

ancient Rome on its original location through restorations of classical Roman buildings *in situ*. During many years of Lorenzo de' Medici's unofficial rule, the Florentines were on bad terms with the Roman pope because of territorial conflicts, which is reflected in many contemporary humanist texts. It is therefore plausible that Florence's attempts to be a New Rome challenged papal Rome's aspiration of being a Rome revived.

Despite these two remarks on specific places in the book, Chernetsky's monograph as a whole marks a big step ahead in the study of Renaissance Florentine culture. Her fresh interpretations of a wide range of texts and artworks will interest scholars and students alike, and will stimulate further research into self-promotion strategies and uses of antiquity in other Renaissance cities.

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doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.568

*The Office of Ceremonies and Advancement in Curial Rome, 1466–1528.*

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Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 230. Leiden: Brill, 2022. xiv + 254 pp. \$139.

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This book provides a rich, compelling, and vivid account of the careers of three Roman curialists: Agostino Patrizi, Johann Burchard, and Paris de' Grassi. As masters of ceremonies to the popes of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, these men were responsible for stage managing the elaborate liturgical events that affirmed and celebrated a triumphant vision of the Renaissance papacy. The masters of ceremonies established the scripts for these events and kept the competitive, unruly actors in line.

DeSilva does not, however, focus primarily on ceremonial performance. Instead, she uses a lush array of sources (tombs, illuminated manuscripts, payment records, lists of benefices, diaries, and other texts, some printed, others surviving only in manuscript) to explore the process of advancement at the Roman court. One of the many admirable attributes of DeSilva's writing is that each chapter begins with a series of questions, and the introduction presents the questions that shape the entire study. "How did curial advancement occur for educated men who did not become popes or cardinals? Did their *cursus honorum* follow a single path or converge on shared goals? What sort of skills did these men require and what did they accomplish? How integrated were curialists within the city of Rome and the larger Italian peninsula? Finally, how did they envision themselves and their contributions?" (1). The book's seven chapters answer these queries by investigating various facets of the ceremonialists' careers.

Chapter 1 examines historiography on the papal court as a site of professional advancement. Chapter 2 charts the development of the Office of Ceremonies. In the Avignon period and early fifteenth century, chapel clerks oversaw liturgical

performance. From 1466–1528, thanks in part to the efforts of DeSilva's protagonists, the Office of Ceremonies became increasingly independent, and in the early sixteenth century was made a separate college. Serving as a ceremonialist was a path to advancement but also a profitable investment. Chapter 3 traces office holding and buying. Chapter 4 examines how bishoprics served as rewards for service but also as a way for papal patrons to extend their influence. In chapters 5 and 6, DeSilva provides an overview of the ceremonialists' literary output. The *Liber ceremonialium* of Patrizi and Burchard and the diaries of Burchard and de' Grassi have received the most attention from historians, but DeSilva argues that their shorter works offer more insights into their individual priorities. Chapter 7 examines one of the ceremonialists' most difficult tasks: reigning in the ambitions and the loquacity of preachers assigned to give sermons before the pontiff. Problems around sermons also highlight the disjunction between the ceremonialists' careful rules and the messy realities of premodern ceremony.

DeSilva deftly elucidates the multifarious process of professional advancement at the Roman court. Nepotism and office buying did not ensure successful curial careers, but neither did advanced legal or humanistic training. Instead, Patrizi, Burchard, and de' Grassi illustrate three paths to financial comfort and professional prestige, all drawing in different ways on a range of assets: family, patrons, venal offices, benefices, ceremonial knowledge, experience, and commitment to raising the status of their office. I would have liked to hear more about how ceremonialists thought about the ceremonies they were overseeing, the vision of the Church that they sought to codify and enact. But no study could delve into all the complexity of the ceremonialists' writings as well as their careers, and DeSilva is admirably clear that this is primarily a study of professional advancement, not a study of ritual. Among all its other contributions, *The Office of Ceremonies* provides a valuable foundation for future studies of papal ceremony and the Renaissance papacy. Neither a modern bureaucracy, a corrupt venal system, nor an incubator of well-connected clients, DeSilva's curia challenges the stereotypes of the pre-Trent papal court and, more generally, of professional life in the early modern period. She demonstrates that success depended upon a complex mixture of skills, connections, strategy, and luck—a mixture that does not fit neatly into general historiographical categories of modernization or traditionalism.

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doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.569