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Sacred history and Enlightenment history: Rome and Naples 1650–1750

Before the Enlightenment, one of the liveliest fields of historical enquiry was sacred history. The history recounted in the Old Testament in particular was used to illustrate the various means — family networks, modes of cultivation, religious worship — by which the earliest humans formed themselves into societies. Among the most fertile exponents of this enquiry were the Neapolitans Giambattista Vico and Pietro Giannone. But the framework for the acceptable study of sacred history in the Catholic world was set in Rome, not Naples, by the Papacy, the Index and the Inquisition. The purpose of my research was to explore what the authorities in Rome thought that framework should be, how they sought to enforce it, and how successful they were.

Within the broad terms of the project indicated above, I pursued three principal lines of enquiry. The first concerned Roman interest in sacred history, and in particular *La storia universale, provata con monumenti, e figurate con simboli degli antichi* (1707), by Francesco Bianchini (1666–1729). Study of the work and of Bianchini's context tended, however, to underline the limitations of Roman intellectual culture by comparison with the Neapolitan. For all the methodological ambition of Bianchini's use of archaeological and figurative evidence, his attempt to render pagan history compatible with the chronological framework of the Old Testament (in the Vulgate version, which allowed less than 4,000 years between the Creation and the birth of Christ) was left unfinished, and had no successors.

A second enquiry concerned the treatment of Richard Simon by the Index. Simon was a member of the Paris Oratory, whose *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678, 1680) made him the leading Biblical scholar of his time. Despite being a Catholic, however, Simon quickly attracted the suspicion of the authorities in Rome. The records of the Congregation of the Index make it possible to reconstruct the context and reasons for this reaction. The context was the recent condemnation of the work of Spinoza by the Holy Office, and a renewed concern with the arguments of Isaac Vossius in favour of the (longer) chronology offered by the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. Initially ambivalent, the Index's readers (*consultores*) gradually hardened in their doubts about Simon, focusing on the implications of his findings for the authority of the Vulgate, and on the 'temerity' of his style, likened to that of Galileo. Simon's works were accordingly prohibited. The consequence, however, was to quarantine Rome against innovation in Biblical scholarship.

The third line of enquiry focused on two Neapolitan scholars and philosophers in Rome: Celestino Galiani (1681–1753) and Biagio Garofalo (1677–1762). They offer an opportunity to test the extent to which Roman priorities were imposed upon Neapolitans living in Rome. While I discovered new evidence that Galiani maintained public orthodoxy on the composition and chronology of the Bible, it is clear from his correspondence that he chafed at the rigidity of the Roman prohibitions on innovation. The case of Garofalo proved most interesting of all. Significant as a friend of both Vico

and Giannone (whose intellectual worlds scholars usually treat as quite separate), Garofalo was the author of a comparative study of Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek poetry, which he dedicated to the reigning Pope, Clement XI. But Garofalo courted controversy, and a proposed second edition caused the book to be referred to the Index. It was possible to follow the ensuing process from Garofalo's reply to his critic, through the assessment carried out by the Secretary of the Index and the reports of its *consultores*, to the final judgement — and Clement XI's personal intervention to block outright prohibition. But the length of the process was discouragement enough — and Garofalo left Rome to join Giannone in Vienna.

In pursuing this research I made productive use of the printed and manuscript holdings of several Roman libraries, including the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, the Angelica, the Casanatense and the Corsiniana. I also worked for several weeks in the archive of the Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede in the Vatican, which houses the records of the Inquisition and the Index.

As a result, I now have a much better understanding of the intellectual priorities of the Church in Rome, and of the means at its disposal to impose them. The next stage of the research, to be pursued in Naples in the summer of 2010, is to test the extent to which Rome's agenda was accepted in the Catholic intellectual world. Even if there was significantly more intellectual freedom in Naples, it is unlikely that the Neapolitans could ignore the Roman agenda with impunity. The questions are how and how far that agenda was adapted, modified and developed by Vico, Giannone and others.

John Robertson
(Faculty of History, University of Cambridge)

Hugh Last Fellowship

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Rome: city of seven hills

It felt rather odd returning to the British School at Rome for my first sustained stint of research there since holding a Rome Scholarship in the late nineties. Back then, I was working on ancient sculpture both in antiquity and in the eighteenth century. Whilst holding the Hugh Last Fellowship, my interest in representation and reception was focused firmly on the landscape and on completing a monograph entitled *The Hills of Rome: Signature of an Eternal City*. Although months of working in libraries in Cambridge and London had seen me do considerable research for this project already, being in Rome proved even more valuable than I had imagined as, for three months, I walked the city (even in the snow), benefited from special permission to study and photograph crucial case-studies, and enjoyed privileged access to the BSR's collection of early works on Rome's topography. For anyone working in this area, the library's real and digital collections are unparalleled. By the end of my tenure, I had completed a draft manuscript.

The Hills of Rome: Signature of an Eternal City brings approaches from Art History, Film Studies and Landscape Archaeology together with Classics to interrogate the claims to seven summits made by Rome and rival cities such as Constantinople and Moscow to determine what this accolade means, and means for Rome, and from where its significance