practice and experience. Furthermore, Wescoat and Ousterhout opine that the phenomenological underpinnings of many of the essays contradict Elsner’s assertion that the built environment may not offer any clues at all concerning human action. Indeed, the attention to movement and architectural encounters under the rubric of sacred space elucidates just how dynamic the relationship between architecture and ritual is, and how, in many ways, the two concepts are inseparable and mutually transformative.

This book does not articulate a comprehensive or conceptual framework for understanding the active role of architecture in the construction of sanctity and establishment of meaning, nor does it claim to. The confluence of the various essays, however, points to a reevaluation of the built environment as a passive witness to ritual action and in its place posits an understanding of architecture and built form as crucial to the human experience of the sacred; in other words, architecture is not only sacred space but also a constitutive element of the sacred itself. And this is perhaps the volume’s biggest strength and what should make the collection of essays of interest to a broader audience beyond those who study Greco-Roman and late antiquity.

The chapters are well illustrated throughout with black-and-white photos, as well as line drawings and plans. The absence of a map is unfortunate but does not detract significantly from the arguments presented. The use of endnotes instead of footnotes is a minor annoyance, but the inclusion of a thorough bibliography at the end of each chapter more than makes up for this. I noted only a few typographical errors and mistakes, the most egregious being a reference to “Frank Geary’s new museum in Bilbau” (296) and an unfortunate homonym in “Frank Geary’s new museum in Bilbau” (321). In all other respects, this is an outstanding collection of essays, or “micro-histories,” as the editors note, providing both breadth and specificity in its examination of the complex problem of architecture, space, and ritual.

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Dorothy Metzger Habel
“When All of Rome Was Under Construction”: The Building Process in Baroque Rome
University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013. 320 pp., 119 b/w illus. $99.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780271055732

Any reader who loves Rome, studies the early modern period in art history, and holds dear the history of architecture will find much to admire in Dorothy Metzger Habel’s study of construction and urban planning in seventeenth-century Rome. “When All of Rome Was Under Construction”: The Building Process in Baroque Rome digs deep into archival records to tell compelling stories about how the building trades functioned and who got to boss whom around, along with what were the obstacles, snags, and goals faced by those who helped to shape baroque Rome. One who studies urbanism is going to relish her accounts and revel in this insider’s view of how architecture and urban development worked when the pope was the king of Rome.

Habel’s chronicle of the building industry in seventeenth-century Rome begins with urban renewal in Piazza Colonna (with spillover into Piazza Navona), followed by a detailed study of the ways in which one of the most ambitious projects of the seventeenth century, the building of Piazza San Pietro, both collided with and influenced nearly every other building project in Rome during the reign of Pope Alexander VII (1655–67).

We learn from the author that she “hears voices” from the past. Such a phrase sounds ever-so-slightly eerie, as it is meant to do. Rome itself is, after all, haunted by its past and has been, off and on, built and built over many times. In the introduction, Habel tells us that her original conception of this project was to write essays, a way of proceeding that calls upon an early modern form of prose. To “essay” is to attempt or try. Her essaying, she had assumed, would include archival research and also follow fairly well-established methods in architectural history. But, in the end, she turns to what she calls something more “synthetic” and “historical.” This is where those “voices” come in, ones to which she is very attentive, listening with care, writing (as she puts it) on the margins of architectural history. This therefore is not a book primarily about architects and patrons, as we find, for example, in Richard Krautheimer, The Rome of Alexander VII (1985), or architectural styles, papal politics, and etiquette, as in Patricia Waddy’s essential Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces: Use and the Art of the Plan (1990).

What Habel discovers is that when one studies the process of building, any number of issues arise, not all of them matters that art historians have addressed very carefully or in much detail. What is it like “on the ground,” for instance? If you were there, what would you see happening? What is the story behind the building? Habel’s reference to “voices” also works as a metaphor for energy and agency in early modern Rome. The one thing this city of priests, monks, cardinals, nuns, lawyers, and administrators needed was architecture for continuous urban renewal, along with workers to carry out those tasks. Rome already had been around for nearly two and a half millennia, giving one a city steeped in history, tradition, and, despite and even because of the depredations of numerous invasions, a vast network of streets and passageways, a tangle of piazzas, buildings, water supplies, sewers, ruins, and quite literally piles of garbage and refuse. The popes of the Counter-Reformation not only led their venerable church but also saw to it that the Caput Mundi thrived, welcoming and housing ambassadors, visitors, priests, nuns, and myriads of others. Rome’s urban fabric needed to be cleaned up, better organized, and made more coherent than it had been.

Rome’s urban and spiritual renewal in the early modern period can be traced to Pope Sixtus V (r. 1585–90), who employed Domenico Fontana to re-erect an ancient obelisk from the imperial circus of Caligula and Nero. On one side of the base of that obelisk, originally from Heliopolus and

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now in the center of St. Peter’s Square, is the following celebratory inscription: Christus Vincit / Christus Regnat / Christus Imperat / Christus ab omni malo plebem suam defendat (Christ Triumphant, Christ Reigns, Christ Rules / May Christ defend His people against all evil). These words capture the spirit that drives urban renewal in early modern Rome. The obelisk, which lies in the background or prehistory of Habel’s account and therefore is not part of her story, all the same helps us understand something of the temper of architecture when all of Rome was under construction.

As anyone who has spent much time in Rome realizes, the past does indeed speak to us. And Habel herself addresses us in a congenial voice, opting from time to time to write informally, so that her discourse is relaxed and even friendly. What Habel discovers is that when one studies the processes of building in early modern Rome, an almost unseemly reptile (a plethora indeed) of issues arises. Many voices speak at once, but rarely as one.

The early chapters, “The Urban Redevelopment of Piazza Colonna I: ‘Senza Spesa Ne Aggravare Alcuno’” and “The Urban Redevelopment of Piazza Colonna II: ‘Il Negotio Restava Aggiustato,’” deal with cleaning up the overcrowded Piazza Colonna and rearranging things in Piazza Navona. We already know from the introduction that Pope Gregory XIII issued a bull in 1574, De Aedificiis, et Jure congrui, allowing the seizure or expropriation of property next to a building project, if and only if that confiscation in some general way improved the immediate urban environment. Much depended upon the desire for the beautification of Rome.

Habel provides us with useful information on how the papacy and developers raised money through bonds and other financial instruments. These bankrolling strategies formed part of fairly sophisticated arrangements and financial schemes, with profits spread around so that lenders made money, as did brokers, all in the service of ensuring that wealthy families got good palaces and that spaces became better organized. Certain guarantees were in place to see that these bonds were well run and worth the investment.

Toward the middle and end of the 1640s, urban renewal burgeoned in Piazza Navona and Piazza Colonna as well as on the Capitoline Hill. Pope Innocent X (r. 1644–55) had an eye on improvements in Piazza Colonna but showed far more interest in what could be done to clean up and reshape Piazza Navona right next door. Innocent X had been born there, although his family’s house then faced onto Via dell’Anima rather than onto the piazza itself. Now as pope, he resolved to turn the piazza into his family’s exquisite courtyard.

Habel continues her study of Rome’s Piazza Colonna neighborhood in her second chapter, which brings us to the reign of Alexander VII. It is during this period that the Barnabites were finally excised from their habitations in Piazza Colonna, which were razed to the ground, the monks being sent packing to join the other Barnabites in Via dei Giubbonari in the environs of the Church of San Carlo ai Catinari.

What occurs in the later seventeenth century is that an urban “public,” as Metzger names this phenomenon, becomes part of the negotiating that attends Rome’s urban renewal. It comes perhaps as a surprise that the tensions between an urban public and papal authority, with all the pushing and pulling that attends such confrontations, seem to have worked out reasonably well for the city.

In chapter 3, “The Repercussions of Building Piazza S. Pietro ‘in Tempo Che Tutta Roma Era in Fabrica,’” Habel chronicles the story of this gargantuan project under the direction of Gianlorenzo Bernini and carried out at the will of Pope Alexander VII. This undertaking soon became the most taxing development of the entire century, straining the city’s and the Vatican’s resources. Other projects going on in Rome at that time found themselves without building materials or the labor necessary for construction. Not only was travertine in short supply, but so too was the mortar necessary for putting it in place.

Naturally, other building campaigns in the city took a hit and settled for a backseat while workers struggled to complete Piazza San Pietro. Camillo Pamphilj faced innumerable delays in the construction of his new Palazzo Pamphilj (later called the Palazzo Doria-Pamphilj) at the Collegio Romano. Even the pope’s desire to finish the façade of the Collegio ran into problems. Because of his interest in the Jesuits’ school, appended to the back of Sant’Ignazio, the pope recognized the wisdom of moving Camillo’s project along as well, given that the palazzo faces onto the same square, Piazza del Collegio Romano. In many ways, these were heady days for the Jesuits, princely patrons, and Rome itself.

Once the nearby Palazzo Salviati was partially demolished (Camillo Pamphilj was able to join his palace with the remains of that palace), work on the Collegio moved along but not swiftly. In fact, given the paucity of building materials, the cementi and other rubble from the wrecked part of Palazzo Salviati were avidly gathered up and used, some of it by Camillo Pamphilj, some for the completion of the Collegio.

In front of the basilica of St. Peter, the new semicircular arms and imposing Tuscan columns occupied the lion’s share of Rome’s construction materials and laborers. Specialized syndicates took over the general organization and execution of the project, with Bernini serving as designer and general supervisor. All the travertine and all the workers in Piazza di Spagna laboring over the construction of the Propaganda Fide were press-ganged to Piazza San Pietro. Alexander VII stopped work on that gorgeous chapel at Monte Pietà: Domenico Guidi had to put off his composing and construction of the chapel’s high-altar relief. Habel recounts these stories and provides fascinating information about how spolie, or the reuse of materials from old buildings for new ones, and how the employment of travertine, pazzolana (slag for concrete), wood, and lime, even when scarce, were made ready to hand.

The organization called La Fabrica di San Pietro did what it could to organize things but not always with perfect results. Bernini saw to it that workers got paid at the end of each day, which would have kept them happy and probably made it easier when the time came to reduce the work force: if handed a pink slip, a lavarone
already had his money in hand and could move on at the end of a workday. One wonders whether the pay was sufficient for a family’s needs. With the pope not providing welfare to the poor, such income must have been very important to the humble families. But, as Habel queries, were these workers paid a living wage?

Chapter 4 brings to our attention a curious document titled “Roza Riforma in molte cose della Città di Roma e mondo, tutto per il ben publico” (A rough proposal for the reform of many concerns in the City of Rome, and in the world, all to benefit the public). The author, Lorenzo Pizzatti, displays less-than-sophisticated skills in his writing. Although the text was never published, a manuscript—one that survives to this day—seems to have had something of a presence in the later seventeenth century. It sounds a bit like a screech, a text developed in a number of chapters and then sent to the one with all the authority in the city of Rome—the pope. Tortured and tiresome as the tome may be—and it is quite long—Habel finds Pizzatti’s voice and his exposition both curious and fascinating, worthy of being the final chapter in her book.

Pizzatti, whose text appeared first in an execrable Latin edition followed by a somewhat better version in Italian, writes about the quality of life in early modern Rome. His topics include filth, hygiene, famine, war, embellishments of the city, and administration of the city government. He proposes a trash removal program that was to be organized by rioni (neighborhoods) and supervised by the maestri delle strade (those charged with overseeing the maintenance of the streets). Pizzatti’s vociferous protests against animal waste reverberate to this day (he cleverly suggested that the cleaning up could be paid for by selling horse manure). Pizzatti saw that filth could be a cause of plague and worried about the plight of the homeless. In many ways, his call for a “Roma pulita” also carries down to the present. It was not so long ago that posters appeared in Rome with the admonition: “Roma pulita dipende anche da te!” (A clean Rome depends also on you!).

Finally the voices Habel hears gather into a chorus, one that “attests to the role of process in building in Rome during the seventeenth century.” Those many processes have in large part given us the Rome we know today.

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Richard Taws
The Politics of the Provisional: Art and Ephemera in Revolutionary France
University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013, 288 pp., 24 color and 66 b/w illus. $74.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780271054186; $35.95 (paper), ISBN 9780271054193

“There are monuments other than those of stone and marble, and they will always be remembered, even though they lasted no longer than a decade.”

The temporary but indelible monuments of the French Revolution described by nineteenth-century art historian Jules Renouvier are at the center of Richard Taws’s fascinating new book, The Politics of the Provisional: Art and Ephemera in Revolutionary France, which explores how an unlikely range of “transitional, provisional, ephemeral, and half-made images and objects” (2) became pivotal to the visual and material culture of the French Revolution. While the book is primarily directed toward readers familiar with the key events of this brief-but-complicated moment in French history, Taws’s novel approach to “the provisional” as both a field of representation and form of materiality that embodied the politics and poetics of revolution will resonate with a broader audience interested in issues of time and materiality. More specifically, this text will appeal to architectural historians seeking to understand how temporary monuments can become potent bearers of meaning at critical junctures of political, social, and cultural change.

This beautifully illustrated book is divided into six chapters examining a range of objects and images produced within the charged revolutionary period from 1789 to 1799. In lieu of a monographic format driven by a single protagonist, Taws’s thematic chapters follow the multiple trajectories and material traces of things formerly dismissed by art historians as marginalia of little artistic merit: Republican calendars and almanacs, paper currency and caricature, Bastille rubble refashioned into miniatures of the prison, melted-down shackles made into rings, as well as participatory outdoor festivals. Produced within the swiftly changing and often conflicting political instants of the revolutionary period, such objects, images, and events shared qualities of impermanence.

The book sheds new light on a decade that has been dominated by Quatremère de Quincy’s still-influential notion of the revolution as a sort of lacuna in art history by repositioning the ephemeral works that proliferated during this period at the crux of revolutionary politics. For in spite of the government’s desire to erect monuments of lasting permanence, “the vast majority of visual materials that conveyed the Revolution’s symbolic message … were mobile, ephemeral, and multiple” (4). Crucially for the author, the temporary character of artistic production did not signal failure but enabled the visualization of the revolution as a radical break with the past. Whereas official artworks such as history paintings and buildings were unquestioningly made to last, the ordinary and widely circulated things such as paper calendars, which were meant to be used up and rendered obsolete, raised a new awareness of time: “Thinking about material durability was one of the key ways in which revolutionaries thought about duration, and it was consequently crucial to how they imagined the place of the Revolution in history” (6).

The question of material durability is at the center of chapter 1, which explores the paper currency known as the assignat, one of the most visible forms of political imagery circulating during the early