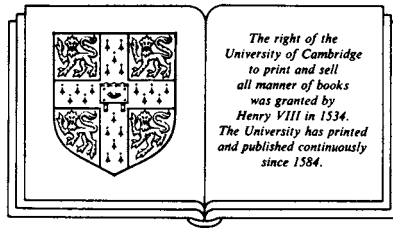


Rome in the Age of Enlightenment

The post-Tridentine syndrome and the ancien regime

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

*Cambridge
New York Port Chester
Melbourne Sydney*

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

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First published 1990
First paperback edition 2002

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Gross. Hanns. 1928-

Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: the post-Tridentine syndrome and the
ancien regime / Hans Gross.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in early modern history)

Bibliography

ISBN 0 521 37211 9

1. Rome (Italy) – Civilization – 18th century. I. Title.

II. Series.

DG812.4.G76 1990

945'.632-dc20 89-992 CIP

ISBN 0 521 37211 9 hardback
ISBN 0 521 89378 X paperback

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Introduction

About seventy years ago one of the founders of modern urban studies, Robert Ezra Park, claimed that “the city is a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of unorganized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in those customs and are transmitted with this tradition.”¹ Contemporary urbanologists may find this description too intangible for their approach. The historian, however, cannot help feeling that Park has caught some of the essence of urban history. The nature and character of a city must be sought not only in its distinct traits, social, political, economic, but in its spirit and ethos which both grows out of these traits and interacts with them, while transcending them. A city creates its own spirit, not independently of its parts but beyond them, and this spirit grows, evolves, and changes over time.

Rome is a fine example of this notion. The grandeur that was Rome never rested wholly, even during the heyday of the ancient Empire, in the elements that made up the city. When the city was laid low in the Middle Ages, the idea outshone its physical reality. The Renaissance brought Rome a new glory and a new character. Starting with the return of the papacy in the fifteenth century following the Great Schism until the French Revolution, the city of Rome may be said to have shared with much of western Europe three stages in its development, the Renaissance, the baroque, and the *ancien regime*, each with its distinctive ethos.

This work focuses on the city’s *ancien-regime* phase, which started late in the seventeenth century and reached its maturity in the eighteenth. For the elite of western Europe, the city played the role of a cultural model, a role it shared with Paris and in the realm of art it probably surpassed the City of Lights. The influx of foreigners into the Eternal City no longer consisted of pilgrims only, although they continued to make up a large proportion of the foreigners in Rome, especially during Holy Years, but of tourists who came to see the remains of the ancient city and admire its art, perhaps with some private amusement at the side. They came to drink in what they perceived to be the culture of Rome and broaden their education. Alongside them were the artists, who either visited or settled for an extended period and then took the influence of Rome and its art back home. By way of these, Roman culture, or what went for Roman culture, formed a significant element in eighteenth-century European culture.

The English were to assume a special role in this diffusion of Roman influence. It

¹ Quoted in H. J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1966), 1.

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all began with the institution of the Grand Tour. Back in Elizabethan England the Grand Tour had already been recognized as a means for gathering information which could be turned to the nation's advantage and for training young gentlemen to take their places in the world. The first reference to a Grand Tour in English only dates, however, from 1679, the year Richard Lassels' *An Italian Voyage, or a Compleat Journey through Italy* was published posthumously. Lassels, a classical scholar and an enthusiastic connoisseur of painting, found a congenial profession of escorting well-to-do and noble young Englishmen through Italy, which nearly always ended with a visit to Rome.² This fashion would become so popular and widespread that in 1734 a small private society of gentlemen who had travelled in Italy was formed with the purpose "of encouraging at home a taste for those objects which had contributed so much to their entertainment abroad." Initially it was no more than a gathering for social and convivial intercourse, but after a year or two it became evident that not conviviality but the love of art, with the ambition of fostering the same sentiment in others, was destined to be the ruling principle of the Society of Dilettanti.³

By that date the vogue for Italian, and particularly Roman, art and antiquities had already made its influence felt. Its inroads can be most clearly discerned. From the time of Inigo Jones, who had visited Italy on two occasions in 1613-1614 in the suite of the young Earl of Arundel, the Palladian style had spread in England. But that style is arguably Venetian, and it was not until the time of Robert Adam, following his long sojourn in Italy in the 1750s, that a new variation of classicism inspired by the ancient Roman models of temples, baths, and triumphal arches began to dominate the architectural taste.⁴ Adam, too, spent his time in Italy gathering ideas for the interior decoration of houses as much as for their outward appearance.

The average English tourist in Rome usually wanted some memento of his travels, be it either in the form of a personal record such as a portrait with some recognizable ruin in the background, or of a romantic landscape painting, or more preferably of some ancient remain, a bust, a bas relief, or a copy of some well-known antique. These demands encouraged a brisk trade in antiquities and works of art, keeping the Roman art dealers and antiquarians in business.

Important as the individual demand was, greater significance must be attached to the more extensive patrons. In the area of works of art, Sir Thomas Isham, a gentleman from Northamptonshire, and the fifth Lord Exeter stand out in the later seventeenth century. Sir Thomas left England in 1676 and spent nearly eighteen

² Geoffrey Trease, *The Grand Tour* (London, 1967), 1-3, 10; Christopher Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (New York, 1969), 10; Robert Enggass, *Early Eighteenth-Century Sculpture in Rome* (2 vols.; University Park, Penn. and London, 1976), 1:10.

³ Lionel Cust and Sir Sidney Colvin, *History of the Society of Dilettanti* (2nd enlarged ed.; London, 1914), 1-6.

⁴ Hibbert, *The Grand Tour*, 239-42; John Fleming, *Robert Adam and His Circle in Edinburgh and Rome* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 193, 267.

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months in Italy. There, advised mainly by a priest called Bruno Talbot, he commissioned a number of contemporary paintings, all of which were carried out in Rome. Lord Exeter was a collector on a far larger scale. He spent two periods in Rome between 1680 and 1685, where he bought Marattas, Gaullis, and other works by Roman painters. He is believed to have introduced Carlo Maratta to other members of the English nobility.⁵

In the early eighteenth century the tempo of acquisition increased. In 1712, the fourteen-year-old Thomas Coke, later the first Earl of Leicester, an orphan with an annual spendable income of £10,000, left England for a projected course in architectural studies with Giacomo Leoni in Rome. During his stay in Rome he met the antiquarian Francesco de' Ficoroni, who advised him on his first purchases of ancient statuary in anticipation of rebuilding his ancestral estate of Holkham Hall. He also came to know William Kent, who had shown enough promise as a painter for his patrons to subsidize a period of study in Italy. Kent was to discover that he could do better as an architect and, at the finish, he did even better as a designer of gardens. Under Kent's guidance, Coke was to make his generous art purchases. Although Coke returned to England in 1718, it was not until 1734 that he was ready to translate his Italian experience into building Holkham Hall. At the end of the 1740s he sent the son of his architect, Matthew Brettingham, Jr., for further acquisitions to Rome.⁶

Other collectors of antiquities were to follow. Henry Howard, since 1738 Earl of Carlisle, met Ficoroni in Rome in 1717 when 23 years old. Howard inherited Castle Howard, which had been in building since 1700 according to plans by John Vanbrugh. There he exhibited about a hundred pieces of ancient art, some probably from Ficoroni's own collection. In 1764 Henry Temple, later Viscount Palmerston, acquired in Rome a collection of antiques for his residence at Broadlands.⁷

But only a relatively small proportion of English country houses owned antiquities; preference was given to collecting paintings. Here, too, the influence of Rome was marked, even if the modality was somewhat different. The English tourist bought up works of painters and sculptors such as Correggio, Guido Reni, Guercino, and the Caracci, who were much more admired in the eighteenth century than they are today. Many of the paintings were probably fakes, purchased at absurdly inflated prices in Rome, but they were the spur to the formation of many fine art collections in Britain.

The demand for portraiture was even more pervasive. At its height any tourist who could afford it would seek out Carlo Maratta and Gaulli, and, at a later point in time, Pompeo Batoni. British artists, however, gradually acquired the skill. It was

⁵ Francis Haskell, *Patrons and Painters. A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (London, 1963), 195-98.

⁶ Trease, *The Grand Tour*, 136-39; Hansgeorg Oehler, "Das Zustandekommen einiger englischen Antikensammlungen im 18. Jahrhundert," in H. Beck, P. C. Bohl, et al. (eds.), *Antikensammlungen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1981), 296-98. ⁷ *Ibid.*, 299-302.

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no new thing for a young British painter to journey to Italy and there eke out his money by copying the old masters or by absorbing knowledge of Graeco-Roman sculpture in the hope of forming a profitable association with some wealthy British visitor, who would patronize him on his return. Some of the earliest of these painters, such as Hugh Howard, who had been a pupil of Maratta in the 1690s, and William Kent, a student of Benedetto Luti, showed little signs of Italian influence. But the next generation of leading British portraitists in Rome came under the influence of Francesco Fernandi, a somewhat elusive figure who worked outside the orbit of the official Accademia di San Luca, but enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Imperiali. He specialized in teaching his art, of Marattesque derivation, to foreigners. Among his British pupils were Allan Ramsay and William Hoare. His one known Italian pupil was significantly Pompeo Batoni, who, we know, became the favorite portrait painter of British gentry. It is not by chance, therefore, that we find complementary qualities in Batoni and Ramsay.⁸

The classical age of British painting, which owed its success to the benign eye of George III and the genius of Sir Joshua Reynolds, bore all the marks of Roman influence. Reynolds sailed for Italy in 1750 and stayed in Rome until 1752. Unlike Ramsay, his art and mind were formed not by the teaching of contemporary Italian painters, but by his daily communion with the long tradition of art from the Antique through Raphael and Michelangelo. On his return he determined to elevate the British portrait tradition by marrying it, as far as possible, to the Roman Grand Style. In the 1760s he set his career in naturalizing this taste in England, an effort that culminated in the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768. Not surprisingly the Society of Dilettanti would take an active interest in the success of the Royal Academy.⁹

About the same time that Reynolds left Rome, Richard Wilson, one of the co-founders of the Royal Academy, followed suit. Wilson fills much the same place in the development of landscape painting in Britain that Reynolds does in portraiture. Both appeared on the scene when the ground had already been broken for the establishment of a new style. The man to introduce the seventeenth-century Roman tradition of landscape painting into Britain was John Wootton, who had spent the early 1720s in Rome, where he had fallen under the spell of Gaspard Dughet and Claude Lorraine, the two classic masters responsible for evolving the Roman landscape tradition. On his return he introduced the Gaspardesque style into Britain. Until then a landscape was either a piece of decorative furniture or a record of an actual scene. It was Wilson's accomplishment to infuse the landscape in

⁸ Hibbert, *The Grand Tour*, 238–39; Anthony M. Clark, "Batoni's Professional Career and Style," in Henry A. Millon (ed.), *Studies in Italian Art and Architecture. Fifteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1980), 332; Ellis K. Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain, 1530 to 1790* (Baltimore, 1953), 122–23, 151–53.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 157–59; Cust and Colvin, *Society of Dilettanti*, 57.

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Britain with the value of an independent work.¹⁰ Thomas Jones, who had studied with Wilson and was himself in Rome between 1776 and 1783, was to carry on the Italian landscape tradition in Britain.¹¹

England's absorption of Roman culture was a comparatively uncomplicated process. It was largely a simple exchange of ancient and modern objects of art against cash on the one hand and the acquisition of taste and skills needed for the various branches of Roman art on the other. The Romans, for their part, were happy to endure the eccentricities and heresies of Englishmen in the expectation of prestige and, more importantly, financial gain. The relationship between Roman culture and France was a great deal more ambivalent. As France grew increasingly powerful and self-assured, criticism and hostility toward Italian art became more pronounced. Bernini's failure in Paris in 1664/65 marked the turning point in the Italian prestige in France. Italian participation in building and decorating Versailles was almost negligible. The establishment by Louis XIV in 1666 of the French Academy in Rome would actually carry the rivalry between official French art and Roman culture into hostile territory. Its declared purpose was to enable French artists to share with the Italians the privilege of studying the masterpieces of the past and thus eventually to replace them. For, despite their hostility, in the inmost French consciousness classical still meant Roman. The history of the *Académie française à Rome* was to be a checkered one and, although there was frequently close collaboration between Italian artists in Rome and the Academy, even to the extent of a formal link between Rome's own *Accademia di San Luca* and the French sister institute, yet by the end of the century there can be little doubt that the crown had passed to Paris.¹²

With such an attitude there was naturally less eagerness for Frenchmen to visit Rome, and in comparison to Englishmen few actually did so, although those that did included some distinguished persons such as Montesquieu. The turning point occurred in the middle of the century. Madame de Pompadour unwittingly became the instigator of this movement when, in 1749, she named her brother M. de Vaudières, later the Marquis de Marigny, director-general of buildings. Wanting him to acquire a thorough knowledge indispensable to the exercise of his office, she sent him in December to Italy to familiarize himself with its artistic beauty. He was accompanied by the architect Jacques Germain Soufflot, the engraver Charles-Nicolas Cochin, and the abbé Leblanc, who acted as chronicler of the expedition. The trip lasted two years. In the wake of M. de Vaudières the worlds of art and finance in France were seized with an urge to see Rome in the second half of the

¹⁰ Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain*, 114, 172–73; W. G. Constable, *Richard Wilson* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 35–36, 80–81, 85, 96; *Settecento a Roma. Mostra, 19 marzo – 31 maggio 1959* (Rome, 1959), 229–30.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹² Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 188–89; Michelangelo Cagiano de Azevedo, *Il gusto nel restauro delle opere d'arte antiche* (Rome, 1948), 35–36.

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eighteenth century. Great tax farmers and everyone else who could afford to indulge a whim set out for Italy. The trip, too, is popularly credited as marking the beginning of the classical revival, set in opposition to the prevailing rococo, although that change in all probability occurred earlier in France.¹³

The influence of Rome on Germany is more difficult to estimate, in part because of the divided nature of the country. It is true the Germans had a certain idealized romantic attraction to the land where the lemon blossoms. But there are indications that their interest in Roman culture became more serious with the passing of time. For example, in 1606, the young Franz-Christoph Khevenhüller on his Grand Tour spent three days in Rome, whereupon he claimed to have seen everything worthwhile. In contrast another Khevenhüller, Count Franz Anton, in a letter of introduction to Cardinal Alessandro Albani for a noble cousin of his, around the middle of the eighteenth century, strongly commended a thorough study of Rome, "where all the unique objects are to be found, that deserve the worthy attention of a young gentleman."¹⁴ Even more profound at times was the scholarly contact. In 1689 the young Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz stayed at Rome, where he was received into the Accademia Fisico-matematica and was first introduced by a Jesuit, Grimaldi, to Chinese studies. He exchanged scientific knowledge with Giovanni Ciampini and Francesco Bianchini.¹⁵ From then on the number of German tourists, including scholars of the caliber of Goethe and Herder, began to increase. During the pontificate of Pius VI, the visits by princely and noble personages, some of whom were to become patrons of Roman culture, grew in frequency.¹⁶

Rome was also receptive to German artists. As early as 1675 the Accademia di San Luca admitted German painters to membership.¹⁷ In return, Italian artists, particularly those trained in Rome, would enrich the artistic life of Germany. In Vienna, the Liechtenstein family, which had come into wealth from the expropriations that followed the Protestant defeats in the Habsburg dominions, turned into important patrons of Italian art.¹⁸ The Roman painter Gregorio Guglielmo, who had studied at home in association with such names as Conca, Trevisani, and Benefial, arrived in Germany shortly after 1750. He spent time working in Dresden in 1753, in Vienna in 1755 and at the Schönbrunn palace in

¹³ M. Albert Tornézy, *Bergeret et Fragonard. Journal inedit d'un voyage en Italie, 1773-1774. Précedé d'une étude* (Paris, 1895), 1-51; Michel N. Benisovich, "Ghezzi and the French Artists in Rome," *Apollo*, N.S. 63 (1967), 345.

¹⁴ Eva-Marie Csáky-Loebenstein, "Studien zur Kavalierstour österreichischer Adelligen im 17. Jahrhundert," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 79 (1971), 420; Friedrich Noack, *Das Deutschtum in Rom seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (2 vols.; Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), 1:171.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:191-92. See more about Ciampini, Bianchini, and the Accademia Fisico-matematica in Rome in Chapter 11.

¹⁶ Ludwig Freiherr von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (16 vols., Freiburg im Breisgau, 1930-1933); 16, pt 3: 68-73, 80; Noack, *Deutschtum in Rom*, 1:170-86; Emilia Morelli (ed.), *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Card. de Tencin dai testi originale* (3 vols.; Rome, 1955-65), 2:359-60, 363-64. ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:210. ¹⁸ Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 194.

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1760–61, in Berlin in 1764, and in Augsburg in 1766–67, before he left for Russia.¹⁹ The famous Marmorbad at Cassel is another remarkable contribution of eighteenth-century Roman art to Germany. The academy of drawing at Mannheim founded by the Elector Charles Theodore in 1752 was consciously modelled on the Accademia di San Luca by its director, the Flemish sculptor Peter Anton van Verschaffelt, who had spent fourteen years in Rome. These are but disparate examples of the importance of Roman culture in the German-speaking areas. Unlike England and even France, however, there are no discernible patterns of diffusion of either contemporary Roman art and culture or of interest in Roman antiquity. Much depended on the interests and whims of individual territorial rulers, such as the Habsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, and the Wettins.²⁰

One could go beyond Britain, France, and Germany to trace the rays of Roman culture that penetrated European civilization in the course of the eighteenth century. It has left its traces in Spain, Sweden, and Russia, just to name a few of the more outstanding examples. However, this image which Rome projected on the European scene through its cultural impact has been refracted by our – and contemporary – preoccupation with the glory of its classical past, the antiquarian remains of which continued to attract the curious and the scholarly, and with the grandeur of its art, still associated with the genius of the Renaissance and the achievement of the high baroque.

The true nature of its state, that state of mind which is a city as Park defined it, cannot be found in the macrocosmic image that Rome projected at large, but must be examined in the state of its people, its institutions and, perhaps most sensitive of all, the cultural and intellectual life within its gates. These are the principal focus of this work.

The time frame chosen for the examination is the period which started late in the seventeenth century and reached its fullness in the eighteenth century. It is the period that is broadly identified with the term *ancien regime* in western Europe. The principles or characteristics we usually attribute to it were taken from the France of Louis XIV and his later imitators throughout the Continent. Its salient features were absolutism, paternalism, and privilege. Each of these traits can be found in Rome as well. Having failed to maintain its civic independence, the capital of the Papal States had become subordinated to the papal government and its administration was little more than a department of state. We may argue about the measure of power that a reigning pope wielded in person, but the absolute nature of his government can hardly be in doubt.

Paternalism was the hallmark of papal rule. Although deprived of all opportunity

¹⁹ *Settecento a Roma*, 122.

²⁰ For collections of Roman antiquities by the Brandenburg rulers, see Gerald Heres, "Der Neuaufbau des Berliner Antikenkabinetts im Jahre 1703," in H. Beck, P. C. Bol, *et al.* (eds.), *Antikensammlungen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1981), 187–98; and Klaus Parlasca, "Die Potsdamer Antikensammlung im 18. Jahrhundert," in *ibid.*, 211–29; Enggass, *Early Eighteenth-Century Sculpture*, 1: 77–80; *Settecento a Roma*, 153.

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to exercise independent decision-making, no urban population was pampered more than that of Rome. Other cities may have enjoyed more efficient government and, to a degree, a more progressive, if not more enlightened, social policy, but none provided such a broad range of support for its urban dwellers, all the way from almsgiving to ensuring the adequacy of its food supply. This care, occasioned by a fear of unrest, appeared to have its desired effect. Bread riots, if not unknown, were rare and subdued. The Romans gladly sacrificed power for a sense of security.

Privilege is usually thought of in terms of the special rights and exemptions granted to the nobility and the church under an absolute government. While the church obviously enjoyed a unique, though ambivalent, status within the Papal States, the nobility had been deprived of a great deal of power, including much of the feudal jurisdiction around Rome. This is not to argue the measure of fiscal privilege it still enjoyed. Our concern, however, is with the privilege of the city and its inhabitants. For in Rome it was not class or order, but the city itself that became the seat of privilege. The Romans enjoyed considerable exemptions from financial levies and duties. We have already noted their favored status in the matter of food supply. The countryside was robbed of its own produce to satisfy the Roman demand; the food prices were subsidized so that the urban folk could eat more cheaply than the producers.

It may well be argued that elements described as distinctive of this historical phase can already be detected in the preceding baroque era and, even earlier, in the Renaissance. Certainly absolutism, paternalism, and privilege did not suddenly burst upon the scene at the close of the seventeenth century. Paolo Prodi recently attempted to show that the papacy spearheaded the creation of modern absolute government since the Renaissance.²¹ Virtually no new major administrative or financial institution surfaced during the period under review. Nor are these features solely confined to Rome. In fact, they are more often associated with France, Spain, and Germany than with Rome. This leaves us with the basic question of what made Rome distinctive during this period. It is probably best answered by a brief consideration of the phase immediately preceding it, the baroque.

The baroque, although it began with a definition of an artistic style,²² has become closely associated with an epoch in history and its ethos, the Catholic Counter Reformation, as viewed across the broad spectrum of political, ideological, social, and cultural manifestations. It is true, of course, that not all baroque is religious in nature or aspiration. Nor indeed is it exclusively confined to Catholicism. Yet within the context of Rome, which became the seat and directing center of the Counter Reformation, the age of the baroque is spiritually and artistically identified with the Counter Reformation and its most visible symbols – the decisions and the message of the Council of Trent and the activities of the

²¹ Paolo Prodi, *Il sovrano pontifice. Un corpo e due anime: la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna* (Bologna, 1982).

²² Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, translated by Kathrin Simon (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966).

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Society of Jesus. We need not stress that the first distinctively baroque structure in Rome was the Jesuit church of the Gesù. This Counter Reformation or, as I will loosely use the term, Tridentine spirit was not only directed against the enemies and external threats to the faith, but its zeal and fervor acted as an integrating force in the Catholic world at large, and even more so in the heart of the Catholic world, Rome. It provided the needed energy and incentive; but it did more than that, it subordinated all aspects of life and government, in various degrees, to an overarching ideology. José Antonio Maravall has suggested, quite rightly in my opinion, that the culture of the baroque was an attempt to integrate and guide the various strands of life, political, cultural, economic, social, to impose order on society, by all means available.²³ As long, therefore, as the spirit of Trent prevailed, the papal rule within the Papal States, and particularly its capital, showed a remarkable cohesiveness. Even where there were setbacks, abroad or at home, or when there were severe financial burdens, the effects over time were minimized or, at least, did not appear to produce an extended crisis. In the realm of art, Roman baroque, the embodiment of this spirit, ruled supreme with Gian Lorenzo Bernini as its outstanding exponent.

This Tridentine spirit, however, would gradually dissipate and with its disappearance came a shift in the as yet largely inarticulated attitudes and sentiments. It may be asserted, with a measure of justification, that this change began at the death of Pope Urban VIII in 1644. But Innocent XI, whose pontificate lasted from 1676 to 1689, showed enough zeal for the cause of the church, both at home and abroad, to count as a Tridentine pope, despite the evident loss of power the papacy had suffered since the Peace of Westphalia. With the death of Innocent in 1689 and of Bernini in 1682 the curtain definitely was drawn on the Tridentine period. Leaving aside the brief reign of the Ottoboni pope, Alexander VIII, the new age would therefore start with Innocent XII in 1691.²⁴ His formal abolition of official nepotism and new approach to pauperism are both signs of a changed outlook.

Art historians have detected iconographical changes symptomatic of the transition. The tomb of the exiled Queen Christina of Sweden at St. Peter's is one of the indications. Christina, daughter of the Protestant champion Gustavus Adolphus and a convert to Catholicism, was considered a living symbol of the triumph of faith over heresy. Her tomb was begun in 1697 at the request of Innocent and finished in 1702. The monument features an enormous relief showing the queen abjuring the throne. Concealed against a column in an almost inaccessible spot is a small relief devoted to Religion driving out Heresy.²⁵ Bernini would not have approved. Even the iconography of a secular composition of his, such as the

²³ José Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque. Analysis of a Historical Structure*, translated by Terry Cochran (Minneapolis, 1986), 35-36, 57-58.

²⁴ Raymond J. Maras, *Innocent IX. Pope of Christian Unity* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1984).

²⁵ Enggass, *Early Eighteenth-Century Sculpture*, 1:13.

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Four Rivers fountain on the Piazza Navona, is distinguished by its predominantly Christian symbolism, the universality of Faith. In stark contrast we have Salvi's eighteenth-century creation, the Trevi fountain, an essentially pagan design whose animating principle is water.²⁶

Actually a premonition of Rome's changed position may be detected much earlier, at the time of Alexander VII (1655–67), whose plan for rebuilding Rome was geared no longer to the convenience of the pious pilgrim, but with an eye to attracting the cultured or would-be cultured gentleman, who might be, but was not necessarily, a Catholic.²⁷ By 1714 this policy was openly articulated. Clement XI, on the occasion of presenting five Egyptian vases to the conservators at the Campidoglio, enunciated his goals. It was, he said, his special concern to provide for the glory and luster of the Eternal City, so that the many foreigners visiting it would admire not only churches and other sanctuaries, but also the most important remains of antiquity.²⁸

Not all the impact of the new circumstances would be felt immediately. Sometimes the process of secularization became drawn out. The Congregazione dei Virtuosi, a confraternity of artists created in the characteristic Counter Reformation atmosphere that prevailed at its foundation in 1543, had as its two main purposes the promotion of good works and the use of fine arts to glorify religion. These objectives were responsible for the nature of the exhibitions it held each year at the Pantheon. But these exhibitions too came to an end sometime before 1764.²⁹ Even more symptomatic of the turn of events over the previous decades was the almost simultaneous suppression of the Jesuits, the standard bearers of the Tridentine spirit, and the establishment of what was to become the Museo Pio-Clementino in 1769 by Clement XIV. In it the heathen gods came to life again in their pagan shrines, marking the final triumph of pagan classicism.³⁰

What do these changes indicate in practical terms and how did they affect the history of Rome and the life of its people during this ancien regime phase? We have stressed the concentrated energy that the direction of the Counter Reformation gave to the policies of the papal government and the cohesiveness it provided for the functioning of its institutions. Once this spirit suffered fatigue or was totally dissipated, not only did Rome lose a sense of direction – one could almost say, with a little exaggeration, its *raison d'être* – but a degree of disorder, an absence of cohesion and a dissonance becomes apparent. This phenomenon of a gradual degradation of culture may best be diagnosed as entropy. Entropy, originally a concept in physics,

²⁶ John A. Pinto, *The Trevi Fountain* (New Haven and London, 1986), 232.

²⁷ Richard Krautheimer, *Roma Alessandria. The Remapping of Rome under Alexander VII, 1655–1667* (Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 1982), 31–32.

²⁸ Wolfgang Liebenwein, "Der Portikus Clemens' XI. und sein Statuens Schmuck. Antikenrezeption und Kapitolsidee im frühen 18. Jahrhundert," in H. Beck, P. C. Bol, et al. (eds.), *Antikensammlungen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1981), 76. ²⁹ Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 126.

³⁰ Hans von Steuben, "Das Museo Pio-Clementino," in H. Beck, P. C. Bol, et al. (eds.), *Antikensammlungen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1981), 149.

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was the measure of the amount of energy no longer capable of conversion into work. To put it rather unscientifically, it was a qualitative loss of energy; the energy which had been previously organized and focused on the central task of the papacy now tended to be distributed more broadly over many interests and more divergent goals, none of which were to reach the intensity, the breadth and overarching importance of its previous single obsessive zeal. Loss of energy is translated into a deficiency of cohesive force. Hence it has become customary to identify entropy as a measure of disorder. The vision of harmonious striving for order throughout nature is disturbingly contradicted. Single elements tend to behave in complete independence from each other, producing an absence of form and pattern, or simply an improbable arrangement of elements; a degradation involving the break-up of shape and the dissolution of functional contexts. Much of that has become characteristic of the state of Rome in this period. While there were numerous individual and isolated efforts at reform, there is no detectable overall policy and goal, no grand vision. Indeed, entropy allows for such reversals of direction as are implied by attempts at reform but at the cost of losing additional energy, which leads to further weakening. It is this entropy which must be held responsible for an increasing compartmentalization of life in Rome and makes it sometimes difficult to put one sphere into a meaningful relationship with another.³¹ Yet random elements that are released from this break-up can be picked up to the benefit of other cultural elements as we have noted at the start by tracing the influence of Roman culture that was exerted on the rest of eighteenth-century Europe.

Through examining the “unorganized attitudes and sentiments,” in the words of Robert Park, we may, however, discover the condition of ancien-regime Rome, which I have entitled the Post-Tridentine Syndrome.³² The characteristic of this syndrome will be a slow and gradual loss of active energy, marked, among other features, by a perceptible, if not always overt, secularization and the loss of the associative mode of action inspired and inculcated at Trent, with intermittent efforts at reversing the trend. In general, there is a certain amount of inertia and disorder, but no wilfull retrogression. In other words, the weakness is not clerical government per se, as used to be asserted by anticlericals, but as clerical government that had lost its overall integrative vision and direction. Whether we approve that direction and vision is immaterial to the theme.

The book is divided into two parts. The first ten chapters are devoted to the

³¹ Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 3-12, 142, 277; Rudolf Arnheim, *Entropy and Art. An Essay on Disorder and Order* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1971), 1-3, 7-8, 12-15; Jeremy Rifkin, *Entropy. A New World View* (New York, 1980), 35-37; Daniel Hershey and Hsuan-Hsien Wang, *A New Age-Scale for Humans* (Lexington, Mass. and Toronto, 1980), 19-24.

³² As indicated earlier I am consciously using the terms “Tridentine” and “Post-Tridentine” in an unconventional sense. In my usage, “Tridentine” applies to the whole ethos and spirit that pervaded the Catholic Counter Reformation, of which the Council of Trent was simultaneously the central event and the principal symptom. “Post-Tridentine” then refers to the period when the spirit and zeal of the Counter Reformation was on the wane.

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material and institutional structures. The second part deals with selected aspects of the intellectual and cultural life in the city. Inevitably this latter section differs from the first. For learning, literature, and art has always been borne by an elite. In ancien-regime Rome this hiatus was particularly marked. Its culture was not rooted in the populace, with the possible exception of the opera. There was an estrangement from culture by the masses, partly because Rome by its cosmopolitan character attracted talents from beyond its borders, while its natives often lacked the needed education.³³ Nevertheless the same Post-Tridentine Syndrome was apparent in both the city at large and its culture. It formed the common overarching bond of its eighteenth-century history. To that extent the elements making up Roman life in the ancien-regime phase shared a similar experience.

³³ Vittorio Emanuele Giuntella, *Roma nel Settecento* (Bologna, 1971), 135-37.