

Gross, Hans. *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The post-Tridentine syndrome and the ancien regime*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. x, 409. Illustrations. \$54.50

Malcolm Greenshields

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material. One big surprise: the purely functional roundhouse design which dominated the 20th century had not become the normal plan, and the early Grand Trunk Railway built a number of cruciform engine houses, two locomotive stalls in each arm. The nineteenth century was more lavish in decoration and architectural embellishment, while the twentieth century favored more stark, purely functional forms—but inside the roundhouse structures, it provided more ancillary facilities for servicing the larger and more complex locomotives of the final development of the steam locomotive. The author rightly discusses the evolution of the turntable, required by the technology of the steam locomotive and in turn making the “round” of the roundhouse a logical design.

Should we attempt to preserve one or more of these structures in commemoration of one aspect of the steam locomotive era that saw the railways emerge as the binding force of the Canadian nation? Without locomotives in its stalls, with no tracks leading somewhere from its turntable, I personally have rather negative views of the CPR's Drake Street, Vancouver, roundhouse even though it is a survivor of the great fire and so doubly historic. Its function gone, it is just a peculiarly-shaped big old brick building; a specialized one, but having much in common with other industrial buildings of its era. Should we save it? If so, for what? Why not tear it down and build something for our present era on the site? This splendid book does not directly address this problem, but presents a good account of what a roundhouse was so we can consider whether we want to intervene and save one or more.

Fritz Lehmann
Department of History
University of British Columbia

Knight, David B. *Choosing Canada's Capital: Conflict Resolution in a Parliamentary System*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991. Pp. xix, 398. Maps. \$18.95 (paper).

The choice of a seat of government for the Union of the Canadas was perhaps the most vexatious and protracted question put before its newly-reformed parliament. As the *Montreal Pilot* noted, “objections would have been found to the Garden of Eden ... and we might have gone on fighting about localities until doomsday.” Except that Ottawa was fixed on. In narrative and documents, Knight leads the reader to this “last act” in a “concatenation of follies,” as the *Boston Daily Advertiser* put it.

This volume is a much altered, enlarged and improved edition of the original on the capital question, published in 1977 to good notices.

Improvements begin with a dressed-up cover, enlarged format and printing, and more substantial paper and binding. The length in words appears to be about double the original.

Substantive changes are of more import. A new sub-title replaces the 1977 version—“Jealousy and Friction in the 19th Century”—reflecting a shift in the interests of the author and the application of recent scholarship to the “seat-of-government” issue.

The notion of conflict resolution thus informs the extensive re-writing of the general introduction and the introductions to each chapter, as well as the selection of (the many more) documents in them.

In effect, the one volume now replaces two: the original *Choosing Canada's Capital*, consisting largely of documents, and a companion volume *A Capital for Canada*. The latter, also issued in 1977, was the author's doctoral dissertation, and

was a largely narrative account of the capital issue. Both books are out of print and, in effect, have become redundant with this new volume.

The new edition is basic reading for scholars of the city in Canada, whether geographers, as the author is, or from other disciplines. But, especially with the new material, Knight's book becomes a valuable entree into the politics and roots of political conflict in Victorian Canada. It also goes far in demonstrating how parliamentary systems in the nineteenth century dealt with tensions. There are insights here for contemporary Canada.

It is thus an important book for political historians and to those interested in constitutions and governmental systems.

Apart from its scholarship, the volume is accessible to students, and is in a format that can be adapted to classroom use, especially where a case study approach is used.

John H. Taylor
Department of History
Carleton University

Gross, Hans. *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The post-Tridentine syndrome and the ancien regime*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. x, 409. Illustrations. \$54.50.

Heroic Tridentine Rome in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a centre of religious and cultural dynamism whose activist zeal and artistic energies had significant effects in much of the world. Its story is well known to historians. In this welcome monograph, however, Hans Gross examines a city less familiar to English-speaking readers: eighteenth-century Rome, the city, as he puts it, of the “ancien regime.” In many respects this is an account of anticlimax, decline, and decay, which finds its own climax fittingly at the intrusion of a

powerful, dynamic and foreign force during the period of the French Revolution and Napoleon.

To explain the entropy in the vitality and influence of Rome, the author tries to capture something ethereal. He calls this spirit, or perhaps loss of spirit, the "post-Tridentine syndrome," a "subtle malaise" in a city whose "clerical government had lost its overall integrative vision and direction." After this almost Hegelian beginning, the book settles into the pattern that has served historians well: first we are given an analysis of the "material and institutional structures" of the city and then an account of intellectual and cultural developments. In order to understand the mind and soul of Rome, we must first get a thorough account of its physiology. This first section occupies about two thirds of the book and is the more successful of the two.

Gross begins with an architectural history of the city, in which he argues that Rome's building history in the eighteenth century reflects its general historical development. While there is a continuity from the religious past, an increasing emphasis on the secular needs of its inhabitants blurs "the vision of what the city represents." Although there were attempts to reproduce the vigorous endeavour of the Tridentine period, and an indigenous Roman rococo did develop, the direction of such efforts, whether hospitals, fountains or roads, was towards the satisfaction of the temporal rather than spiritual needs of citizens. Ironically, those new ecclesiastical building projects that were completed (such as the sacristy of St. Peter's) simply added to the burden of debt that was part of the post-Tridentine decline. Moreover, Gross suggests that aesthetic improvements in Rome were more a backdrop for wealthy tourists than an inspiration to pilgrims. After all that has been written about secularization dur-

ing this period, it seems appropriate that Rome was transformed, in some elite minds, from a church into a museum. The accounts of Roman planning and architecture are fascinating and quite well drawn, but marred by the reproduction of an eighteenth-century map too small to permit the reader to locate the projects described in the text.

In subsequent chapters of the first section, the Roman government, economy and population receive ample analysis, although some contradictions are left unexplained. For example, on the one hand, we are told that, as in absolutist states, the municipal independence of Rome was steadily "dissipated" and by the eighteenth century the traditional rulers were papal appointees, usually outsiders who had little "intimate feeling for the welfare of its people." On the other hand, it would have been interesting had Gross reconciled this opinion with the evidence of continuing charity that gave ordinary Romans a relatively easy subsistence.

The demographic aspect of the post-Tridentine syndrome included a reduction in the proportion of clerics in the population and an increase in the "demographic role of the female population." The decrease in the ecclesiastical presence, while not surprising in an age of ecclesiastical decline, is nonetheless remarkable when considered in the context of the unexpectedly small proportion of clerics in the general population. This proportion reached a maximum for the 18th century of 7.41% (sic) in the period 1716-1720 and declined to 3.3% by the beginning of the 19th century. By contrast, Rome's overall population continued to grow until 1794. But the key to its growth, typical of other large cities of the period, was not indigenous fertility, for the death rate exceeded that of births; indeed the gap between them continued to grow. Rather, the Roman propensity to welcome outsiders assured continued demographic growth. Here the author is at his best, scru-

pulously documenting his analysis with extensive archival evidence which makes his book an important source for scholars from a wide range of fields. An interesting aspect of Gross's demographic chapter is his brief examination of Rome's Jews. Despite gradual impoverishment and papal animosity towards the community, a low age of marriage, higher fertility and continual immigration compensated for the decimation of its numbers by the diseases that were endemic to the insalubrious ghetto near the Tiber. The greatest egress of Jews followed the papal restoration of 1809, at the end of a century of antagonistic symbiosis between Jew and Catholic in Rome.

The general loss of vigour and direction also characterized the Roman economy. In a demographic and cultural sense Rome had long been an international importer of persons and in Delumeau's phrase (quoted by Gross) an exporter of "truth" and "art". In the more narrowly economic sense, Rome was a capital city, and not unlike other capitals a consumer rather than a producer. Moreover, it suffered from a growing trade deficit for most of the 18th century. In addition to discussing Rome's economic disadvantages, such as the lack of capital investment and the primitive management of Roman industries, Gross discusses some interesting failed attempts to stimulate profitable enterprise. While his depiction of "post-Tridentine lassitude" is sufficient, and provides an interesting contrast to other European cities of the period, he goes on to devote an entire chapter to finance and currency. This chapter serves to explain the mismanagement of Roman finance, and documents thoroughly a complex, antiquated system which suffered from incoherent policy and the loss of international church revenues. While symptomatic of the syndrome he wishes to describe, these matters might have been dis-

cussed along with the Roman economy. In any event, several of the points he wishes to make could have been summarized more clearly by means of graphs or charts. All the same a reader cannot but admire the meticulous compilation of data involved in Gross's fiscal analysis.

Glimmers of Roman life and mentalities emerge when the author turns to the subject of lotteries. Although its profits were expended to the benefit of the Church and the city, Gross argues that the lotto had deleterious effects on Romans of "all classes" and generally on the economy of the city, where the substantial amounts expended might have been better used for investment. Moreover, he contends with a rather northern fussiness that it simply "gave the Romans yet one more excuse for doing no work while living in the expectation of the miracle that would make them wealthy overnight." Where, one is tempted to ask, would it have been more fitting to wait for a miracle than in Rome? And were not the expenditures of lotto profits sometimes a form of investment in a city where, in any event, it was difficult to prise capital from the relatively lightly taxed Roman citizen? Unfortunately, with this brief glance at Roman attitudes, the author titillates the reader but goes no further along this line of inquiry.

The chapters which follow continue the construction of arguments and evidence for the post-Tridentine syndrome and in many cases they are models of scholarship. The description of the *Agro Romano*, on which Rome has depended in the past for its food supply, is well drawn and explains clearly the official restrictions which led, after 1720, to the insufficiency of the hinterland to meet the capital's needs, also putting into perspective the well-known attempts to make productive the Pontine Marshes. (This section and others should be read with the background of Ricuperati and Carpanetto's general work, *Italy in the*

Age of Reason.) Thus even agriculture showed the continual ebb of Roman vitality during the eighteenth century. Because of the Roman system of food supply and the widespread and time-honoured tradition of charity, however, Romans were generally quite well fed by the standards of the day. According to Gross, Roman charity was rightly considered a generous tradition, although Rome's poor were not immune to the growing tendency (discussed by historians for a variety of places during this period) to distinguish between the "true" and "false" poor and to employ a harsher coercion in their treatment. Gross concludes paradoxically that Rome was losing its charitable zeal, but that her charitable works were still too generous for her "economic health." The subsequent chapter on crime contains interesting possibilities, although the loss of social responsibility the author identifies is not altogether clear from the evidence presented in a somewhat unsystematic description of criminality. This chapter illustrates a problem which Gross does not overcome. Criminal justice records are among the most vivid historical descriptions of individual behaviour that we possess, but the book fails to give the reader a vivid sense of life in eighteenth-century Rome. In a later and very interesting chapter on thought, he opines that "the religion of the people at times transformed itself into a tissue of beliefs consisting of superstitious dross and unbridled emotions." At this, the reader is tempted to cry out: "give us more dross! unbridle the emotions!" That having been said however, Gross's careful scholarship and the thoroughness of his documentation of Roman material civilization, learning and cultural trends in transition make this excellent piece of scholarship a solid and essential contribution to the historiography of great cities.

Malcolm Greenshields
University of Lethbridge

Rappaport, Steve. *Worlds within worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London*, (*Cambridge studies in population, economy and society in past time*). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. Pp. xv, 449. Tables, index.

Brigden, Susan. *London and the Reformation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989. Pp. xix, 676. Table, index. \$137.50

Historians of sixteenth-century England have long held the view that for most men and women who lived in London while the Tudors reigned, life was "nasty, brutish and short"—and that was on the good days, which became less frequent as the time passed. London population, it has generally been agreed, rose from fewer than 50,000 to as many as 250,000, an increase that was generated entirely by immigration from the rest of England. For most of this period, we have been told, a third of the rapidly growing population was destitute, while another third survived just above or below the poverty level. One bad harvest could make the difference for them. English society became steadily more polarised with "a fabulously wealthy elite living cheek by jowl with a thoroughly destitute majority." Desperately protecting their privileges was a progressively more oligarchic, but beleaguered government, which enabled one of the largest cities in Europe by 1600 to be "ruled by twenty-six aldermen with the limited assistance of about two hundred common councilmen." Steve Rappaport's fine study sets out to question every element in this generally accepted compound of beliefs which, he points out, stress too insistently "signs of change" while overlooking evidence which points to continuity.

Rappaport's argument is that most historians have exaggerated the degree to which London experienced change in the sixteenth century. True, its population increased sharply, so that it became one of the three largest cities in Europe by