and sides of wood and rush lattice that allowed easy entry for fish but no exit. One can be seen in the lower left foreground of Gaspar van Wittel’s view of the Tiber upstream of Ponte Sisto (1682) (Fig. 12). Baccio Pontelli’s earlier view of the Tiber from the Aventine (1493) (Fig. 13) features a number of these rectangular enclosures, some in front of a tower on the bank to the left of the drawing, and others near the rectangular church S. Maria Egiziaca and the Marmorata, the ancient port facility, on the opposite bank. This stretch of river downstream of Pons Sanctae Mariae (today Ponte Rotto), between the bridge and remains of the ancient Pons Sublicius (in the foreground of Fig. 13), was particularly favoured for fisheries, and continued to be so until construction of the embankments late in the nineteenth century. Roesler Franz’s view painted four centuries later, looking downstream rather
than upstream, shows two boys sitting on a remnant of Pons Sublicius to the left with a group of fishing structures similarly anchored in this location (Figs. 14, 15). Known as *giornelli*, each is a wooden platform with an attached rotary fishing device, consisting of scoop nets mounted at the end of paddles, and powered by the river’s flow.22 An Anderson photograph (c. 1860) of the same location illustrates well their construction (Figs. 16, 17).

The fisheries on the Tiber belonged mostly to churches which, lacking the resources to manage or maintain them, leased them out to others. Leases were generally for a minimum of five years and maximum of twelve, with agreed rents of either a monetary sum, or combination of money and ‘in kind’ provisions in the form of fish.23 Thus, in 1363, Antonio Scambi prepared a lease agreement in which Benedetto, rector of S. Lorenzo de Pisciola (probably S. Lorenzo in Piscinula), agreed to rent out for ten years a fishery located at the foot of a tower named Polcelle on the Trastevere river bank, between a fishery belonging to Annibaldo di Cecco and a water mill also owned by the church.24 The annual rent would be three florins, plus two shad with roe (*lacce ovate*) and two tender male shad (*lacce lattinate*).25 Similarly, across the Tiber, a third of a jointly-owned fishery beside the Marmorata was rented out to a fishmonger in 1369 for five florins to be paid at Christmas as well as two *lacce ovate* and two *lacce lattinate* delivered during Lent and again at Easter.26 Here in this location was also one of the few privately-owned fisheries on the Tiber, called *Maltiempo*.27 Its position is precisely defined in a document as ‘below the church of S. Sabina, beside Pons Fractus, with on one side the fishery called la Posta, on the side towards said church the river bank and a public way, in front the Marmorata port’, in much the same position therefore as those in Baccio Pontelli’s view (Fig. 13).28 In the late 1300s the fishery was in the hands of a lay consortium, but by the beginning of 1400s it had passed to the monastery of S. Alessio.29 In this section of the Tiber between the Marmorata and Trastevere, the Savelli, one of the prominent non-*pescivendoli* families of rione S. Angelo, owned at least three fisheries. They sold a half-share in these, 42 houses and one of the other productive structures on the Tiber, a floating grain mill, in 1368 for 800 florins.30 A fishery alone could be an item of considerable and enduring value. In the eleventh century, two fisheries were donated to S. Maria in Trastevere. Four centuries later at least one of them still belonged to the church and in 1446 was generating 75 florins a year in rent.31

Fisheries on the Tiber could not provide enough fish to supply the city, and sources outside Rome were more im-
important. Churches and *pescivendoli* were jointly involved in freshwater fisheries in places like Lago di Fogliano and near Torre Astura on the coast south of Rome, under the same sorts of ownership and lease arrangements as applied to the Tiber fisheries. In the 1360s, for example, the Roman churches of S. Eufemia and S. Giovanni in Laterano owned, or part-owned, fisheries in Lago di Fogliano, as did well-known Roman families such as the Caetani and Annibaldi and *pescivendoli* such as the Gibelli and Ponziani. The interlinked deals involving these groups are well illustrated by an agreement negotiated late in 1368 between the Annibaldi, the monastery of S. Eufemia and the Roman *pescivendolo*, Pietro Paolo Ponziani. On 9 November the Annibaldi sold a fishery and the use of other fisheries or fishing positions in Lago di Fogliano, half to S. Eufemia and half to Ponziani. Two weeks later, S. Eufemia leased its half to Ponziani for a yearly rent of 45 florins and two deliveries of fish directly to their monastery in Rome—one during Lent and the second during Advent. As well, the parties agreed that if either wanted to sell their half-share at the end of the seven-year lease they had agreed to, they would offer it first to the other for a slightly lower price than might otherwise be possible on an open market.

Roman *pescivendoli* were also dealing directly with marine fishermen in towns such as Nettuno, Terracina, Ostia, Sperlonga, Gaeta and Naples on the coast. They made loans to them and bought fish from them. Some of the loans may have been advance payments for future catches to be supplied to the *pescivendolo*, and all had strict conditions attached. Although such transactions involved non-Roman residents, the legal documents covering them were drawn up by Scambi and were often signed at S. Angelo.

From the statutes of the *Ars pescivendularum*, and to a lesser extent from Scambi’s records and proclamations issued by the city authorities (bandi), come the names of the fish arriving on the fish market benches. Most popular were shrimp, sardines, clams and small, silver fish called *argentarielli*. Brown meagre (*umbrina*), coastal leer fish (*leccia*), and even dolphins, were also available as well as highly-prized sturgeon and eels. The guild statutes also reveal that birds and small game were sold in the fish market—hares, pheasants, grey partridges, starlings and pigeons—and that youths or servants (*garzoni sive famulos*) were paid an annual salary by *pescivendoli* to sell thrushes and blackbirds.
S. Angelo in Pescheria and the Market

The intimate bonds between S. Angelo in Pescheria and the fish market must have existed from the time when the piazza in front of the church developed into a market place, since the church held ownership of the basic infrastructure and facilities used by the market. According to ancient rights, the space in front of any church, up to a distance of thirty paces from the church façade, was considered an integral part of the building. Consequently the piazza, the well at its centre, and the ancient propylaeum which had become the church porch were all deemed to be part of the church, and this was where the fish market was established. The fact that the piazza was called piazza di S. Angelo rather than piazza di Pescaria, the name by which it was known from the seventeenth century onwards, suggests that the church continued to hold firm rights over the piazza throughout the Middle Ages.

The covered church porch was where many of the fish retailers’ marble display slabs were set out. These were pieces of marble retrieved from what would have been an abundant supply left over from the many ancient public buildings that once stood in the area. A typical one set
upon a masonry base appears in a Roesler Franz water-colour (Fig. 18 and Frontispiece). The fish seller’s brass scales are laid out on top of it, with baskets of fish at its base and a simple wooden bench displaying fish beside it. The church owned the display slabs which was unusual because in other Italian cities, slabs were traditionally owned by the fishmongers’ guild. Isabella Salvagni has used archival sources to reconstruct the placement of stones in the church porch, along the narrow approach street *via mercatoria* (today via di Portico di Ottavia) and around the well during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Fig. 19). The stones hugged the church façade, the inner and outer surfaces of the porch, and both sides of *via mercatoria*. They were also placed on three sides of the well, the fourth being left free, presumably to permit access to the well. Over the course of the three centuries there was almost no change in the placement of benches, which probably occupied the same sites in the medieval period.

As was the case with fisheries, although the canons of the church owned the display stones, they did not manage them. Instead, they leased them to fishmongers who then frequently sublet them to small retailers. A large