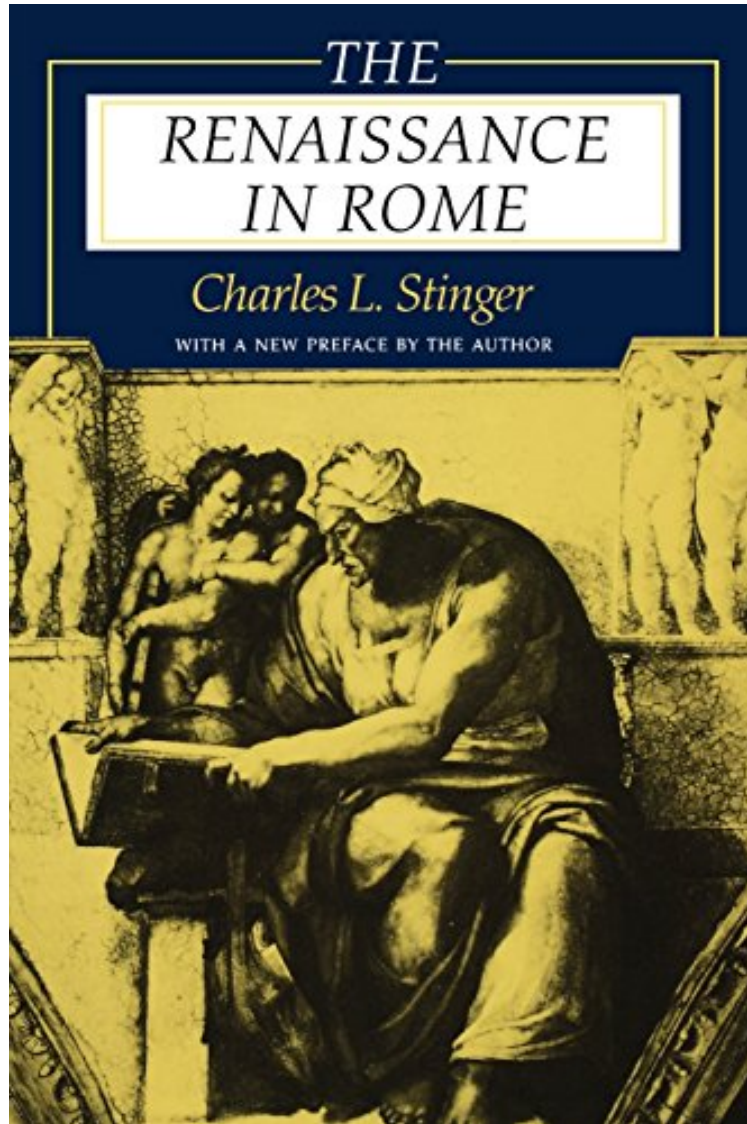


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The Renaissance in Rome

Charles L. Stinger

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.com At the beginning of the 15th century, Rome proclaimed itself, as it had done throughout its history, caput mundi, "the head of the world." The truth, writes Charles Stinger, was less glorious: the popes had long since abandoned Rome for palaces in French Avignon, and the principal trading centers were in places such as Alexandria, Marseilles, and Constantinople. Even within Italy (which was still ununified), Florence and Venice were more important culturally. With the Renaissance, however, as European elites became interested in studying and emulating the ancient past, Rome became a great center anew: the popes returned, and travelers from around the world came to see the ruins of ancient times and to converse with intellectuals and artists. The transition, Stinger writes, was "from medieval alley and tower to Renaissance street and palace," from a closed and suspicious urban village to an open and vibrant city. With a cast of characters including Lorenzo de Medici, Michelangelo, and Lucrezia Borgia, Stinger relates a fascinating story of the city's renewal--which involved no small amount of intrigue. --Gregory McNamee Winner, American Historical Association Marraro Prize 1985 " ... comprehensive, readable, beautifully documented ... I cannot imagine a library or a person seriously interested in Renaissance Rome without it." -Manuscripta "Brilliant synthesis. A must." -Bibliothèque L'Humanisme et Renaissance " ... no book in English or otherwise covers the breadth of Renaissance Rome as this one does. It will be definitive for a long time." -Church History " ... attractively presented ... stimulating ... " -Renaissance Studies "In lively prose ... the author paints a complex multilayered image of compelling vividness." -History of European Ideas