REMEMBERING POPE GREGORY VII: CARDINAL BOSO AND ALEXANDER III

by JOHN DORAN*

In the conclusion to his masterly biography of Pope Gregory VII (1073–85), H. E. John Cowdrey notes the paradox that the pope so lionized by modern historians, to the extent that the age of reform bears his name, was largely forgotten in the twelfth century and made little impact on Christian thought, spirituality or canon law.[1] Cowdrey is not alone in his observation that Gregory 'receded from memory with remarkable speed and completeness'; when he was remembered, it was as a failure and as one who brought decline upon the church.[2] For Cowdrey, the answer to this conundrum lay in the fact that Gregory VII was in fact far closer to the ideals of the sixth century than of the twelfth; he was a Benedictine monk and shared the worldview and outlook of Gregory the Great (590–604) rather than those of the so-called lawyer popes Alexander III (1159–81) and Innocent III (1198–1216). Yet within a century of Gregory's death he was presented by Cardinal Boso as a model pope, who had overcome a schismatic emperor and the problems which his interference had precipitated in Rome. For Boso, writing for the instruction of the officials of the papal chamber, the very policies set out by Gregory VII were to be pursued and emulated. Far from being a peripheral and contradictory figure, with more in common with the distant past than the near future, Gregory was the perfect guide to the beleaguered Pope Alexander III, who was also struggling against a hostile emperor and his antipope.

Cardinal Boso composed his series of papal biographies during

* Sadly, John Doran died as this volume was going to press. A tribute to him will appear in SCH 50, which he co-edited.

1 H. E. John Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073–1085* (Oxford, 1998), 683–4.

2 Thomas N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2009), 89–93, esp. 92; Geoffrey Barraclough, *The Medieval Papacy* (London, 1968), 89–90; John Gilchrist, 'The Gregorian Reform Tradition and Pope Alexander III', in Filippo Liotta, ed., *Miscellanea, Rolando Bandinelli, Papa Alessandro III* (Siena, 1986), 261–87, at 262–4; Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, OHCC (Oxford, 1989), 109–21, esp. 121.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the 1160s and 1170s, after a long career as a curialist.[3] He seems to have arrived at the papal curia, certainly by 1135, under the patronage of Cardinal Guy of Pisa. Boso's association with Guy and his own words of praise for Lucius II (1144–5) for bringing canons regular from Lucca to Rome suggest that he was himself a canon regular, perhaps with links to S. Frediano in Lucca.[4] As a canon regular, Boso would have been perceived as an antagonist by the native Roman clergy, who were hostile to this mode of religious life, which was introduced to Rome from the early twelfth century, most notably in the Lateran basilica.[5] Symbolic of the dominance of the canons was the privilege they secured that every cardinal deacon of S. Maria Nova should come from the S. Frediano community, and this at a time when very few native Romans were being named as cardinals.[6]

Boso rose to prominence in the wake of his clerical protector. Cardinal Guy became chancellor of the Roman church under Eugenius III (1145–53) and, following his death in 1149, the role of chancellor was effectively occupied by Boso, who dated papal letters until Rolando, the future Alexander III, was appointed chancellor in 1153.[7] In 1154, under Adrian IV (1154–9), Boso became papal chamberlain (i.e. treasurer), while in 1157 he was elevated to the college of cardinals with the diaconal title of SS. Cosma e Damiano, previously held by both Guy of Pisa and Rolando.[8] As

3 Ian S. Robinson, *The Papacy 1073–1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1990), 254–7; Zelina Zafarana, 'Bosone', in *DBI*, 13: 270–4; Fritz Geisthardt, *Der Kämmerer Boso* (Berlin, 1936); for a brief but thorough account, see *Le Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Louis Duchesne, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2nd ser. 3, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Paris, 1955–7), 2: xxxvii–xliv.

4 *DBI*, 13: 271; *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 385–6.

5 Pietro Zerbi, '"Vecchio" e "nuovo" monachesimo alla metà del secolo XII', 3–24; Cosmo Damiano Fonseca, 'Monaci e canonici alla ricerca di una identità', 203–22; Luigi Prosdocimi, 'Germi di "modernità" nelle strutture ecclesiastiche del secolo XII', 721–31; all in *Istituzioni Monastiche e Istituzioni Canonicali in Occidente (1123–1215). Atti della settima Settimana internazionale di studio, Mendola, 28 agosto – 3 settembre 1977*, Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore 9 (Milan, 1980). See also Morris, *Papal Monarchy*, 240–62, 612–16.

6 Philippus Jaffé, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ad annum 1198*, ed. S. Loewenfeld, F. Kaltenbrunner and P.W. Ewald, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1885–8), no. 8480; renewed by Alexander III himself in 1160: ibid., no. 10637.

7 Johannes M. Brixius, *Die Mitglieder des Kardinalkollegiums von 1130–1181* (Berlin, 1912), 43, 56–7; Barbara Zenker, *Die Mitglieder des Kardinalkollegiums von 1130–1159* (Würzburg, 1964), 146–8, 86–8.

8 Brixius, *Mitglieder*, 58; Zenker, *Mitglieder*, 149–52.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

papal chamberlain Boso pursued a concerted policy of restoring the fortunes of the church in central Italy, where much of his work involved personally receiving oaths from individuals and towns in the environs of Rome who had been induced to become papal vassals.[9] In pursuit of these efforts Boso compiled a *liber censuum*, a list of the claims of the Roman church to lands and rights, as a result of which his knowledge of the archival sources of the Roman church became very extensive. His series of papal biographies was essentially a private work, compiled in order to serve as a model for later chamberlains and others who sought to restore the fortunes of the papacy, such as Cencius Camerarius, later Honorius III (1216–27), and Cardinal Albinus, both of whom were active under popes Clement III (1187–91) and Celestine III (1191–8).[10]

The painstaking work undertaken by Boso in central Italy was destroyed by the disputed election of 1159 and the subsequent recognition by Frederick Barbarossa of the antipope Victor IV in preference to Alexander III.[11] The initial success of Victor forced Alexander to go into exile in France, but Boso remained an important adviser, and his promotion as cardinal priest of S. Pudenziana in 1165–6 was perhaps a reward for his part in garnering support in Italy and securing the return of Alexander III to Rome.[12] Few men in positions of such influence left eye-witness accounts, certainly during the Middle Ages, and the value of Boso's work has not been sufficiently appreciated by historians.[13] Boso was clearly involved in the formulation of policy at the highest level, and was denounced by the canons of St Peter's basilica as 'the first-born of Satan',

9 *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 397; Geisthardt, *Der Kämmerer Boso*, 441–59; Pierre Toubert, *Les structures du Latium médiéval: Le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IX^e siècle à la fin du XII^e siècle*, 2 vols, Bibliotheque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 221 (Rome, 1973), 1048–51, 1060–5, 1075, 1170.

10 Paul Fabre, *Étude sur le* Liber Censuum *de l'Église romaine* (Paris, 1892), 16–21; Peter Munz, Introduction to *Boso's Life of Alexander III*, transl. G. M. Ellis (Oxford, 1973), 1, 25–9; Odilo Engels, 'Kardinal Boso als Geschichtsschreiber', in *Konzil und Papst. Festgabe für Hermann Tüchle*, ed. Georg Schwaiger (Munich, 1975), 147–68; *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: xlii–xliii.

11 John Doran, '"At last we reached the port of salvation": The Roman Context of the Schism of 1159', in Peter D. Clarke and Anne J. Duggan, eds, *Pope Alexander III (1159–81): The Art of Survival* (Farnham, 2012), 51–98.

12 Zenker, *Mitglieder*, 151.

13 Engels, 'Kardinal Boso', 147; for an exceptional recognition of Boso's importance, see Arsenio Frugoni, *Arnaldo da Brescia nelle fonti del secolo XII* (Rome, 1954), 123–9.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and fomentor of the schism of 1159, yet there is little in his text which explicitly reveals his own role; it is here that his account of Gregory VII can provide important insights.[14] For Boso not only wrote biographies of his contemporary popes; he also drew upon other sources in order to explain the history of the papacy before his own time. Moreover, not content simply to copy from his sources, he made significant changes in his description of crucial events.[15] These changes show that Boso drew upon the past in order to inform the present, and when he found accounts which conflicted with his own perception of how a pope should behave, he altered them. They were given added significance because the cardinal was not writing for a general audience, but for a small group of administrators who were his assistants in the papal chamber, men who knew from the documents at their disposal that their task had indeed been begun under Gregory VII.[16] Boso's reappraisal of Gregory's pontificate was a direct appeal to the past in order to justify what he and his assistants were aiming to achieve in the present, a vindication of his own policy and of his own pope, Alexander III.

Boso's papal biographies present the historian with a number of problems. Firstly, there is no extant contemporary manuscript. Boso's original compositions, beginning with the pontificate of Paschal II, were copied into a version of the *Liber Censuum* of Cencius Camerarius, now at Florence, in 1254/5,[17] together with a series of excerpts from earlier sources. These appear as an attempt to provide an account of the papacy from the point at which the original *Liber Pontificalis* ended in the ninth century. Fabre reviewed the text for his edition of the *Liber Censuum* and expressed doubt as to whether Boso had compiled the earlier lives, although not doubting his authorship of the lives of Adrian IV and Alexander III.[18] Duchesne, who edited the text for inclusion in his edition of the *Liber Pontificalis*, noted that the compilation of the earlier lives was entirely consistent with Boso's original work and that it

[14] Doran, '"At last we reached the port of salvation"', 87–91.

[15] Engels, 'Kardinal Boso', 152.

[16] Fabre, *Étude*, 21.

[17] Paul Fabre, 'Les vies des papes dans les manuscrits du *Liber Censuum*', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome* 6 (1886), 147–61, at 147–8; for an overview of the manuscripts of the *Liber Censuum*, see Fabre, *Étude*, 170–227.

[18] Fabre, 'Les vies des papes', 155–7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

was thus reasonable to suppose that Boso had been responsible for the earlier compilation too. Both pieces were clearly intended to form part of his own *Liber Censuum*, the text of which has not survived, although it can be traced in the later compilation by Cencius Camerarius.[19]

The second problem with Boso's *Lives* is the attention which has been paid to one part of the manuscript, the life of Alexander III. Peter Munz stresses the dramatic element, noting that Boso was interested in writing a history of the Alexandrine schism which had a hero in Alexander, intent only on preserving the unity of the church, and a villain in Frederick Barbarossa, equally intent on destroying that unity.[20] Boso's model was the *Liber Pontificalis* and thus his lives were mainly concerned with the actions of the popes in the city of Rome.[21] To single out the biography of Alexander as a dramatic narrative is, however, to miss the point. The intention was to justify the consistent policy being pursued by the popes, and by Boso himself as chamberlain, which sought to restore the territorial fortunes of the papacy. The life of Alexander must be considered in the context of what came earlier in the manuscript.

Boso clearly saw his own era as a continuation of that of the reform. Adrian IV had made Boso responsible for the restitution of many towns and cities to the church and for the creation of new strongholds, the *castra specialia*.[22] The ultimate aim of this policy was to provide security for the pope in Rome.[23] That security was threatened, just as it had been in the eleventh century, by the assertive policies being pursued in Italy by a young emperor.[24] Significantly, Boso was at the forefront of a group of cardinals which supported the renewed alliance of Adrian IV with the Normans in

[19] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: xxxvii–lxiii; Enrico Stevenson, 'Osservazioni sulla "Collectio canonum" di Deusdedit', *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria* 8 (1885), 305–98, at 368–70.

[20] Munz, Introduction to *Boso's Life of Alexander III*, 1–3.

[21] Ibid. 4; for the *Liber Pontificalis*, see Duchesne's introductions to the first and second volumes and the additional notes provided by Mollat in the third volume; an accessible brief introduction is provided by *The Book of the Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis)*, transl. and ed. R. Davis, TTH 6, rev. edn (Liverpool, 2000), xi–lxiii.

[22] *Le* Liber Censuum *de l'Église Romaine*, ed. P. Fabre and L. Duchesne, 3 vols (Paris, 1889–1910), 1: 385–400.

[23] Toubert, *Les structures du Latium*, 1051–81.

[24] Giovanni Tabacco, 'Northern and Central Italy in the Twelfth Century', in David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith, eds, *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, 4: *c.1024–c.1198* (Cambridge, 2004), Part 2, 428–34.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

June 1156.[25] This political context explains the changes which Boso made to Bonizo of Sutri's *Liber ad amicum*, each of which can be explained as a deliberate attempt to correct the historical record in order to fit current preoccupations. The cardinal himself experienced the same problems which had faced Bonizo's popes.[26] Thus Boso included the Norman alliance of 1059, which demonstrated the vulnerability of the reform party in Rome, when Nicholas II (1059–61) was greatly disturbed that the Roman captains had 'through violence occupied and illegally retained the rights of the church and the rulership of the city'.[27] Nicholas went to Apulia in order to reconcile the Normans, who not only returned all the lands which they had seized, but forced the pope's contumacious vassals to return to their fealty. For Boso, the natural consequence of the pope's vassals returning to their fealty was the liberation of Rome from their tyranny and the restoration of the church.

In recounting the events of Christmas 1075, Boso revealed his own ideas about the role of the pope by altering Bonizo's account.[28] Cencius Stephani, a troublesome Roman nobleman, seized Gregory during the vigil mass of Christmas at S. Maria Maggiore and dragged him from the altar, Boso omitting that the pope was wounded as a result. He was then taken to a remarkable tower which Cencius had built in the city. In the morning the Romans released the pope and completely destroyed the tower. At this point the two accounts diverge significantly. Bonizo simply recounted that Gregory had prevented the Romans from killing Cencius; instead, they punished him and his accomplices with many blows and banishment. For Boso, however, the most significant thing was that following his ordeal Gregory returned immediately to his customary duties. Indeed, so keen was Boso to emphasize this that he deliberately transposed these events from

[25] Robinson, *Papacy*, 52–3, 79–83, 116, 389–91, 470–1; but see also Anne J. Duggan, '*Totius christianitatis caput*: The Pope and the Princes', in Brenda Bolton and Anne J. Duggan, eds, *Adrian IV, The English Pope (1154–1159): Studies and Texts* (Aldershot, 2003), 113–20.

[26] For Bonizo's 'Letter to a Friend', see Ian S. Robinson, *The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII* (Manchester, 2004), 36–63.

[27] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 358; *Bonizonis episcopi Sutrini Liber ad amicum*, in MGH LdeL 1, 568–620, at 592–3; ET with extensive commentary in Robinson, *Papal Reform*, 158–262, at 232–3.

[28] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 362; MGH LdeL 1, 606; Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 327–8.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Christmas to Easter, stating that the pope went to the Lateran palace to eat the customary meal with the cardinals and others.[29] These details do not appear in Bonizo's account, but they reveal the considerable importance which Boso attached to ceremonial and to the observation of customs. The disruptions of the twelfth century had led to the loss of the routine round of visits to the great basilicas and other stational churches, and of the communal meals which had their origin in the temporal administration of the eighth- and ninth-century popes.[30] The anxiety which Boso clearly felt about this is revealed towards the end of his *Life* of Alexander III, when he says that the pope wanted the Roman people to allow him to return to the city as shepherd and bishop of their souls in order that he and his brothers, the cardinals, could perform their customary offices in their churches.[31]

Boso's account of how the Romans dealt with Cencius is also revealing. While Bonizo simply reported that the Romans inflicted punishment and banishment on Cencius and his followers, Boso wrote that the Roman people judged Cencius and his accomplices in their own tribunal (*in rebus propriis*), condemning and imposing perpetual banishment from Rome upon them.[32] Here Boso placed a contemporary gloss on the events of 1075, reflecting the increased autonomy which the Romans had secured during the twelfth century with the development of their own commune, recognized by the popes but often at odds with them.[33] Significantly, he related that the rebels had been judged on Easter Monday, but Boso knew full well that this was the pope's ceremonial crowning day when he rode in procession from St Peter's to the Lateran, having received the customary oaths of fidelity from civic officials.

[29] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 362; cf. MGH LdeL 1, 606; for this customary meal, see *Le* Liber Censuum, ed. Fabre and Duchesne, 1: 298.

[30] John Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 228 (Rome, 1987), 105–268; Thomas F. X. Noble, 'Topography, Celebration, and Power: The Making of a Papal Rome in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries', in Mayke de Jong, Frans Theuws and Carine van Rhijn, eds, *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2001), 45–91, at 83–91.

[31] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 426.

[32] Ibid. 2: 362; MGH LdeL 1, 606.

[33] Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur, 'Il comune romano', in A. Vauchez, ed., *Roma medievale*, Storia di Roma dall'antichità a oggi (Rome, 2001), 117–57.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Indeed, as chamberlain, Boso's task on that very day was to hand over the salaries of the officials in return.[34]

Boso's treatment of the third successive year in which Henry IV besieged Rome reveals once again that the interests of pope and Romans were not always identical.[35] By 1084 Gregory had lost much of his support in Rome, not only among the people, who had endured three years of hardship, but also among his own cardinals, who were critical of his intransigence.[36] Boso reported that the Roman people came to Gregory and implored him to crown Henry IV, begging him 'to have mercy on their almost lost homeland'. Gregory replied that he would rather die than renounce justice and the liberty of the church. He would only crown Henry if he guaranteed these things. Otherwise 'he ought not to and would not hear the Romans' plea'. Boso altered Bonizo's account of Gregory's words and chose to omit his inclusion of 'bishops, clerics, abbots and monks' among the imploring Romans. But Boso well understood the basis of the argument. Henry IV was exploiting the weakness of the pope in a city forced to suffer because of a quarrel in which it had little interest. In July 1167, after the Romans had been defeated outside Tusculum at Monte Porzio, Frederick Barbarossa was approaching Rome with an imperial army and a large number of Roman hostages.[37] In spite of the money expended by Alexander on the defence of the city, Frederick exploited this situation and secured the pope's flight from Rome, which must have been in Boso's mind as he wrote.[38]

According to Boso, Henry won over the Roman people with money and fear, inducing Gregory and his cardinals to move to Castel Sant'Angelo for greater security.[39] Boso made no attempt to hide the loss of local support related by Bonizo. Upon hearing that Gregory had sent for assistance to Robert Guiscard, Henry destroyed the houses on the Capitoline Hill and the Leonine City

[34] *Le* Liber Censuum, ed. Fabre and Duchesne, 1: 299–310; 2: 154.

[35] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 367.

[36] Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 329; Robinson, *Papacy*, 36; for criticism of Gregory from the lower clergy of Rome, see Zelina Zafarana, 'Sul "conventus" del clero romano nel maggio 1082', *Studi Medievali* 7 (1966), 399–403.

[37] Doran, '"At last we reached the port of salvation"', 78–82.

[38] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 417; ibid., xl for Boso writing his account in 1177–8.

[39] Ibid. 368.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

before fleeing from Rome with Wibert (the antipope Clement III, 1080–1100). Here Boso followed Bonizo's account, but for him the destruction of houses on the Capitoline took on added significance.[40] At least since the establishment of the Roman Commune in 1143 the Capitol was regarded as a symbol of the Roman people.[41] Hence, for Boso, Henry's attack on the Capitol represented an attack on the Roman people. Although in 1084 the Capitol was probably a stronghold of the Corsi family, which continued to support Gregory after most other Roman families had abandoned him, Boso used this incident as an example of the hostility of the empire to the interests of the Romans.[42]

The assault of Robert Guiscard and the Normans on Rome in 1084 is often seen as an immense calamity for the city.[43] Although good reasons exist to believe that the severity of the sack which it occasioned has been exaggerated, Boso's concern was with the deserved punishment of the Romans for their abandonment of the legitimate pope.[44] At this point, he deviated markedly from his source. Bonizo related that, following the pope's liberation, Guiscard spent many days in the Lateran palace passing judgement upon the Romans, after which he took the pope with him to Salerno, the inference being that Gregory could not stay in a city in which he had lost support.[45] Boso, however, studiously avoided mentioning the Lateran palace as the place from which judgement was passed by Robert Guiscard. This is perhaps because the Lateran lost its judicial significance after the recognition of the Roman Senate by the popes in the 1140s, when such functions passed to the Capitol.[46] More plausibly, Boso was perhaps cautious about suggesting that Robert Guiscard had exercised judicial

[40] Ibid.; MGH LdeL 1, 614–15.

[41] Norberto Grammacini, 'La prima riedificazione del Campidoglio e la rivoluzione senatoriale del 1144', in *Roma, centro ideale della cultura dell'Antico nei secoli xv e xvi, da Martino V al sacco di Roma, 1417–1527. Convegno internazionale di studi su umanesimo e Rinascimento, Roma, 25–30 novembre 1985*, ed. Silvia Danesi Squarzina (Milan, 1989), 33–47.

[42] Richard Krautheimer, *Rome, Profile of a City, 312–1308* (Princeton, NJ, 1980), 149.

[43] Ferdinand Gregorovius, *History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, transl. Annie Hamilton, 6 vols (London, 1894–8), 4: 237–54; L. Gatto, *Storia di Roma nel medioevo* (Rome, 1999), 314– 20.

[44] *Liber Pontificalis*, 2: 368; Louis Hamilton, 'Memory, Symbol, and Arson: Was Rome "Sacked" in 1084?', *Speculum* 78 (2003), 378–99.

[45] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 368.

[46] Cesare D'Onofrio, *Un popolo di statue racconta* (Rome, 1990), 250–62.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

power in Rome, especially in the place where papal justice was usually dispensed.[47]

Boso did, however, mention the Lateran palace, but in a context ignored by Bonizo, when he reported that following the Normans' liberation of Gregory, they left him and his brothers, the cardinals, 'sitting in peace in the Lateran palace, busy with ecclesiastical business from all parts of the world as their office demanded'. Only after 'a long time' did Gregory leave Rome voluntarily to join Robert Guiscard at Salerno.[48] Why did Boso falsify his historical account? It is clear that he believed that chastisement by the Normans had restored the Romans to their obedience. Elsewhere in his biographies he was a firm advocate of dealing harshly with the Romans to recall them from their errors.[49] But the main reason seems to be Boso's identification of the Lateran palace as the natural seat of papal jurisdiction. Gregory was the legitimate pope, and Wibert's flight from Rome after his unorthodox consecration was proof of this. Gregory could not then be seen to fly also. Wibert did in fact enjoy considerable support in Rome, and no fewer than twelve of Gregory's cardinals defected to him in 1084, enabling him to return to Rome and remain there until 1098.[50] Yet Boso made no mention of this. Indeed, after his account of Gregory's death at Salerno, he moved straight to the pontificate of Paschal II.

Why then did Boso feel impelled to rescue Gregory VII from the hard facts which Bonizo had related? Was it really so important to present him as pacifying Rome with the aid of his Norman allies and immediately returning to the business of administering the church universal from his traditional throne in the Lateran palace? And for what reason did he gloss over and disguise the unpalatable fact that the Romans, who had risen so heroically to rescue Gregory in 1075, simply abandoned him in 1084? Firstly, Boso was living through another papal schism, similar to that which had unfolded from 1080 onwards, and served a pope who was able to maintain himself in Rome only for brief interludes during a long pontificate. Boso was unable to present Gregory's failure in

47 On the traditions of the Lateran palace, see Ingo Herklotz, *Gli eredi di Costantino. Il papato, il Laterano e la propaganda visiva nel xii secolo* (Rome, 2000), 41–94; for the judicial significance of the palace, see esp. 57 and 60–1.

48 *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 368.

49 Ibid. 424–5.

50 Robinson, *Papacy*, 412; Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 321–3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

all its starkness because he feared a similar failure for Alexander III. Indeed, although Boso reported Alexander's flight as imperial troops approached Rome in July 1167, he avoided reporting the enthronement of Barbarossa's antipope 'Paschal III' and the subsequent imperial coronation.[51]

It should also be remembered that Boso represented a religious tradition which looked back favourably on Gregory VII in a way that the Roman people and clergy did not. He revealed this in a final intervention in the sources from which he copied Gregory's *Life*. Having described Gregory's rescue by Robert Guiscard, Boso inserted a passage from Bonizo's *Liber ad amicum* recounting the pope's success, early in his pontificate, in reforming St Peter's basilica.[52] This passage is of great interest, because it shows the reformed papacy turning against 'ancient and most wicked' customs in the city of Rome. Gregory was credited with having freed St Peter's basilica from the oppression of sixty lay lodgers (*mansionarii*), who had violently seized the altars and oratories of the basilica, except for the pope's own high altar, charging fees to those wishing to pray there, which they then kept for themselves. These Roman citizens, married or living with women, had shaved their beards and put on mitres, informing those who had come there to pray, and especially the gullible rustic pilgrims from Lombardy, that they were cardinal priests and could grant them indulgences and remission of their sins in return for money. They also lurked about at night, pretending to guard the basilica but in fact committing all sorts of filthy acts. Gregory had these men removed with great difficulty and committed the basilica to the care of honest clerics and priests.

Boso included this story because he found it in Bonizo of Sutri's work, but its anachronistic inclusion at this point emphasizes his conviction that the interests of the church could only fully be served when the city of Rome was under firm ecclesiastical control. He was also doubtless motivated by the fact that the canons of St Peter's had, in 1159, played a prominent part in ensuring the election of the antipope Victor IV (1159–64). In response, Boso appealed to history, his hope being that once Alexander III had

[51] *Chronica Regia Coloniensis (Annales Maximi Colonienses)*, MGH SRG 18, 117–18.
[52] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: 368; MGH LdeL 1, 603; Cowdrey, *Gregory VII*, 319.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press

secured the city of Rome and ended the schism, he would deal with entrenched and disruptive influences in Rome, just as his illustrious predecessor Gregory VII had done. If, as Munz suggests, Alexander was Boso's hero, this was because he was following in the footsteps of Gregory VII.[53] Far from being a pope who had left no legacy, for Boso Gregory VII was a model pope, wholeheartedly committed to his exalted office and determined, in spite of persecution and the malice of the Romans, to restore his city to its rightful place at the heart of the church universal. Yet by the 1170s Boso was one of the few people who remembered him this way.[54]

University of Chester

[53] Munz, Introduction to *Boso's Life of Alexander III*, 3.

[54] See *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 2: xli, for admiration of 'this pope with few defenders' among the entourage of Pope Adrian IV.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400002047 Published online by Cambridge University Press