

Market values in eighteenth-century Rome

Review of:

The Art Market in Rome in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in the Social History of Art, edited by Paolo Coen, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018 [Studies in the History of Collecting and Art Markets, vol. 5], xii + 234 pp., 80 colour illus., €116/\$134 hdbk, ISBN 978-90-04-33699-5.

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Anyone who doubts that a society's art market reveals its underlying values need only consider the case of Inigo Philbrick, the high-flying young dealer who sold investors overlapping shares of the same blue-chip contemporary works and who was recently apprehended in Vanuatu. The present volume boasts no one quite so colourful, though it too concerns a moment in which the business side of art acquired new prominence. Based on an international congress held at Rome's Palazzo Barberini, the anthology's ten chapters consider diverse facets of art's production, circulation, and recirculation in early modern Rome, unfortunately not all centred on the time and place announced in the title. This is a limitation in a study of art markets, which are typically localized and responsive to shifting conditions. While less focused than one would wish, the collection nonetheless illuminates a key phase in the market's development while contextualizing our own age of glossy magazines, glamorous fairs, 'speculators', and illicit trafficking of cultural property.

Both symposium and anthology reflect the efforts of Paolo Coen, professor of the history of art at the Università degli Studi di Teramo, to bring to Rome something of the economic perspective long established in studies of the seventeenth-century Netherlands. Specifically, he aims to rehabilitate a century that got short shrift from Francis Haskell, whose 1963 *Patrons and Painters* passed from seventeenth-century Rome to eighteenth-century Venice in response to a perceived collapse of economic and artistic leadership beginning under the Chigi Pope, Alexander VII (1655-1667). Coen prefers the more balanced view offered by historians like Franco Venturi and the contributors to the 2000 exhibition *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* in Philadelphia; like them, he reads 'the passage between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Rome in terms of continuity, albeit still keeping some indisputable differences' (pp. 4-5). Coen's own study of the city's eighteenth-century painting trade, published in 2010 with an extensive documentary appendix of wills, inventories, estimates, export licenses, sales catalogues, and period correspondence, contributed significantly to mapping this

territory.¹ The present project, which proposes Rome as a case study of broader trends, nonetheless avoids the temptation to reduce every artistic decision to the law of supply and demand (p. 1). Rather, it approaches ‘the lens of the art market’ as ‘a legitimate tool with which to assess the rich interconnections between history, history of art, history of taste and history of art criticism’ (pp. 1-2).

After situating the topic in historiographical terms, Coen’s introduction (‘The Art Market in Rome in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in the Modern ‘Social History’ of Art’) sketches the components of the city’s ‘art system’—elective papacy, exiled Stuart court, aristocratic collections, state-sponsored museums, art academies, and public exhibitions—before surveying, as did Haskell, the various classes of collectors (from pilgrims to pontiffs and from sovereigns to Grand Tourists) as well as the dealers, brokers, and intermediaries who catered to them. While necessarily rapid, this panorama covers useful ground, particularly with regard to the rise of professional dealers (a phenomenon shared with Paris and London) and to the sites, strategies, and conditions of their business. As the portrait of a ‘system’, however, the vision remains somewhat atomized, and greater attention to the ways these elements connected structurally and economically would enhance the historical picture. More surprising in light of the volume’s revisionist project is Coen’s lack of reference to recent work by Christopher Johns, Carole Paul, Heather Hyde Minor, and others who have linked Rome’s eighteenth-century art scene to progressive intellectual, cultural, religious, and museological developments.² Even more problematic is the neglect of important studies of Rome’s art market by Vicky Coltman, Ilaria Bignamini, Clare Hornsby, and Jonathan Yarker, suggesting a limited familiarity with Anglophone scholarship unexpected in an English-language publication.³ Factual glitches, such as the mislabelling of the Capitoline Museum’s

¹ *Il mercato dei quadri a Roma nel diciottesimo secolo: la domanda, l’offerta e la circolazione delle opere in un grande centro artistico europeo*. 2 vols., Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2010. The covers of both publications are illustrated with details of Panini’s imaginary picture gallery of Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga (1749; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art).

² See, for instance, Heather Hyde Minor, *The Culture of Architecture in Enlightenment Rome*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010; Carole Paul, ed., *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early 19th-Century Europe*, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012; Christopher M. S. Johns, *The Visual Culture of Catholic Enlightenment*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015.

³ See in particular Vicky Coltman, *Classical Sculpture and the Culture of Collecting in Britain since 1760*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, including a discussion of ‘correspondence’ or mail-order collecting from Rome; Ilaria Bignamini and Clare Hornsby, *Digging and Dealing in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010; Jonathan Yarker and Clare Hornsby, ‘Buying Art in Rome in the 1770s’, in *The English Prize: The Capture of the Westmorland, An Episode of the Grand Tour*, ed. María Dolores Sánchez-Jáuregi and Scott Wilcox, New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2012, 62-87. Yarker’s 2015 dissertation ‘Copies and Copying in Eighteenth-Century Britain’ (University of Cambridge) is mentioned on p. 147.

Hall of the Doves (fig. 1.6, known in the eighteenth century as the Sala delle Miscellanee) as the Hall of the Philosophers, diminish the reader's confidence.

Consistent with its Haskellian ambition, the collection begins with a historiographical essay on 'The Social Histories of Art' by historian Peter Burke. Despite reports of its demise, Burke argues that a socially informed approach is very much alive. After tracing the development of what he terms cultural, Marxist, and microlevel frameworks of analysis by scholars including Panofsky, Hauser, Berger, Baxandall, Gombrich, and Clark, he identifies ten perspectives that have oriented the field since the 1970s: reception, collecting, 'art worlds', anthropology of art, visual culture, geography, gender, domestic and 'decorative' spheres, politics, and economics. While it may seem unusual to include such a broad overview in a specialized anthology, Burke's essay helps situate the succeeding chapters in methodological terms and provides a useful and digestible guide to recent scholarly trends.

The anthology proceeds with three chapters devoted to the seventeenth century, none of which, despite their merits, fit the volume's chronological parameters.⁴ Renata Ago, a pioneer in studying the material world of Rome's non-aristocratic households, begins by examining (in 'The Value of a Work of Art: Minor Collections and Display Practices') how three 'simple private gentlemen' (p. 54) conferred on 'inanimate objects the power to show outside the value that their owners attributed to themselves' (p. 67).⁵ The first, the goldsmith and medallist Gasparo (or Gaspare) Mola (or Molo, Moli), used his 1639 testament to stress the merit and value of an enamel sword guard of his own manufacture, to ensure that his executors not 'be deceived by the words of inadequate connoisseurs and give it away for a small price' (p. 63). Felice Amadori, a lawyer who also wrote his will in 1639, was equally solicitous of his prized ancient statues, establishing a perpetual trust barring their sale, loan, or removal from his sala, stair, and courtyard—conditions that endured for over a century, by which time the majority were judged to be 'by mediocre modern authors . . . most of them broken and with missing pieces, not exceeding in total the value of about 40 scudi' (66-67). Ago's third case, the little-known and apparently mediocre painter Francesco Raspantini (d. 1664), sought to enhance his own productions by hanging them with originals and copies of other masters in his apartment near piazza Navona. Even if obliquely related to the volume's stated topic, Ago's essay highlights the tensions and shifting balances between symbolic and financial values.

⁴ Although Coen invokes a 'long' eighteenth century in his introduction (p. 2), the focus in all three chapters on the period before 1650 strains that rubric, especially given the ambition to pick up where Haskell left off. At a minimum, the links between this early period and the century in question should have been foregrounded.

⁵ See also Renata Ago, *Il gusto delle cose: una storia degli oggetti nella Roma del Seicento*, Rome: Donzelli, 2006, translated as *Gusto for Things: A History of Objects in Seventeenth-Century Rome*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Patrizia Cavazzini ('Marketing Strategies and the Creation of Taste in Seventeenth-Century Rome') also addresses non-noble milieux, correcting Haskell's belief that paintings were largely produced on commission until the rise of an open art market around 1650. Cavazzini attributes this bias partly to reliance on family archives over criminal and judicial records that attest to a broad and thriving trade in paintings even before 1600, carried on by a developed network of brokers and intermediaries as well as tradesmen who sold pictures as a side line. Pricing, too, was more variable than contracts imply, since a painting's value was often determined only when completed. Among the most intriguing aspects of Cavazzini's study is her documentation of a thriving trade in copies, many sold by dealers who specialized in a particular painter, genre, or even composition. Some subjects, such as seductive biblical and Roman heroines, seem to have been marketed for their erotic appeal, while others, including still lifes and landscapes, appear in middle-class inventories before gaining acceptance at higher levels.⁶ Cavazzini's concerns, which echo themes explored in her 2008 book *Painting as Business in Early Seventeenth-Century Rome* (Pennsylvania State University Press), thus bear directly, albeit well before the century in question, on the art market's role in incubating artistic innovation.

Raffaella Morselli's chapter ('Jan Meysens' 1649 Portfolio of Artists: The Conception and Composition of the Book *Image de divers hommes d'esprit sublime* [and the Inclusion of Three Italian Painters]) is harder to situate, since it addresses neither the eighteenth century nor Rome but an Antwerp publication featuring portraits of living or recently deceased Flemish artists. Although Morselli suggests that 'the *Images* became a model throughout Europe for all sale catalogues up to the end of the eighteenth century' (p. 87), this idea is not developed, and the fact that several of the Flemings spent time in Italy, while three Italian (but not Roman) artists are included, offers slim connections to the theme. Given the topic, it is disconcerting to see Gillis Hendricx credited (fig. 5.5, caption) with etching the frontispiece to van Dyck's so-called *Iconography* (Hendricx was the publisher, while the head was etched by van Dyck himself and the rest engraved by Jacobus Neeffs, all spelled out in the plate). Fig. 5.3, an engraving by Paulus Pontius after van Dyck's self-portrait, is misidentified as an etching.

Two further chapters offer a closer if still indirect perspective on Rome's eighteenth-century art market. Valter Curzi ('Moral Subjects and *Exempla Virtutis* at the Start of the Eighteenth Century: Art and Politics in England, Rome and Venice') explores the newly classicizing tastes of English patrons who had taken an Italian Tour and wished to import what they had seen to their libraries, walls, and ceilings. Revising a suggestion by Robert Rosenblum, who saw the birth of a moralizing

⁶ Arnold Witte, reviewing *Painting as Business* in *Simiolus* 34 (2009-10), 65-67, questions Cavazzini's conclusion that middle-class collectors drove the taste for new genres, in part because of the difference between inherited and new collections and in part because of differential documentation across the social spectrum. Cf. Cavazzini 2008, ch. 3 ('The Diffusion of Painting') and ch. 4 ('The Market').

neoclassicism as a French phenomenon of the 1760s, Curzi stresses the role of earlier Whig *milordi* (including Thomas Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester, Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington, and others) who, identifying themselves with ancient Rome and Romans, commissioned not just copies of Roman antiquities by Francesco Bartoli and others but history paintings by Roman and Venetian artists (several of whom were lured to Britain) in which ancient heroes prefigure their own modern, liberal virtues.⁷ While Curzi's essay clarifies Rome's new importance for the rising Whig aristocracy (and by implication the city's increasing reliance on British patronage), its focus remains on culturally and politically informed iconography rather than the art market *per se*.

Giovanna Perini Folesani's study of British involvement in Rome's art market ('Sir Joshua Reynolds in Rome, 1750-1752: The Debut of an Artist, an Art Collector or an Art Dealer?') reaches a negative conclusion, namely, that the young Reynolds was not in fact buying or brokering or even restoring paintings while in Rome in his late twenties, as has sometimes been claimed and as might be assumed from the presence in his sketchbooks of numerous pictures from the Barberini collection that ended up in British hands. To the contrary, Perini Folesani's painstaking review of Reynolds's activities in Italy suggests that although he copied more Old Masters than he admitted or are known today, he made his living largely by producing caricatures of British tourists and perhaps selling or forging the occasional drawing. As a young artist still developing his eye, Reynolds lacked the funds, backing, and expertise to speculate in pictures. His Roman purchases were rather investments for his studio, including plaster casts, drawings, and prints that he parlayed into a new and fashionable approach to portraiture once back in London. Only then could Reynolds succumb to the market's lure: 'I considered myself as playing a great game', he reminisced, 'and instead of beginning to save money, I laid out faster than I got it in purchasing the best examples of art that could be procured, for I even borrowed money for this purpose. The possession of pictures by Titian, Vandyck, Rembrandt etc. I considered as the best kind of wealth' (p. 143).

With Coen's own substantial chapter on 'Brownlow Cecil, Ninth Earl of Exeter, Thomas Jenkins and Nicolas Mosman: Origins, Functions and Aesthetic Guidelines of a Great Drawing Collection in Eighteenth-Century Rome, Now at the British Museum', the city's eighteenth-century art market comes more sharply into focus. Coen's topic is the set of 277 highly finished pencil and black chalk drawings after Italian paintings produced for Lord Exeter by the German artist Nicolaus (Nikolaus, Nicolas) Mosman (Mosmann) between the earl's first stay in Rome in 1764 and the artist's death in 1787. Coen sets the commission in the context of

⁷ The dates given on p. 118 for Francesco Bartoli (1670-1733), an artist in the circle of Francesco Fernandi, nicknamed l'Imperiali, are those of his father Pietro Santi (1635-1700). On the Topham collection at Eton, and copy drawings generally (per p. 120, n. 19), see also Adriano Aymonino, with Lucy Gwynn & Mirco Modolo, *Paper Palaces: The Topham Drawings as a Source for British Neo-Classicism*, exh. cat., Eton, 2013.

Exeter's extensive purchases of art during both of his tours, including sculptures by Joseph Nollekens and paintings by Angelika Kauffmann and Jakob Philipp Hackert. Indeed, apart from a few frescoes or altarpieces, the bulk of Mosman's models were privately owned gallery pictures that were at least theoretically available for sale. Twenty-nine, in fact, were in the stock of the dealer, banker, broker, and art advisor Thomas Jenkins (himself a minor painter), whom Coen persuasively proposes as the instigator, director, and collateral beneficiary of the project. Jenkins, in Coen's reading, used Mosman's drawings to whet Lord Exeter's appetite for items he could handle, including the *Madonna and Child Holding Cherries*, then attributed to Leonardo, and three canvases ascribed to Guido Reni, all drawn by Mosman, purchased by Cecil, and still preserved at Burghley House. Coen also credits Jenkins for the inclusion of naturalistic works by Guercino, the Caravaggisti, and others that bucked the earl's classicizing tastes but whose abundance and affordability were catnip to an astute dealer. As Coen notes, Jenkins did not initiate the use of reproductions as a promotional stratagem (Alessandro Albani, Baron Philipp von Stosch, Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, and, one might add, Piranesi all mastered this technique with antiquities), though he seems to have raised it to another level. For Coen, Jenkins 'acted like a hand in a glove', activating Mosman's drawings as 'a delicate and sensitive diaphragm between demand and supply' (p. 186).

Coen makes a strong case for approaching the Mosman drawings as a sophisticated sales ploy and a barometer of Cecil's evolving taste. Yet they were also art works in their own right, and it would be beneficial to consider their visual qualities in an artistic culture increasingly predicated on translation across media. Indeed, the distinctive framing lines (which appear to replicate the plate marks and etched borders of reproductive prints), emphasis on subtle gradations of light, and print-like formulas of authorship suggest that Mosman's drawings were meant to evoke a published luxury folio or even to be engraved, perhaps in mezzotint or stipple, as a way of improving British taste and recouping the substantial sum invested—some 2,000 pounds sterling, according to Exeter himself. (The failure or abandonment of such a project may conceivably have occasioned the earl's donation of the drawings to the British Museum in 1789). The role of copying is underscored by the re-emergence of a second album of very similar drawings by Mosman for an unknown patron, this one recording forty-four antique statues then or previously located in Rome.⁸ Begun upon Mosman's arrival in 1755 and likely involving Anton Raphael Mengs and Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, it suggests that Exeter's commission (which included drawings of fifteen ancient and modern sculptures) capitalized on practices pioneered in Rome's antiquarian market. Given the complexities of that

⁸ The album, which was sold at Bonham's, London, 24 June 2015 (lot 111), was most recently with Robin Halwas, Ltd. Coen notes it briefly at p. 146, n. 1, and provides a fuller discussion in Coen, 'Copie a disegno da pezzi classici sul mercato romano del diciottesimo secolo: una nuova album di Nicolas Mosman e una proposta per Bartolomeo Cavaceppi', in *Libri e album di disegni 1500-1800. Nuove prospettive metodologiche e di esegesi storico-critica*, ed., Vita Segreto, Rome: De Luca, 2018, 189-202.

scene, it is worrying to see Jenkins, born in Devon to English parents, repeatedly identified as Scottish (pp. 152, 178, 182, and implied at 19). The mistake, which suggests a confusion with Jenkins's rivals James Byres or Gavin Hamilton, obscures the marked tribalism of British *milordi*, rampant jealousies among dealers, and resulting factionalism among artists and restorers.⁹ And since Byres and other Roman dealers also sold or brokered pictures copied for Lord Exeter by Mosman (who also received occasional commissions from Byres, to Jenkins's annoyance), further exploration of this artistic and commercial ecosystem would enhance Coen's analysis.

The question of copies also informs Brian Allen's chapter on 'The Capture of Westmorland and the Purchase of Art in Rome in the 1770s', concerning a British merchant ship loaded with travellers' purchases in Italy and intercepted by French privateers during the American War of Independence. As Director of Studies at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London, Allen helped launch the joint research project that culminated in the 2012-13 exhibition 'The English Prize: The Capture of the 'Westmorland', an Episode of the Grand Tour', shown at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven.¹⁰ His essay, prepared before that catalogue was published, chronicles the team's efforts to trace the scattered cargo and summarizes its findings—namely, that the days of Grand Tourists returning from Rome 'festooned' with important Old Master pictures and antique sculptures were over by 1779, and that most of the art objects it carried 'were little more than modest souvenirs' or copies, often in miniature, of canonical masterpieces (p. 197). By decoding the owners' markings on dozens of individual crates, the project puts names and faces on an otherwise largely anonymous trade, providing 'a density and level of detail that has enabled us to begin reshaping previous thinking about the subject' (p. 197).

The importance of detail is amply demonstrated by Daniela Gallo's insightful chapter ('Economic and Scholarly Appraisal of Ancient Marbles in Late 18th-Century Rome'), which questions the prevailing idea that antiquities attained unprecedented market value in the final decades of the century. Studying sculptures acquired for the new museum established at the Vatican in 1770 (soon dubbed the Pio-Clementino after its papal promoters), Gallo correlates the prices paid with their historical and aesthetic merits as highlighted in the published catalogue, revealing not just the dynamics of the market but the intellectual values that underpinned it. Notably, she identifies only seven works acquired between 1772 and 1778 that cost the Apostolic Chamber more than a thousand Roman scudi, a sum equivalent to three years of Mosman's salary from Lord Exeter and four to five times what a trained sculptor might earn annually in a top restoration workshop. The most

⁹ Coen's discussion of Anton von Maron's 1791 portrait of Jenkins in *Aequa potestas: le arti in gara a Roma nel Settecento*, ed. Angela Cipriani, Rome: De Luca, 2000, 41, correctly refers to him as English.

¹⁰ See *The English Prize*, ed. Sánchez-Jáuregi and Wilcox, as in n. 3; for a review by the present writer, see <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2181>.

expensive, the colossal *Juno* purchased from Princess Cornelia Costanza Barberini for 2,600 scudi in 1772 and later installed in the museum's Sala Rotonda, was distinguished by its size, intact condition, and aesthetic quality, being considered both 'Greek' and 'one of the most perfect clothed statues then known' (p. 203). Similar criteria explain the 1,500 scudi paid for a smaller *Bacchus with a Faun* purchased in 1776 from Casa Giraud (previously displayed solo in the current Gabinetto dell'Apoxyomenos), whereas the colossal seated *Nerva*, acquired from Cavaceppi and also installed in the Sala Rotonda, would presumably have commanded more than 1,400 scudi had it not been entirely restored below the torso. A thousand scudi, meanwhile, purchased such fine (but unrestored) statues as the *Discobolus* (technically a *discophoros*) unearthed by Gavin Hamilton in 1771 at Tor Colombaro, the *Apollo Musagetes* found with a group of Muses and philosophers by Domenico de Angelis at the Pianelle di Cassio, or the small *Sleeping Apollo* from the same site, notable for iconographic rarity as well as preservation.¹¹ All were carefully repaired and took places of pride in the rising galleries.

Impressive as these prices may seem, Gallo concludes from their infrequency 'that, except for a few rare cases, ancient Greco-Roman sculpture was not expensive' during the formation of the papal museum (p. 206). This sense is buttressed by comparison with high prices paid for non-figural works, such as the roughly 1,000 scudi paid for two ancient urns in green and black basanite (purchased together for 2,150 scudi from the Collegio Clementino in 1772), for a pair of 2.5-meter porphyry columns, and for a set of four taller columns in *breccia corallina*, all prized exotic ancient marbles of the type the Braschi pope particularly admired.¹² Costly materials help explain the even higher value of modern luxury objects like the lavish *deser* or centrepiece in semiprecious stones with gilt-bronze mounts, purchased by the Bailli de Breteuil, Portugal's ambassador to Rome, from the goldsmith Luigi Valadier in 1778 and sold upon Breteuil's death to the Prince of Asturias, later Charles IV of Spain. Indeed, the price of 10,000 zecchini (20,500 scudi) quoted by Gallo (p. 208) is an underestimate, since a more reliable report in Rome's *Diario Ordinario* reckoned the *deser's* cost at 45,000 to 50,000 scudi.¹³ The museum's ancient statues were indeed

¹¹ A breakdown of prices for the Tivoli statues (which were discovered in late December 1774 or early January 1775, not in May 1776 as on p. 202) in the museum's archive (p. 203, n. 14) dramatizes the effect of condition (and consequent expense of restoration) on market value.

¹² On Pius VI's decision to feature ornamental and non-figurative ancient objects at the Vatican, see Collins, *Papacy and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Rome: Pius VI and the Arts*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, ch. 4: 'The Gods' Abode', and Gallo, 'Entre érudition et création artistique. Les objets antiques en marbre au XVIIIe siècle', in *L'artiste et l'antiquaire. L'étude de l'antique et son imaginaire à l'époque moderne*, ed. E Lurin and D. Morana Burlot, Paris, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art / Éditions Picard, 2017, 209-223.

¹³ *Diario Ordinario* ('Cracas'), n. 362 (20 June 1778), 20, 'secondo il giudizio del Publico [sic], e degl'Intendenti'. Gallo's figure comes from Susanne Adina Meyer and Serenella Rolfi Ozwald in 'Le fonti e il loro uso: documenti per un atlante della produzione artistica romana durante il pontificato di Pio VI', in *Una miniera per l'Europa*, ed. Maria Ceclia Mazzi, Rome,

economical compared to Canova's towering papal tombs in SS. Apostoli and St. Peter's, costing 11,000 and 22,000 scudi respectively, though the difference in scale (even the former is over seven meters high, with three colossal figures and a significant architectural component) must play a role. If anything, the 500 scudi paid in 1772 for Pierino da Vinci's 73 x 160 cm relief of *Cosimo I de' Medici as the Patron of Pisa*, then attributed to Michelangelo and the only major modern sculpture acquired for the museum, suggest that size, condition, rarity, and quality, rather than age, were they key determinants of price.

Gallo finds ancient marbles equally affordable when compared to the top market prices for paintings (which did yet not feature in the museum), such as the 1,400 scudi for which Pompeo Batoni's *Allegory of Clemency and Justice* was assessed upon its export by King Stanislas II of Poland in 1768, or the 3,000 zecchini (6,150 scudi) asked by the publisher and art dealer Ludovico Mirri for Agostino Carracci's large canvas of *Hero and Leander* in the mid-1780s (p. 208). There are problems, however, with several of the figures offered in this context. With regard to Poussin's seven Boccapaduli *Sacraments*, sold by James Byres to the Duke of Rutland in one of the most brazen art smuggling schemes in eighteenth-century Italy, the sum of 32,000 to 48,000 scudi reportedly offered by Joshua Reynolds (p. 209) is inflated by a factor of four; Reynolds valued the set at 8,000 to 12,000 crowns, not pounds, in line with the roughly 1,100 scudi the duke eventually paid per canvas in 1786 and thus equivalent to the prices paid for the museum's better statues.¹⁴ Mirri's high estimate

2008, 122, n. 60, quoting (in part) an entry in the diary of a young German painter who saw the *deser* while on exhibition in Valadier's studio. However, inaccuracies in that report (cf. *Ein Potsdamer Maler in Rom: Briefe des Batoni-Schülers Johann Gottlieb Puhmann aus den Jahren 1774 bis 1787*, ed. Götz Eckardt, Berlin: Henschverlag, 1979, 150) suggest that he was repeating hearsay and that Cracas's figure is preferable in the absence of further documentation. On the role of the *deser* in Valadier's production, see, most recently, Alvar González-Palacios, *Luigi Valadier*, New York: Frick Collection, 2018, ch. 4 (123-205).

¹⁴ Gallo's figure comes from Coen, *Il mercato dei quadri*, v. 1, 170, which misreads a letter from Alleyne Fitzherbert to the then Marquess of Granby dated 25 March 1777, communicating Reynolds' opinion that 'these pictures—besides being a great national object, and consequently worthy of your Lordship's public spirit—would be at eight, or even twelve thousand crowns [equivalent to five shillings], a most desirable and advantageous purchase to a private dealer, and that, in short, if you should decline taking them, he should be exceedingly happy to buy them himself'. See *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, K. G., Preserved at Belvoir Castle*, v. 3, London, Eyre and Spottiswood, 8 (also 9 and 214). Since Benedict XIV had personally denied the *Sacraments* an export license when purchased by Sir Robert Walpole in the 1740s, a decision affirmed by Pius VI, Byres was only able to extract them by substituting copies with the collusion of the family and exporting them with the utmost secrecy. Reynolds subsequently informed the duke that 'Prince Rezzonico was much mortified' to see the *Sacraments* in England and instructed his brother, 'who is Secretary of State, that he should reprimand the inspectors for suffering those pictures to come out of Rome'. Sometime after this, Lady Spencer told me that in consequence of this smuggling it is

for his Carracci, by far his most expensive picture, should likewise be contextualized against his lower prices for other autograph works, including a portrait of Charles V by Titian (700 scudi), a portrait by Leonardo of a Milanese princess (200 scudi), a large St. Francis by Guido Reni (95 scudi), a small landscape by Poussin (15 scudi), and the head of a man by Domenichino (10 scudi), all in gilded frames and all comparable with prices paid for ancient sculptures in the papal museum.¹⁵ It is also worth noting that although many of Rome's finest antiquities, unlike Old Master paintings, were already in papal hands, when extraordinary examples did come to market they continued to command dizzying prices. According to Winckelmann, an English amateur unsuccessfully offered Cardinal Furietti 36,000 scudi for the pair of black-marble centaurs unearthed at Tivoli in 1736 and eventually purchased for 13,000 (together with the famous dove mosaic) by Clement XIII in 1767 for the Capitoline Museum. A generation earlier, Clement XII had paid 6,000 scudi for the famous Ludovisi *Dying Gaul*, against Agostino Cornacchini's estimate of 12,000 scudi and the heirs' initial asking price of 8,000.¹⁶ As late as 1770, Clement XIV paid the nuns of S. Cosimato a substantial 4,000 scudi for the famed Fusconi *Meleager*, together with a draped torso, a Molossian hound, and a pair of sphinxes in *granitello*, all initially destined for the Capitoline.

Assessing the relative value of ancient marbles in eighteenth-century Rome would thus seem to require broader correlation with prevailing prices as well as further consideration of the effects of official intervention, including increasing vigilance over the export of cultural patrimony. That said, the evidence seems to support Gallo's suggestion that the foundation of the Pio-Clementino depressed rather than enhanced the market for ancient sculpture, which, at least on first impression, 'was more highly priced in the medium to low quality range' (p. 209). Gallo attributes this to the presence of foreign buyers, creating 'a double market' (p. 210) in which northern collectors paid dearly for lesser works the pope rejected. Additional factors may have distorted the prices paid by the papal museum, however, including vendors' desire to curry favour by not asking top dollar and the pontiff's corresponding wish to subsidize religious and charitable institutions.¹⁷ The

now death to attempt sending pictures out of Rome without being first examined' (*Manuscripts*, 360).

¹⁵ Coen, *Il mercato dei quadri*, v. 2, doc. 28, 601-602. For comparison, Gallo notes that the museum bought 'quality anthropomorphic statues' for 200 or 300 scudi and that even iconographically rare busts did not exceed 200 scudi (pp. 206-207).

¹⁶ Coen, 'The Art Market in Rome', 15; see also Stefano Pierguidi, 'Monnot, Livio Odiscalchi e il Gladiatore dei Musei Capitolini', *Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma* 28 (2014), 53-60.

¹⁷ The former may explain the low sum of 100 scudi paid to Duke Giuseppe Mattei in 1782 for the semicolossal *Juno Sospita Lanuvina*, purchased (per Visconti's contemporary note) because it was 'molto opportuna per le nicchie del Salone Rotondo' (Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale II, Antichità e Belle Arti, busta 22, #79, *nota* covering 14 November to 2 December 1782, in the hand of Ennio Quirino Visconti). Although a need for restoration always lowered market value (in this case, the statue lacked the feet, hands, and part of the

pope, too, had sole power to dissolve the *fidecommessi* entailing much aristocratic property, a thumb on the scale in an increasingly competitive market. The decline in expensive purchases after the accession of the Church's former general treasurer as Pius VI in 1775 must also have reflected the papacy's decision to bypass an overheated market by conducting its own excavations, a particular advantage as the project expanded. Finally, in terms of pricing criteria, the public (and often later) evaluations in the museum's catalogue may sometimes be supplemented with more specific rationales in the contemporary bills or 'Giustificazioni' submitted by the papal commissioner of antiquities Giovanni Battista Visconti. In the case of a small satyr and nymph purchased from Jenkins for the surprising sum of 1,400 scudi in 1772, for instance, Visconti's *nota* makes clear that while the 'eccellentissimo stile' and 'singolare conservazione' were key factors in its favour (down to traces of original gilding on the urn), just as important was its superiority to the fragmentary version in the grand ducal gallery in Florence, misidentified by Gori and wrongly restored as a Venus extracting a thorn.¹⁸ Rivalry evidently affected the eighteenth-century art market, just as it does today.

The volume concludes with a chapter by Maria Teresa Caracciolo entitled 'Jean-Baptiste Wicar in Rome (1784-1834): Fifty Years of Purchases, Sales, and Appraisals of Works of Art'. The expatriate French painter and connoisseur formed three collections of Old Master drawings in Florence and Rome, where he settled in 1800, and Caracciolo's investigation of the fortunes of the last of these collections (bequeathed to Lille in 1835) will interest drawings specialists, particularly those concerned with changing understandings of Raphael and his school. In the present context, her conclusion that Wicar arranged his sheets so as to balance an appreciation of masterpieces with an interest in regional traditions would be enhanced by further consideration of his collecting process and of drawings' cultural, pedagogical, and commercial status vis-à-vis other media.¹⁹

arms), in this case the price may have reflected the papacy's previous purchase of thirty-four works from the Mattei collection for 4,300 scudi after dissolving the *fidecommesso* in 1770.

¹⁸ Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale II, Antichità e Belle Arti, busta 16, #39, an undated bill for purchases from Jenkins in the hand of Ennio Quirino Visconti, authorized by Treasurer Giovanni Angelo Braschi (later Pius VI) on 22 January 1772. For a draft of this item, also in Ennio Quirino's hand, see Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 10307, ff. 76-77, citing the offending passage of Gori's *Museum Florentinum* (the damaged example in Naples, also critiqued in the catalogue, was not mentioned at the time of purchase). For further documentation of the logic behind specific purchases, see Collins, 'Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican City: Ideology and Aesthetics in the Age of the Grand Tour', in *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early 19th-Century Europe*, ed. Carole Paul, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012, 118-119.

¹⁹ On this point Caracciolo (p. 212) cites part of a revealing report from the dealer Giovanni Antonio Armano regarding Wicar's sale of his second collection of 7,000 drawings to the British dealer Samuel Woodburn in 1823 for 11,000 Roman scudi. After noting that 'sono mezo regalati essendo intatti quelli che sono veramente principali' (a phrase perhaps better translated as 'they were practically given away, since the really important ones are intact')

As the foregoing suggests, *The Art Market in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* is rich with studies that exemplify some, if not all, of the approaches sketched out by Burke, demonstrating that the social history of art is thriving and that the art trade remains fertile ground. The book is handsomely produced and printed, with generous and well positioned colour plates. The text, however, is riddled with mistakes and inconsistencies of spelling, typography, punctuation, and citation form. The variance of personal and place names among chapter texts, headings, captions, and index—not to mention garbled book titles such as ‘*Display of Art in Roman Seventeenth-Century Palaces*’ (p. 70) and even ‘*Patrons and Painters in Seventeenth-Century Italy*’ (p. 68)— suggests an abdication of editorial oversight. The problem is accentuated by awkward or ambiguous translations, since only Italian speakers will understand phrases like ‘contemporary Capitoline artists’ (p. 18) or ‘St Francesco with death in his hand’ (p. 57), just as only attentive readers will realize that ‘misattributions’ (p. 216) should read deattributions, among similar confusions. It is tempting to excuse editorial lapses at a time when the humanities, scholars, and publishers are under siege, but one might also argue that it is all the more important in such an environment to establish credibility through attention to detail. It would also be desirable, given the variety of voices and perspectives and the volume’s inclusion in a series devoted to art markets, to define that term more clearly or at least to suggest what historical studies of an art market might address. Despite the claim that ‘the extent and even more the limits of the art market were carefully delineated’ (p. 1), the concept at the core of this anthology remains somewhat vague. Coen admits that the ‘liquidness’ of Roman laws and regulations causes the city’s art market to remain ‘quite an elusive expression’ (p. 27); still, a clearer sense of what the term includes and/or excludes would help focus an emerging field and encourage comparison across time and place.

In sum, readers looking to explore the commercial dimension of art in eighteenth-century Rome will find many helpful hints in this volume, if not a comprehensive picture. As it stands, the focus is both broad, including topics, times, and places of varying relevance to the theme, and narrow, focusing on paintings, drawings, and sculptures at the expense of the many other art forms bought, sold, and traded in the papal capital. Both the catholicity of Lord Exeter’s purchases, which included prints, table tops, glass cameos, mosaics, and a chimneypiece by Piranesi, and the corresponding range of media unloaded from the *Westmorland* suggest the benefit of a more integrated vision of what constituted art and its

Armano cites the government’s failure to buy the collection as an example of Italy’s despoliation, complaining that ‘que disegni per lo studio [. . .] sarebbero stati più utili e di maggior decoro in Roma che il braccio nuovo del Museo [of ancient sculpture, added by Pius VII], ma qui sono ciechi’. For the full citation, see Monica Preti-Hamard, ‘*Celleberrimi Francisci Mazzola Parmensis graphides: Les collections de dessins du Parmesan à Venise et à Bologne. Collectionneurs, marché, l’édition*’, in *Jean-Baptiste Wicar et son temps, 1762-1834*, ed. M. T. Carracciolo and Gennaro Toscano, Villeneuve d’Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2007, 316 and 333.

markets in eighteenth-century Rome. Indeed, in the spirit of Burke’s invocation of “art worlds” – that is, “the whole complex of institutions that have come to surround the production and consumption of art” (p. 42) – it might be argued that the ‘Roman art system’ as developed in the *Settecento* consisted of a complex and increasingly interdependent network of artists, craftsmen, merchants, clients, patrons, princes, clerics, and bureaucrats working together in an industry that loomed larger as other sectors of the economy flagged. The essays presented here, particularly those that evoke this wider frame, offer a solid and welcome foundation for further work on this important and still under-studied topic.

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