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The development of the Roman carnival over
the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

At

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By

Denis Mooney

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The development of the Roman carnival over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Summary

The purpose of this thesis is to give a description of the main features of the carnival in Rome over a period of time from the late seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century, the last two hundred years of its effective existence.

To appreciate the form of the festival over this period, which in its essential characteristics remained basically unchanged, something must be said about the earlier centuries, where there were notable differences and emphases. The final form of the carnival was established in the second half of the seventeenth century. Given the time-scale and the number of factors involved, a thematic rather than a chronological sequence has been followed in order to establish in which ways the earlier carnival differed from the later.

Chapter One is devoted to the earlier years. There is a serious lack of documentation for the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods, especially in relation to the enjoyment of the ordinary people. Most references to the occasion tend to concentrate on the more aristocratic manifestations, or on the official and more organized events. In the Middle Ages and for much of the sixteenth century the carnival held a position of importance in the civic calendar of Rome, in the form of the Games of Agone and Testaccio. They were organized by the S.P.Q.R., the city magistrates and the 'Rioni'. With the progressive establishment of Papal power from the mid fifteenth century, and the choice of the via Lata for the main events, the importance of the people's games declined (the games of Testaccio dying out some time in the early seventeenth century) and this

reflected the gradual decline of the people's power. With the increasing power of the Papacy and the new Papal aristocracy in the seventeenth century, a process of control, reform and refinement of the carnival took place - political control, moral reform under the impetus of the Counter-Reformation, the regulating of the carnival to remove the violence and disorders of earlier years, a refining of the features of the carnival which removed some of the crudeness and vulgarity. These moves concerned particularly the carnival of the people, of which only glimpses are recorded; the years after the mid sixteenth century are those in which the Church and the cultural elite distanced themselves from the popular culture which had been shared by all in the Renaissance period - and the carnival was the prime example of this culture. Annual edicts dictated the rules to be observed in the conduct of carnival; initially extremely severe, they were softened somewhat in the course of the seventeenth century, particularly in relation to the participation of women in the celebrations. This chapter ends with a look at the innovations of Paul II, who gave the carnival its essential form and duration in 1466, by his move to the Corso (via Lata), his introduction of the classical 'Trionfo', which was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a celebration of the city and the Pope, and in the seventeenth century of the aristocracy. Some reference will be made to the most popular masks seen in the seventeenth century carnival. The chapter ends with a look at the races, increased in number and in variety by Paul II. For most of this period the horse-race was only one of a number of races; only in the second half of the seventeenth century did it become the sole kind.

Chapter Two covers the period up to 1789; a period of relative stability, free from political tension and troubles. The form of the carnival was now virtually complete - only the 'Moccoli' ceremony of

the last evening had still to be added. This chapter gives a description of the various features of the carnival which remains generally valid for later periods, though more details and more emphasis will be noted on certain points in later chapters. The focus was now firmly on the Corso, by this time the venue for all the main events of the carnival - the public events. The games of Agone and Testaccio were over, and the other locations which had been occasionally used no longer figured in the celebrations. The aristocratic domination of the occasion had declined considerably; the focus was on the people and their pleasure, the aristocracy preferring, as Goethe indicated to mix with the crowd on the street. Foreigners were an increasing presence, but had not yet begun to take such an enthusiastic part in the proceedings as they did later. A description of individual features will be given, the masks, some indication of the scenes played out on the Corso, the confetti battles (with a look at the projectiles used in earlier periods), the 'mocoli' evening, the races (the one area where the aristocracy maintained control for the greater part of the century).

Chapter Three covers the period between 1789 and 1815 - a period of upheaval, with the arrival of revolution in the city. The political dimension was brought into the carnival, the element of conflict absent for so many years. With war in Europe the numbers of foreigners visiting the city diminished considerably; there is much less information available from foreign observers for this period. The political tension, already apparent even before the arrival of the French in 1798, came to the surface at various moments, most notably in the remarkable example of passive resistance to the French command which took place in the carnival of 1809. The French, in 1798-99, made an unsuccessful attempt to reform and renew the carnival, to turn it

into a 'fête révolutionnaire' ('la Festa Saturnale'); but very soon things were back to normal - or almost, since the 'moccoli' ceremony banned in 1790, was not resumed till 1811. The traditional masks, some of which had been outlawed, were back in those closing years of the period. There was a further increase in the freedom allowed to women, and the mask of the peasant girl, or 'Ciociara' was becoming the most popular female costume.

Chapter Four continues the story up to 1848. With the end of hostilities and the Restoration of Papal government foreigners flocked back to Rome, and began to play a more active role, in the masked ball, private or public, but also on the Corso - particularly in the confetti battles, where their participation was so violent that they often offended the Romans. The freedom of the young women was even more noticeable in these years. The quality of the horses presented for the races had deteriorated. The familiar masks were very much in evidence, but there was an increase of more primitive and grotesque ones - animals, giants, physical deformities. There is more evidence of little scenes played out on, and off, the Corso, and praise of the skill of the Romans in comic improvisation. There were, however, numerous foreign observers who denied the ability of the Romans to 'support' character, and who preferred the masked ball, their concept of masking - based on historical, artistic, literary models. Such masks began to appear on the Corso, too.

This chapter ends with a look at the political situation after 1830. Even before this year some of the more sensitive foreign observers had sensed an unease and a tension under the light-heartedness of the affair, indications that perhaps some of the inhabitants of Rome had not welcomed the Pope back so whole-heartedly. The carnival of 1831, in the middle of the rebellion in the Papal States, brought this to the surface. There was an abortive attempt at

insurrection in this carnival, which had virtually no support; but further signs of disaffection with the government were seen in later years, culminating in a show of patriotic enthusiasm for the Italian cause in the carnival of 1848.

Chapter Five covers the period up to 1870, the final phase of Papal rule in the city. The fall of the Roman Republic in 1849, with the arrival of the French troops under General Oudinot, marked a decisive moment in the history of Rome, and in the history of its carnival. It became an instrument in the hands of the authorities, an 'istituzione di polizia', being promoted by the government to give the impression of a return to normal, and boycotted by the liberals as a sign of protest. By means of exhortations and threats the 'Comitato Nazionale' succeeded in reducing the crowds on the Corso, and most of the carnivals of these years were poor affairs. The resistance was passive, for the most part, consisting of silent demonstrations, but there were occasional acts of violence, directed particularly against the French troops. After 1860 it seemed clear that the government was living on borrowed time. Political pressures had driven many people off the Corso, in particular the upper and middle-classes, leaving the street, it is suggested, to the rabble and the foreigners. Foreigners, in fact, were noticing a decline in the carnival, though the familiar scenes were still witnessed. But for some foreign visitors the 'artists' carnival' of Cervara was becoming a rival attraction.

Chapter Six deals with the early years of 'Roma capitale'. After 1870 the political dimension of carnival was still retained; Rome was split into two camps, clerical and anticlerical, the latter now promoting carnival, the former through the mouthpiece of the 'Osservatore Romano' criticizing the organization of the affair. Committees were set up to run the carnival by the town council, and by

the foreign artists of the 'Circolo Internazionale'. Much of this activity had a rather antiquarian air, an attempt to resurrect old forms and breathe new life into them. Elaborate floats and 'carri' once more appeared on the Corso, bringing the world of the masked ball onto the street, with artistic, historical, literary pageants. The middle-classes, nevertheless, were still tending to desert the street carnival in favour of the 'veglione', and the scenes on the street were rowdier.

Rome had become a different town, had grown considerably in population. These new Romans were unfamiliar with the old traditions and customs, the old social cohesiveness was disappearing, and the occasion was becoming more commercialized. For a number of reasons carnival was in a state of decline, the old spontaneity had disappeared. The final blow was the loss of the horse-race in 1883, after a final fatal accident. Attempts were made to replace it, but the solutions seemed artificial; the old spirit had gone. In the following years a chorus of voices proclaimed the death of the carnival.

Preface

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the development of the Roman carnival over a period of time which corresponds to the last two hundred years of its existence. This will be a preliminary essay in a field which requires more extensive study and more detailed analysis. A full history of the carnival still remains to be undertaken, making use of the large amount of material which is available. Most of the sources for the present study are published ones. There is a large amount of material still to be consulted and researched, both published and unpublished - the chronicles of the 'Avvisi di Roma'; the texts of the annual edicts on Carnival, legal records, private diaries and letters, reports of foreign envoys to the court of Rome, iconographical material (the many drawings, paintings and prints of carnival scenes which appeared over the years). This constitutes a substantial amount of material to be edited, annotated and interpreted. To these could be added the literary works which feature the carnival; a very small number of these have been utilised in this study.

There already exists a fair amount of writing on the Roman carnival, articles, chapters in general studies, whole books on the subject. Foremost among these is Filippo Clementi's indispensable two volume work, from which a substantial amount of information has been drawn. Clementi undertook a very extensive study of the subject over the whole of its history, with much patient research in chronicles, diaries, edicts, etc. He provides an essential point of reference for any study of the phenomenon. But he does leave certain points unclear, and certain questions unasked. The most serious of these concerns the participation of the people in what is essentially a people's festival. This is an area which Clementi virtually ignores; the

carnival he describes is, for the most part, an official manifestation, organized, structured and regulated by the authorities - Magistrates and 'caporioni', Pope, aristocracy - who impose a form on the spontaneous celebrations of the people. They organize triumphal processions, games, regulate the races, legislate the kind of behaviour permitted. It is here that Clementi's book is most invaluable; he amasses an impressive amount of material to give us an image of the development of this official intervention from the beginnings of the festival through to its demise at the start of the present century. In this area all subsequent studies of the subject are indebted to him.

The essential thing which is missing in his account is a description of the scene on the Corso over the whole duration of the carnival's history; not the description of the often very elaborate processions and 'carri', or the horse-race, for example, but a description of the behaviour of the people. Clementi himself points out for the earlier periods the lack of documentation, and he is echoed on this point by later commentators. For these later periods, however, he ignores a large body of material, some of which he was obviously aware of. I am referring to the numerous references to the carnival made by foreign travellers to Rome in the later centuries and included in the accounts of their visit to Italy. Clementi occasionally quotes from one of these travellers to illustrate a point, but does not seem to consider them a particularly important source of material. This is all the more surprising in that Ademollo's little book on the carnival, published before his own, had contained a brief appendix quoting from some of these accounts.

It is from this source that the bulk of the documentation for this study is derived. Travellers' accounts of Rome provide an

extremely useful perspective on life in the city. From the seventeenth century onwards they produced a very large number of published accounts; there is, presumably, much material still existing in unpublished form in private houses, libraries etc. (in the form of letters and diaries). The information to be gathered from these accounts is ^afragmentary, referring only, in most cases, the details which caught the eye of the observer. It is necessary to piece together details from a large number of accounts to arrive at something which resembles an image of the scenes on the Corso. Through this a number of recurring features can be identified, and an attempt made to categorize them, for example the masks most popular over the period. There still remains the need to supplement this material, in order to supply some of the missing pieces of the mosaic, to clarify certain points, to understand the phenomenon. A certain amount of data has been found in histories of the period, to fill in the background and get some idea of the pressure of events on the carnival, to indicate relations between people and authorities, etc. To gain a further understanding of the significance of the phenomenon and to help interpret the material available use has been made of the writings of specialists on the carnival and on popular culture generally. Many of the observations made are indebted to writers like Toschi, Burke, Bakhtin, Muchembled, etc. Where details are lacking or incomplete use is occasionally made of the comparative method, particularly in relation to the scenes acted out on the Corso. There is often a very strong similarity between scenes coming from very distant periods - for example from Lassels in the mid 1600s, Goethe in the 1780s, Hawthorne in the 1850s. Occasional reference is made also to similar scenes found in the contemporary carnivals of Naples and Venice.

The choice of the period to be studied, apart from the fact that it offers considerably more documentation than the earlier ones, gives the possibility of establishing the key features of the carnival as they were during a long phase of peace and relative stability, and then seeing how they survived, were affected and modified in a period of change and unrest. Carnival survived as a large-scale phenomenon into the twentieth century, but the carnival in its most characteristic form died shortly after 1870. It was a form, and a spirit, very much associated with Papal Rome, an aspect of 'Rome sparita'. It had been characterized by the participation of all the classes of society in Rome; but in particular it had been the occasion for the common people to forget for a brief moment the constraints of their existence and to enjoy the freedom of this moment with a verve and a spontaneity which was commented on by most observers of the scene. In the decades before 1870, however, and in the years following it, this spontaneity and good humour declined notably with the changing circumstances. Carnival was to some extent a victim of these circumstances, in particular of the political climate of earlier years, and in part of the modern world where such festivals seem out of place in the big city, except as a tourist attraction. Rome, the capital of Italy, was a different city from Papal Rome, with a greatly enlarged population many of whom were unfamiliar with the old traditions and customs, with new institutions, and with a rapidly developing middle class. The physical aspect of the city was changing, too, under the onslaught of the 'New Barbarians'. Visitors to the city lamented the loss of the old Rome they had known in earlier visits, or in their imagination, fed by the books they had read and the images they had seen of the city before 1870. Henry James voiced the disappointments of many who had looked forward eagerly to their visit only to discover that the reality did not live up to the image they

had in their mind. He had been writing to a friend, he tells us, when noises from the Corso reminded him that he was "within eyeshot of an affair the fame of which had ministered to the day dreams of my infancy. I used to have a scrap book with a coloured print of the starting of the bedizened wild horses, and the use of a library rich in keepsakes and annuals with a frontispiece commonly of a masked lady in a balcony, the heroine of a delightful tale further on. Agitated by these tender memories I descended into the street; but I confess I looked in vain for a masked lady who might serve as a frontispiece, in vain for any object whatever that might adorn a tale ... Decidedly it was an ignoble form of humour ... The Carnival had received its deathblow in my imagination; and it has been ever since but a thin and dusky ghost of pleasure that has flitted at intervals in and out of my consciousness."¹

¹ Henry James, Italian Hours, New York, 1968, pp. 194-195.

CHAPTER ONE

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1. The games of Agone and Testaccio. 2. Papal and aristocratic control of the carnival. 3. The people's carnival and the Church's opposition. 4. The regulation of carnival. 5. The 'Trionfo'. 6. Individual masks. 7. The races.

1. The games of Agone and Testaccio

This chapter can give little more than an impression of the festival as it was in the first centuries of its recorded existence. Given the duration of the period, over 500 years, and the range of references, it has been decided to abandon any attempt at a chronological sequence, in favour of a thematic treatment, concentrating on certain key features and moments. Much of the evidence for this early period is gathered from secondary sources and reports written in later years. A fuller description of the various features would require extensive use of the comparative method, drawing, for example, on studies of contemporary carnivals in other Italian cities, or on descriptions of modern carnivals which show similar features. Clementi recognized the difficulty, referring to the lack of diaries which have survived from the years before the fifteenth century¹.

Of the characteristic features of carnival, irrespective of time or place - masking, processions, contests, rituals, music, dancing, excessive eating and drinking, plays, mock-battles, the crowning, dethroning and death of Carnival, etc. - not all are to be found in any one carnival. The first mention of it in Rome relates to the year 1143 and describes a curious ceremony on Mount Testaccio, mythical

spot of the foundation of Rome, in which a bear, a bullock and a cock were ritually sacrificed having previously been conducted in an elaborate procession through the streets of the city: Premoli quoting from the description given by a certain Benedetto Canonico, makes no attempt to explain it, but points out the obvious religious significance which Benedetto attributes to it. "È impossibile stabilire in cosa consistesse realmente questa cerimonia, che sembra avere insieme i caratteri di un sacrificio lustrale e di un'avenatio."²

The scene of the ceremony, Mount Testaccio, was one of the two main venues of the carnival. Note that the word itself was not invariably used in these early years, the usual reference being to the games of Agone and Testaccio. The ritual importance of these was still strong in these early centuries, and is reflected in the bull featuring as a sacrificial victim, together with the pig, in the centre piece of the games - the bullfight (which was held also in other Italian carnivals). The Roman bullfight was something rather different from the present-day 'corrida', being a much rougher and much less orderly affair. The element of danger was central to the occasion, as it was in the other main feature of the medieval games - the joust or tourney. Carnival was traditionally a time for young men to make a display of strength, skill and courage. A description written in Roman dialect appearing in the annals of Ludovico Bonconte Monaldeschi of a bullfight held in the Colosseum in 1332, reports that no less than eighteen noble youths were killed³. Gregorovius and later historians, however, point out that this description is a spurious one probably written in the fifteenth century⁴. Nonetheless it was a dangerous sport and numerous deaths did occur - as in a fight held in Saint Peter's Square in 1519, in which several lives were lost⁵.

A distinction seems to have been made between the fights held in

the city, and those held on Testaccio. Describing a fourteenth century fight in Piazza Campidoglio, Clementi tells us that the bulls had to be defeated without being harmed, but they were savagely hacked to pieces in the fights on Testaccio. In both cases considerable skill and courage were shown in a disorderly free-for-all, which suggests a more dangerous and brutal version of the running of the bulls at Pamplona. On Testaccio small carts, covered with red cloth and bearing the banners of the people of Rome and, later, also of the Pope, each dragging a pig behind it, were sent careering down the hill towards the players, who fought each other to obtain the prize (the pig); meanwhile the bulls were set loose on the players, turning their fury also on the pigs; pigs and bulls were released at intervals to increase the general confusion, and the whole affair ended when all the animals were slaughtered⁶.

The other dominant feature of these Roman games which was also accorded an important civic function was the joust (or occasionally the tournament). They had a civic solemnity, and participation was regarded as a sign of distinction. Young men were chosen as champions from each 'Rione', and had the honour and the duty to appear. These young noblemen vied with each other to have the honour of being chosen as champions of the different 'Rioni'; as such, they took part in all the solemn occasions in the city calendar; we find the 'lusores testaceos' present, for example, at the entry of Corradino in Rome in 1254, and also at the entries of Henry VII and Ludwig of Bavaria.⁷ Jousts were usually held in the other main venue of the games - in Agone, or Piazza Navona, site of the stadium of Domitian, which served at other times of the year as a useful training-ground for such warlike exercises. Jousts were also held on mount Testaccio before the bullfight, first those given by the knights, then those by the squires. The more elaborate tournaments were held occasionally, in

piazza Navona - or more usually in other venues, such as Campidoglio or the Belvedere of the Vatican. Similar jousts or tournaments were organized in all the Italian cities, with the aim of keeping the young nobles in fighting form, and also to celebrate important occasions, such as military victories, the entry of honoured guests, or the birth of royal princes.

The rights and privileges of the players were notable; the duties were also clearly stated. Each 'rione' was obliged to bear the cost of the procession, which was considerable, and was fined if it failed to pay. Those chosen to take part could not refuse the honour, unless they were sick or over the age of forty. Such fines and obligations indicate some occasional reluctance to take part. Where this was very frequently to be met was from the cities surrounding Rome, and subject to her rule (like Tivoli, Toscanella etc.) whose participation in the games served as a kind of tribute. One of the earliest mentions of the games indicates this enforced participation. Premoli refers to a stone tablet dating from the year 1300, preserved in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, which declares that the city of Toscanella is condemned to pay the tribute of eight players for the games of Testaccio⁸. This same Toscanella, thirty-seven years later, found an ally in the Pope, who frequently sided with the subject towns against the city magistrates: "decreto di Benedetto XI ... si esonerava la città di Toscanella dall' obbligo di dare i giocatori per quelle feste"⁹.

This latter example comes from the period when the Papal court was established in Avignon, and the Pope had little effective power in Rome. It was to be some time before the power of the magistrates was seriously challenged, and then gradually eroded, after the return of the Pope to Rome. This return, and the progressive strengthening of the Pope's position, were to be followed by a change in the running of

the carnival, and a gradual lessening of the importance of the old games of Agone and Testaccio.

By the second half of the sixteenth century the ceremonial processions which opened the festival had been discontinued. There is a description of these splendid occasion in Clementi. Each "rione" of the city provided a number of players, together with one fighting bull. Two or three days before the festival the bull, richly decorated, was paraded through the 'rione' by the 'Contestabile', followed by the players, while from the windows food and wine were showered on them. The processions then moved on to Agone where 'corse al saraceno' were held after the bulls had been displayed. On the Saturday the bulls were presented on the Capitol, and the citizens of Tivoli appeared before the Senate to make their act of obedience to the 'Conservatori'; after this ceremony the fight was held. On the Sunday the city authorities, militia, officials of the various guilds, appeared wearing splendid costumes of silk, velvet, gold and silver, with glistening arms and armour. The procession set out for Testaccio, led by forty young men from the leading families of Rome, followed by officials, magistrates, 'caporioni', 'conservatori', the Prefect and the 'Gonfaloniere' of Rome, the latter bearing the standard of the Senate and the Roman people, which he solemnly raised on Testaccio. The procession was accompanied throughout by the sound of trumpets, drums and other instruments.¹⁰

In Rome, as elsewhere, carnival was a seasonal ritual, an initially agrarian festival, its roots belonging basically to the peasant rather than the Christian calendar. In the latter it represents a period of licence granted, reluctantly, by the Church before the rigours of Lent. In the peasant calendar it represents much more; a period in which the routine of every day life and the normal laws governing behaviour are set aside momentarily, particularly those

relating to social and sexual norms. It is a kind of temporary return to primitive chaos, prior to the re-establishing of order, with the arrival of a new agricultural cycle. It is a ritual passage from one phase to another, from winter to spring, the return of life to the earth, a celebration of fertility.

But it was also a civic feast, an official feast. Both elements were essential to the Roman carnival in this early period, but such documentation as there is relates predominantly to the official feast. The dispositions regarding the organizing of the games were written into the statutes of the city, and therefore had the force of law¹¹. This quality of civic feast tended to dictate the duration of the event, which varied in different towns. In Rome, from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards, it was limited to a period of less than two weeks before Ash Wednesday; a period, to be precise, of eleven days, of which eight were masking days, set aside for public celebrations - masking, races, confetti-battles, etc. Rather like the situation applying in the 'Decameron', Sundays and Fridays were 'dies non', in which masking and other activities were banned. The above remark, as we have seen, did not apply to the games of Agone and Testaccio in earlier times; nor, interestingly, did the prohibition of activities on Sunday. Initially, there were only two days set aside for celebrations (later extended to three) - and one of these days was a Sunday. Moroni tells us that they were held on the "festa di giovedì grasso, e di sessagesima, detta di Agone e nell' altra della ultima domenica, cioè quella di quinquagesima, detta di Testaccio. Quindi fu aggiuntø un terzo giorno intermedio tra i due suddetti, cioè il sabbato destinato alle cacce dei tori"¹² (in 1425). By Bouchard's visit of 1632, the situation had been changed for some time in relation to the use of a Sunday: "Le dimanche 15 l'on ne fit point de

masques, estant deffendu d'en faire les festes ni le vendredy."¹³

Another feature to note in the carnival of these early years is the fact that it was not held every year. This was, of course, the result of bans, since as a seasonal ritual it should be celebrated each year at the same time. It had to be granted annually by the authorities, the city magistrates and, later, the governor of Rome. One example of an interruption lasted for no less than seven years, between 1475 and 1483, the return to normal being indicated by this quotation: "Agonales ludi pluribus annis intermissi, hodie VI februari ornatu et varietate ad modum celebres instaurati sunt"¹⁴. The reason for this interruption was serious civil disturbances and war in the streets between rival groups, particularly between the 'Rioni' of Monti and Trastevere, traditional enemies. In 1485, barely two years after the feast was resumed there was war once more in the streets, and it was again banned¹⁵.

Among other occasions for the temporary interruption or banning of carnival was the period after the Sack of Rome, from 1527 to 1536. Apart from political and civic disturbances there were other reasons, such as natural calamities - like plague and flood. The latter did not lead automatically however, to the banning of carnival; witness the situation in 1599, when, despite the flooding which left 1500 dead and was followed by famine, a brilliant carnival was held¹⁶. Gigli, however, in his diary for 1631 reports the banning of the carnival of that year: "Alli 22 de Febraro essendo venuto il tempo di Carnevale, non si fecero Maschere, nè si corsero palij, acciò Roma non si rallegrasse, mentre molte città d'Italia piangevano, afflitti dalla peste, et in loco di feste si fecero in diverse Chiese orationi di quarant' ore, solennissime con molti apparati."¹⁷ Jubilee years, and the death of the Pope, constituted other occasions for the forbidding of carnival.

In its quality of official feast carnival could be curtailed, extended, even postponed or anticipated to coincide with some important public occasion - the arrival of a prince or some other distinguished visitor to Rome, the birth of an heir to the throne, a wedding, etc. In 1471, for example, the carnival was extended by a month in connection with the celebrations in honour of the arrival of Borso d' Este. In 1502 carnival was anticipated to coincide with the wedding of Lucrezia Borgia. Much depended on the character of the individual Pope, and Alexander VI was, of course, a notorious pleasure-lover; in 1495 he permitted the wearing of masks after Christmas¹⁸. Even in the seventeenth century we still find a powerful personage, like Donna Olimpia, the Pope's sister-in-law, arranging for the running of the races to be held on days not normally set aside for them¹⁹.

The games of Agone and Testaccio, although there are distinctions to be made between the two, were equally official feasts. The essence of the carnival is that it is the people's festival - the word 'people' indicating not a social stratum, but all of the people; it is a time when social barriers break down and men can mix as equals. "Roma aveva questo di notevole, e non potremmo dire se tra le capitali europee, fosse una sua specialità: si facevano durante l'anno e particolarmente in carnevale giuochi cavallereschi e giuochi popolari, ma la distinzione tra gli uni e gli altri stava solo nelle persone che vi agivano, essendo tutti giuochi egualmente pubblici e alternandosi, senza un ordine prestabilito."²⁰

Of the two main venues (others were also occasionally used), Agone was associated particularly with jousting or tournaments, and with the nobility. The name is a corruption of 'Campus Agonalis', the old stadium of Domitian which dictated the shape of the present Piazza

Navona. Testaccio, on the other hand, was associated with the people, in this period as later. It lay beyond the limits of the inhabited city (much shrunken in the Middle Ages from the huge city of the late Roman Empire). Testaccio would later become the scene of the annual May festival (a kind of plebeian continuation of the Testaccio games) and, later still, of the 'Ottobrata' or 'scampagnata' of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. This artificial hill was known, in fact, as 'Il prato del Popolo Romano'. The kind of activities which were held there in May and in October have a strong similarity to the scenes we see occasionally described later of people enjoying their carnival off the main venue of the occasion, via del Corso. "Attualmente a maggio, nell' estate, e massime nell'ottobre è frequentato questo monte dai romaneschi, e dalle minenti, per le vignate, ovvero sia per certe ricreazioni, consistenti in colazioni, balli, canti dei ritornelli, delle tarantelle, e simili curiose composizioni, fra il suono dei tamburelli, dei colascioni, e dei mandolini".²¹

Such activities are the spontaneous expression of the people's enjoyment of the occasion, a joyful release from the drab, even grim, routine of their daily existence. But the games of Testaccio in the early period, having an official importance, were an occasion when the whole population (not just the lower orders) joined in the activities with a sense of pride in belonging to the city, which was for much of this period under the republican government of senator and city magistrates, during the Pope's absence in Avignon, and for some time after the return to Rome was still able to retain a certain measure of independence. But the strength and the power of the Papacy gradually increased, and by 1466 came an innovation which was of historic importance for the carnival; though its full effect was not felt for some time. The choice of the via Lata as site of the races and new

triumphal processions, by Pope Paul II, marked a key-year in the history of the carnival, and may be regarded as the real birth of the festival in the form which, with some modifications, was to last to the end of its history, and which was notably different from that of the medieval games.

2. Papal and aristocratic control of the carnival

Paul II deserves the title of father of the Roman carnival for a number of reasons. First of all there was the move itself to the city of a feature which was to take on an increasing importance namely the races; then there was his introduction of the masquerade or 'Trionfo', which was to play a dominant role in the course of the following two centuries; then, his extension of the duration of the festival, the number of activities, and his regulating of the races. Premoli, quoting from 'La vita di Paolo II' by Gaspare da Verona and Michele Canensi, gives us a report of these important changes of 1466: "Ampliò i giochi dei Romani e i premi dei giochi affinché ognuno, di ogni età e condizione, ai quali appariva che la repubblica fiorisse e si accrescesse, potesse sortire qualche vantaggio, e a ciascuno concesse il premio del gioco."²²

It has been suggested by some commentators that the reasons for the move might have been purely personal, made for the convenience of the Pope himself. Paul II was a Venetian and a lover of spectacle and festivals. He had begun in 1455 the construction of a splendid palace in Piazza San Marco (the present Piazza Venezia), the spot which would become the winning post of the races; from the windows of his new palace he could, of course, obtain an excellent view of the races run along the long, straight street between Piazza del Popolo and Piazza San Marco. Paul's enjoyment of the spectacle, and his pleasure in

observing the people's enjoyment, was shared by a number of Popes in these early years.

But the Pope, while intent on giving his people pleasure, was also a politician, intent on reinforcing papal control in the city: "Paolo II conobbe meglio dei suoi predecessori il vero genio del popolo di Roma, e le due molle principali, che lo fanno agire, a seconda di chi deve condurre collo stesso di lui vantaggio: panem et circenses. Onde si studio` particolarmente di contentarlo in ambedue queste cose, coll' abbondanza de' viveri, e coi pubblici spettacoli".²³ It brought the principal manifestations of the carnival within the confines of the city itself (the via Lata was, in fact, in this period just on the edge of the inhabited city).

The games of Agone and Testaccio had been held under the aegis of S.P.Q.R. The process of democratic control of the city, begun in the mid twelfth century, was completed in the period of the 'Babylonish captivity'. The organization of the city, contained in the statutes of 1363, was essentially democratic: the senator himself was designated by the people. When the Papacy returned to Rome, with Martin V, the situation was already changing; the power of the people was becoming limited and, according to Pastor, this Pope's reign marked the end of political liberty in Rome.²⁴ The city and the surrounding countryside were in a state of anarchy, and the people welcomed the rigorous action taken by the Pope to remedy the situation. The process of increasing papal power was thus already under way before the advent of Paul II; this is reflected even in the conduct of the carnival. Premoli, referring to the notes on the expenses for the games of Agone and Testaccio in 1456, observes that "sui drappi rossi delle carrette lo stemma papale era aggiunto all'antica sigla S.P.Q.R., simbolo dell' autorità municipale".²⁵

With the changes in the statutes of Rome over the next century the people's representatives began to play a role of decreasing importance in the conduct of affairs, and in the running of the carnival. Premoli speaks of a systematic violation of the statutes in the closing years of the fifteenth century and the opening of the sixteenth century.²⁶ Clementi dates the final practical eclipse of the Capitoline Magistrates from the constitution of 1580.²⁷ Magistrates and 'caporioni' still held their position in ceremonial occasions such as the opening procession of the carnival celebrations, but their presence was only the occasion for a display of pomp and prestige. The Governor of Rome, appointed by the Pope, had effectively taken over the power of the S.P.Q.R. This official, in fact, was a prelate, and usually non-Roman.

By the time of Bouchard's visit in 1632 the Governor was obviously the most important figure in the opening procession. "Sur les 22 heures le gouverneur fit sa cavalcade tout le long du Cours, monté sur une haquénée couverte d'une housse violette, faisant porter devant lui le pallio avec de grans festons d'oliviers ornez de dorures et papiers de diverses couleurs. Le sénateur de Rome marchoit immédiatement après sur une haquenée blanche ... Après luy marchoient les trois conservateurs de Rome, puis le prieur des Caporioni monsignore Fiscale, et tous les autres officiers de Campidoglio, avec les barigels et toute la sbirrerie à cheval".²⁸

This process of establishing Papal control over the city, and therefore over the carnival was, then, a gradual process. For the history of the carnival in these years we witness a long period of transition. The move to the via Lata did not constitute a complete break with the traditions and the forms of the festival, but rather the beginning of a process of erosion. The older venues of the events were not abandoned with this move; according to their suitability,

tournaments and bullfights, and even races, could be held on Campidoglio, piazza Navona, St Peter's etc. In the year after the move, 1467, it is clear that the races were still held on Testaccio. "Et puro in questo dì [10 February], che fo lo dì de Carnebale, fu ricorso lo pallio, secondo al solito, a Testaccio, e perchè non fu data buona mossa, fo corso da Santa Maria del Popolo fino a San Marco e ebbero Pavolo Angelo de Lo Paulo de Iuliano."²⁹

The games of Agone and Testaccio were not abolished, then, by Paul II: "che anzi il Canonico scrive: 'Ludos agones more vetusto adhibitibus indomitibus tauris in Campo Testaccio splendidissime iussit'".³⁰ There is no precise date for the end of the games, though it seems to have been around the middle of the sixteenth century. The last splendid occasion recorded is for 1545, which Clementi describes as marking the end of the 'carnevale classico'.³¹ Jousts and tournaments survived for some years, promoted occasionally by private individuals - princes and cardinals. Testaccio, thereafter, became the scene of the people's May festival, the games which continued in this losing any official importance.

By the seventeenth century the people had become, according to many commentators, merely passive spectators at what should be their own festival. Their contribution had become the 'gazzarra sul Corso' dismissed by official chroniclers. (The following chapters will attempt a description of this 'gazzarra', a word which encompassed some of the essential features of this popular festival). The most splendid and striking of the carnival events had become the monopoly of the new Papal aristocracy. The communal celebration of the earlier periods had become a compartmentalized, hierarchical occasion, a reflection of the courtly Baroque aesthetic: "Il popolo in piedi, si mescola alla -'gazzarra', concorre diviso in categorie 'razziali' (i

giovani, i vecchi, i gobbi, gli ebrei) ai diversi palii. Il pubblico d'élite si muove e si esibisce in carrozza. Spettatori d'eccezione, dame, cardinali, non si uniscono alla folla, assistano dai palchi sontuosi alzati sulle facciate dei palazzi alle sfilate e agli eccessi carnevaleschi".³²

Carnival had now entered a phase which, in the eyes of some commentators, notably Clementi, represented its highest point: "Ed eccoci giunti ad uno dei periodi veramente grandiosi del carnevale Romano. La mascherata comincia ad affermarsi, e nell' anno 1647 si veggono non solo sul Corso, ma per tutta la città bellissime inventioni di maschere, con carri di commedie, balli et musica".³³ The aristocracy was now the purveyor of carnival entertainments, and especially in the period between the 1630s and the 1660s displayed a lavishness and prodigality which is unparalleled in private celebrations of the carnival. These were the years which saw the peak of the fortunes of the new papal families, the Barberini, the Pamphili, etc. We have the testimony of English visitors like John Milton to the magnificent hospitality and lavish spectacles put on by the Barberini in the 1630s and 1640s.³⁴

These pale in comparison with the show put on in 1656 for a more illustrious visitor, ex-queen Christina of Sweden, who had arrived in Rome towards the end of the preceding year. The visit brought out to the full the spirit of rivalry which existed among the noble families, as they sought to outdo each other in honouring her. Prince Pamphili succeeded in outshining the others by erecting, in record time, a balcony on his palace on the Corso, from which the royal visitor could view the proceedings: "Nella notte medesima del sabato aveva fatto erigere avanti il suo palazzo un lungo palco con sollecita e ben intera architettura".³⁵ Christina became a great devotee of the carnival during her long stay in Rome, and became a familiar sight to

visiting travellers like Mortoft: "The Queen of Swedland honoured this place twice with her presence, having the last day of the carnival the two Barberini, Franciscus and Carlo, with her in her coach, which was not very usual".³⁶ (This freedom of behaviour of the royal guest was not always appreciated by the Vatican).

The Rome which was the scene of these splendid spectacles was a city much changed from the preceding century; it was now 'Roma nova', the most modern city in Europe. One of the men who contributed to the grandeur of this new Rome was G.L. Bernini, who was also the great deviser of carnival masquerades and theatrical entertainments which, unlike his other works, have unfortunately not survived. The aristocratic carnival, the 'carnevale di signori', was the climax of a long period in which Church and nobility established an effective control over Rome. The people, as a political force, was vanquished and even its characteristic feasts were expropriated by the aristocracy, and the people had become onlookers. In the process the carnival had been tamed, and rendered a much less violent and dangerous affair.

The bullfight had been banned; there were one or two isolated examples put on by aristocratic patrons in the following century, and a burlesque, bloodless version of it was revived in the nineteenth century. The other dangerous sport of the joust or tournament was revived in the seventeenth century, but as a kind of court *fête*, a lavish spectacle rather than a warlike exercise. This was evident already in the elaborate tourney organized on the occasion of the wedding of Count Annibale Altemps, nephew of Pius IV, in 1565, though Pericoli Ridolfini considers it the last of the great military tournaments.³⁷ In the closing years of the sixteenth century the tournament became an essentially theatrical occasion: "Con il XVI

secolo le giostre e tornei, espressione nel mondo feudale della forza del signore e di reali conflitti di potenza, si fanno sempre più spettacoli. Non si assiste più a un combattimento e se il fine è sempre una dimostrazione di potenza dell' aristocrazia prevale, anche sul momento ludico, lo spiegamento fastoso di costumi e apparati".³⁸

The carnival had become a more refined and less dangerous occasion. The people had been tamed, and causes of potential unrest removed. Law and order had effectively been imposed on a phenomenon which contains in its spirit a powerful potential for disorder. The energy released by the licence of carnival could be dangerous for both Church and State. It is a moment of liberation, of 'catharsis', which can be achieved through music, dance, mock-battles, noise. But mock-battles, in particular, could develop into real ones; we have evidence of this in the seven year interruption in the festival, between 1475 and 1483, and there were other less notable, examples in the course of the following century. Feltrino da Manfredi's description of the carnival of 1499 tells us that masking had been "prohibita a pena de la forca e questo perchè ogni giorno si ammazzano multa brigata".³⁹

Lassels, writing in the mid seventeenth century, when control had been firmly established for some time, puts forward the idea that the carnival serves as a kind of 'safety-valve' for the release of tension; he admires the wisdom of the government which allows such a release, thereby avoiding real unrest and turbulence, which could be dangerous to the state. If only, he says, English rulers had been wise enough to adopt this system! "And this is allowed the Italians, that they may give a little vent to their spirits, which have been stifled in for a whole year, and are ready else to choak them with gravity and melancholy ... If our statesmen in England had gone on in the course their wise Ancestors had showed, and had suffered, as they did, some honest recreation to the People ... to give vent to their animal

Spirits, we had all been happier. But while both the Tribunals and the Pulpits thundered out against moderate Recreations and Assemblies, out of Fear and Faction, they made the humour of the English men grow so sour and bitter, that nothing would please them, but flat Rebellion and Fanatick Heresies." Two pages later Lassels gives us some idea of the limited range of this 'release', and the reason for the remarkable decorousness of the occasion. "By this you may guess at their other fooleries in carnival time, and see how innocently they divert themselves. For you must know, that none are suffered to carry Swords and Arms, while they go masked thus; nor to enter into any house; nor to go abroad masked after it grows dark; nor to do or speak any thing scandalously that may shock civility or publick view; for which reason there are always Guards set, and Sergeants riding up and down the street of the Corso, to keep all in order, and to make even Mirth observe Decency."⁴⁰

These two quotations from Lassel's account neatly summarise the policy of the Papal authorities towards the carnival in the preceding one hundred years. The Church, from its initial absolute rejection of this 'pagan' festival, had for centuries now accepted it as providing, like other feast-days which it had incorporated into the Christian calendar, the possibility of that much-needed moment of release from routine, tension and frustration. The problem of how much licence to grant the people in a period in which, theoretically, 'ogni scherzo vale' much preoccupied it; how to balance the provision to the people of 'Bread and circuses' to keep it quiet and unrebelling, with the need to curb the violent excesses which such licence provoked. When order and hierarchy have been turned upside down, is it always possible to recover that order? The policy did, in fact, work, and we do not find in the Roman carnival of the sixteenth century such an

example of conflict as Le Roy Ladurie describes in his book 'Le carnaval de Romans'.

The approach to the problem tended to reflect the attitude of the individual Pope, but in the closing years of the sixteenth century the emphasis was very much on severity and repression, particularly under the pontificate of Sixtus V; exasperated by the disorders of the recent carnivals, he put before the people the ultimate deterrent during the festival - the scaffold set up in the public square. Clementi gives the text of the savage 'bando' published by Sixtus in 1586, especially savage and grimly comic in its dispositions for those found guilty of interfering with the horse-race: "Avvertendo, che se per causa di detti impedimenti ne venghi morte o mutilatione, quelli che saranno causa, incorreranno ipso facto nella pena della forca da eseguirsi allhora in loco senz' altra tela giudiziaria, se ben quello che harà dato causa a detti impedimenti morisse: Nondimeno vuole s.s. Reverendissimo, che cosi morto, si possi incontanente far appiccare nel luogo istesso del Corso."⁴¹

This grim feature of the carnival, public executions proposed as a warning against disorders, and as a spectacle much appreciated by the people, continued into the nineteenth century. Over the last twenty years of the century there were a number of spectacular examples. One, in 1582, took place the day after the crime, an attempted murder, when the culprit was beheaded on ponte Sant' Angelo 'con li medesimi habiti de la maschera'. Others were reserved for the occasion; in 1581 a certain Catena (guilty of fifty-four murders!), in 1594 thirty bandits. The most illustrious victim was no murderer but the philosopher Giordano Bruno, who perished at the stake in Campo di Fiori during the carnival of 1600.⁴² These are extreme examples of the efforts made in these years to tame the carnival; to transform it from a wild, unruly and violent manifestation of pent-up emotions, into a

carefully-controlled and policed affair. The potential aggressiveness had to be channelled, while leaving the people with the impression of a complete freedom and licence.

Some of this freedom and licence undoubtedly survived in the seventeenth century carnival, and was to be witnessed on the Corso, and in the side-streets and piazzas. The problem is that it attracted very little attention from official chroniclers and foreign visitors, who were almost exclusively interested in the aristocratic and more spectacular manifestations. Luckily there are contemporary accounts, particularly from travellers, to give us some idea of the people's festival (these may be more appropriately considered in the next chapter); to these may be added occasional comments in the 'Avvisi di Roma'. But one important official source does give us some indirect evidence of the over-enthusiasm shown by some individuals; this is to be found in the annually published edicts, or 'bandi' which governed carnival, and which laid down the law with regard to what behaviour was not acceptable during the carnival period; the repetition, year after year, of these 'bandi', with almost the same wording, is an eloquent enough indication of the fact that they were very often not obeyed.

3. The people's carnival and the Church's opposition

Before looking at these edicts it would be appropriate to give a few examples of the people's carnival, enjoyed spontaneously and either unrelated, or often related rather ambivalently, to the official phenomenon. These examples can only give us a rather hazy impression of this whole aspect, this central aspect, of the carnival; documentary evidence is extremely scarce. It is here that the comparative method could be particularly useful, but a great deal of

caution has to be exercised in interpreting the scarce data. One area to explore is the element of burlesque and ribaldry to be observed in one or two references to the tournaments and the bullfights of the Agone and Testaccio games. The element of buffoonery and parody is an essential part of the carnival (the 'world upside down'), and other such seasonal festivals as, for example, the old Roman Saturnalia. A burlesque, then, of the strength, skill and courage of the champions in the tourney or the bullfight might be expected on these occasions. Erasmus, in the course of his visit to Rome in 1509, was present at a bullfight in the Vatican palace: "ma quello spettacolo sanguinoso non gli andò a genio, lo divertì invece assai un buffone mascherato che intramezzava le uccisioni di tori con la caricatura del combattimento".⁴³ Some years later (in 1545) we have a more elaborate version of this: "come negli spettacoli di palazzo, non manca l'intermezzo dei buffoni: una livrea di 36 buffoni, personaggi specializzati nelle parodie delle danze armate note come 'dances des bouffons', diffuse tra il '400 e il '500 e di cui si è rilevato la corrispondenza, nei duelli dei poemi eroicomici. Qui i Mattaccini appaiono a cavallo e si esibiscono in un burlesco assalto ai tori".⁴⁴

The jesters on this occasion were professionals hired by an aristocratic patron, as in any court fête, and the same is possibly true of the one whose performance so amused Erasmus. But, whether from professionals or amateurs such exhibitions are the reflection of a popular culture, a culture shared by all classes of society in this early period. The 'giullare', often an expert in the parody of chivalric culture, was of course a great favourite with the crowd. But let us look at what seem more spontaneous, improvised entertainments put on by the people themselves, often away from the scene of the official programme of carnival. For, as Fiorani points out, even in liturgical feasts the people had their own amusements, besides their

passive enjoyment of the spectacle laid on for them: "Ma se durante le sfilate il popolo guardava in silenzio o partecipava con animo devoto allo snodarsi delle immagini sacre e delle preghiere intonate dai sacerdoti, la conclusione dei riti dava il via a un rumoroso sciamare per le strade del quartiere e un affollarsi nelle osterie".⁴⁵ How much more enthusiastically, then, might they be expected to participate in the joys of carnival!

An early observer of the carnival of the people in Naples, towards the end of the sixteenth century, Bartolommeo del Tufo, may give us some idea of what was happening in Rome. We have for this same period the accounts of the Sieur de Villamont of both carnivals, which show striking similarities in two features (so much so that the descriptions are almost identical). Del Tufo, in his poetic account, after looking at such manifestations of the aristocratic celebrations as the 'Barriera', or 'combat à la barriere', goes on to talk about a very different kind of carnival, of a decidedly rustic character, obviously non-official and unstructured:

"Mentre a spezzar lancia i cavalieri / vedeste et anco allor
tanti boffoni / Trastulli e pantaloni / che per tutti i cantoni /
con le parole e gesti et altri spassi / fanno ridere i sassi /
Sentireste et intorno / cento cocchi di musiche ogni giorno, /
come anco farse, tresche et imperticate / da cento ammascarate /
et al suon del pignato o del tagliero / cantar mastro Rogiero / e
simili persone / col tamburello o con lo calascione ...

Move in giro le man, natiche e piedi / ...

et allor tu vedi / con gratia il ballator gir sempre a tuono /
porge in for l'anche e vien dove tu siedì / con man natiche e
piè, cui gl'altri sono / dietro a mirar di che il primier fa
cenno / con piè natiche e man, con tutto il senno."⁴⁶

Del Tufo's verses concern three central features of the people's carnival - masking (which we shall look at later), music-making and dancing. What we should note in his description of the dance is the strongly sexual connotations of the movements. These have led to its being identified with a popular dance of the time, of Maltese origin, known as the 'Sfessania'. Posner, in his article on Callot's 'Balli di Sfessania' has made the connection between the etchings and Del Tufo's verses, and related them to a popular song of the period (lines from which appear on the frontispiece of the Callot collection).⁴⁷ The phallic movements which we find in this song and in Del Tufo and Callot indicate a fertility dance (like the contemporary 'Moresca', or the English Morris dance), and remind us that dance plays an essential role in the carnival ritual of death and rebirth.⁴⁸

The body in its various functions, especially reproduction and defecation, is basic to carnival imagery.⁴⁹ The vulgarity which so offended later ages, and led to a determined effort on the part of the authorities to clean up the carnival, was an essential feature of the earlier festival, and something so deeply rooted in popular culture that it has proved impossible to eliminate it completely. In the carnival of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there are fleeting references to it. The co-existence of popular culture and the culture of the elite which had existed before, was lost in the seventeenth century. Culture, like society itself, had become more rigidly compartmentalized. The culture which had belonged to all classes became identified with the common people, and was no longer accorded a place of any importance in the carnival celebrations. Its culture was driven underground, surfacing in descriptions of the later carnival with occasional references to rude words or gestures.⁵⁰

Writers on the carnival like Clementi are repelled by such

manifestations of the carnival spirit. A typical remark from this writer comes after his description, quoted from a contemporary source, of one of the most curious, and most puzzling, incidents reported in the carnival:

"a 20 gennaio "fu fatta la caccia alla conca di San Marco de tori 14", che si protrasse per cinque giorni ... Il diarista ricorda anche che venne "ammazzato un porco e fu ammazzata la spinosa da un uomo a cavallo a culo nudo (?) e fu ammazzato il riccio a coscie nude da una femina (?) e vi fu fatta la gatta e non fu ammazzata". Non è il caso di intrattenersi su questi sconci giochi popolari. Più gradite feste si preparano alla fontana "de Nagone". Colà ai 25 di febbraio, venne eretta nel mezzo della piazza una colonna di sei botti di vino. .. La fontana poi era scomparsa sotto una piramide di prosciutti e di ciambelle, sul vertice della quale era stato collocato un porco intero arrostito".⁵¹

This side of the carnival was attacked, of course, by the Church, and its disappearance, or at least diminution, was one instance of the Church's triumph over this pagan festival. It had been violently opposed to it from its earliest days; the Fathers of the Church, St. Augustine, Tertullian, St. John Chrysostom, had fulminated against the carnival. Such attacks often aroused the passionate resentment of the people; Clementi tells us that St. Almachio was killed by the crowd for trying to stop the carnival revels.⁵²

The Church opposed the use of the mask, the invention of the Devil, not just because it constituted an incognito to avoid detection in the commission of disorders or crimes, for the settling of scores, personal or political (it was, at different times, all of these), but because it was an occasion for the wearer to lose his sense of

identity and become possessed by a force other than sexuality or the desire for revenge, or political subversion: "Ma non basta la gioia, e neppure l'ebbrezza del vino e dei sensi: ci vuole qualcosa di ancor più spinto: la follia".⁵³ What the Church feared was this loss of control, this re-emergence of what it saw as pagan forces, the triumph of the Devil. That something of this survived into the seventeenth and even the eighteenth century, is clear from the writings against carnival and the Feast of Fools which appeared in these later periods, such as the works by Savaron and Du Tillot⁵⁴. Mention of the Feast of Fools reminds us that the Church had good reason to fear such excesses if they could take place in the church itself, and figure in the Church calendar. Toschi gives us some idea of this extraordinary feast in which the lower clergy played the main part in producing a grotesque parody of the Mass, with obscene songs, dances, with the wearing of devil and animal masks, and even, it is claimed, fornication in the church itself.⁵⁵

The parody of religious, liturgical forms was a standard feature of medieval and Renaissance popular culture, and has left signs in the literature and art of these periods - Boccaccio's story of Ser Cepperello is an obvious example. Burke tells us that parodies of religious forms like the catechism, the psalms or the Lord's Prayer, and mock sermons, were to be found in the repertoire of the medieval clowns.⁵⁶ All of these, as Bakhtin has pointed out in his study of Rabelais, come from the sphere of carnival imagery, of the reversals, the emphasis on 'life upside-down' which we find in this period of disorder.⁵⁷ They are not to be taken as the expression of irreligion, or deliberate acts of deconsecration of the Church. The parody of religious forms was akin to the parody of chivalric forms like the tournament or the joust, or the parody of learning in the mask of the

Doctor or the Lawyer. It would be naive to assume that there was no element of resentment against authority, religious or secular, but the main impulse was the tremendous sense of release of carnival laughter.

The excesses of carnival and the Feast of Fools became prime targets of Church and State in the process of establishing power over the people in the course of the sixteenth century. With the demise of the Feast of Fools carnival became the main reflection of popular culture, a culture which over the space of a few hundred years was gradually repressed and devalued. The aristocracy, reacting against much of the spirit of 'life upside-down', outlawed the more vulgar manifestations of the festival and relegated the people to a marginal role in the proceedings. The community spirit, the social cohesiveness of the carnival was lost.

The second half of the century saw the Church triumph over the carnival mentality. What it was particularly determined to remove from the carnival and other expressions of popular culture was the mingling of the sacred and the profane. As we have seen, with reference to the Feast of Fools, the church itself was not sacred in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; and we have seen that the Vatican itself and St Peter's Square were often the scenes of tourneys and bullfights, as well as rather lewd theatrical entertainments in the reigns of Popes like Alexander VI or Leo X. The clergy, before the Reformation, had been close to its congregation, sharing its tastes, its beliefs, its superstitions, its culture and its feasts. This applied in particular to the lower clergy, but was true to some extent even at the highest level, as in the case of the afore-mentioned Alexander VI and Leo X, great lovers of the carnival entertainments.

What strikes us particularly forcefully in the Renaissance period, is the important role played by the higher clergy - the cardinals. The most famous example of obscene licence in these years is actually

directed against the college of cardinals; it is reported by Burcardus in his diary for 1503: "post prandium, iverunt ad Plateam Triginta Mascherati habentes nasos longos et grossos in forma priaporum, sive membrorum virilium (!!!) in magna quantitate, precedente eos valisia cardinalis habentia arma sive scuta cum tribus vexillis".⁵⁸ While his son Cesare was incensed by this demonstration, Alexander VI himself seems to have been genuinely amused at the insolence, and brushed aside the former's urgings that he should punish the culprits. The obscenity we find in this masquerade may not be, indeed, far removed from that of certain sixteenth century carnival 'carri' organized by individual cardinals, and paraded in grand pomp around the houses of other cardinals.⁵⁹

The young cardinals were also noticeably vain and arrogant in their public appearances, and there is no shortage of references to the splendid costumes in which they appeared during carnival in the streets, on horseback or in carriages. It was a sad occasion when they did not appear in all their finery. Sanuto tells us that the carnival of 1519 was a poor affair, since the cardinals were not spending the money they used to on rich costumes: "Altri cardinali non a fato niune livree ... nè c'è più quel tempo del povero Cardinal di Siena, che spendeva in uno zorno in una livrea ducati 4000, sì che niuno di tanti cardinali ha speso un quatrino."⁶⁰

Their gorgeous finery was equalled by their arrogance; proud of their grand coaches or their prowess as horsemen they were indifferent to any harm which these could cause. A notable example is found in a description of the carnival of 1508: "Nella festa in Agone il 4 marzo 1508, comparve mascherato il cardinale Sanseverino su un cavallo morello con due staffieri grandi a piedi. Stette forse sei ore nel cospetto di più di 30,000 persone ed era conosciuto da tutti (certo

per la sua statura gigantesca): e presso i cardinali e gli uomini d'ingegno fu per lui una vergogna perpetua, ed al presente non si parla d'altro in Roma.' Gli fu compagno il cardinal di Narbona (Castelnau) che cavalcava un cavallo leardo 'e stroppiò molte persone e buttò a terra. Vi so dire che fece un fatto d'arme assai vituperoso per lui."⁶¹ The cardinals' love of horses was shown in relation to the races, where they are sometimes (like the Cardinal of Lorraine in the pontificate of Hadrian VI) reported as owners of the winners; it was to be seen, too, in their love for hunting.⁶²

The crisis of the Church in the sixteenth century, with the traumas of the Reformation and the Sack of Rome in 1527 cast a shadow over the city. The carnival was banned for a number of years after 1527, making a brilliant return in 1536. The century was to see few splendid carnivals after this date; we have already referred to the festival of 1539 and Clementi describes 1545 as the last great carnival of the century ('un canto di cigno') which saw the end of the splendid processions of Agone and Testaccio.⁶³ The following twenty years witnessed an alternation between concession and repression. Clementi quotes the words of Luigi Mocenigo in a report to the Venetian council in 1560: "Qui si vive modestamente. Essi (the clergy) ... non prendono più parte alcuna ai pubblici divertimenti, non si veggono più, come altre volte, cardinali mascherati, non si scorgono più correr le vie di Roma a cavallo e in vettura in compagnia di dame. Non più banchetti, non più giochi, non più caccie, non livree, nè altro lusso."⁶⁴ The situation, as always, varied according to the temperament of the individual pope; Julius III, for example, was a great lover of the popular games, while showing little interest in grand 'Trionfi'.⁶⁵

By the 1570s carnival was a rather poor affair; Gregory XIII had no love for it and urged his cardinals to abstain.⁶⁶ In these closing

decades of the century there was a succession of anti-carnival popes, culminating with Clement VIII (1592-1605), who would have liked to ban it entirely.⁶⁷ Montaigne, on his visit of 1581, despite finding the carnival in a moment of reprise, was not very impressed with it: "Le Quaresme Prenant que ce fit à Rome cette année là, fut plus licentieux, par la permission du pape, qu'il n'avoit esté plusieurs années auparavant: nous trouvions pourtant que ce n'estoit pas grand chose".⁶⁸ A few years after Montaigne's visit, as we have seen, came the pontificate of Sixtus V (1589-90) who set himself seriously to restraining the excesses of the event, with his savage 'bando' of 1586, described by Clementi as the "magna carta del carnevale romano".⁶⁹

From 1597 dates another important institution which will survive to the end of the carnival's history, introduced by the Jesuits as a kind of counter-carnival - the ceremony of the Forty Hours, or 'carnevale santificato', based on the principle of not allowing the Devil to have the best tunes! Here, rather than intimidation or coercion, the gentler arts of persuasion were used to tempt people away from the profane pleasures of the Corso into the church by a theatrical display of religious art and devotion; in this first year it was presented, according to the chronicler of the 'Avvisi di Roma', "con tale ornamento ed apparato; che molti, anzi la maggior parte di Roma, si compiacque più di questo esercizio spirituale che degli altri vani trattenimenti".⁷⁰ The theatrical flair increased, as we might expect, in the following century, as we may see in the account of Grangier de Liverdys of his visit to the church of Gesù: "Là j'admiray la vision du prophète Ezechiel ... il y avoit en cet ouvrage de grosses machines de bois ... Il ne se pouvoit rien voir de plus beau."⁷¹

4. The regulation of carnival

The restraints imposed on the carnival revelries in the latter half of the sixteenth century were, from the point of view of the maintenance of law and order, much needed. After centuries of disorder carnival was codified in edicts which governed the behaviour of the participants, and prescribed the punishment for transgressions. This represented another key moment in the history of the festival; repressive as these measures were they left an imprint on the carnival which changed its nature in the following centuries. They also imposed a tighter framework on the festival. This had to be formally authorized by the Pope each year; each year the Capitoline magistrates had to compile a programme to be accepted or rejected by the pontiff; if, as was usually the case, it was accepted, it would then be given to the Governor to supervise its execution. The fact that permission was not automatically granted meant that the posting of the 'bandi' were awaited with eager anticipation. Bouchard is one of the first foreign visitors to note this, in 1632: "Les bandi affichez, aussitost l'on vit paroistre quantité de masques, car cette publication tient lieu de permission de se masquer sans laquelle l'on ne scauroit faire aucun masque, sur peine de prison."⁷²

Normally three 'bandi' were published (though Bouchard indicates four), one relating to the masking, one to the races, and one, be it noted, to the treatment of the Jews. The latter two may be more conveniently treated together (since the race was, with the 'giudiata', the most notable occasion for the display of anti-semitism). The first 'bando', while being ostensibly concerned with the wearing of masks, was rather broader in scope. It also contained the important prohibition on the carrying of weapons and the throwing of certain objects. Mock battles, as we shall see, figured largely in the

carnival celebrations; in Chapter Two we shall look at the throwing of flowers and confetti (real ones or plaster-coated pellets), and the earlier throwing of eggs; there we may note, from the evidence of the 'bandi', that even in the seventeenth century more offensive and dangerous objects were thrown. The wearing of masks was allowed only within stated hours, and rigorously forbidden after dark. Lassels notes this, and also the fact that it was forbidden to enter houses wearing a mask. Masks representing the clergy were very severely prohibited, as were any costumes which resembled clerical dress.

Bouchard makes it clear that, despite the severity of the edicts, not too much attention was paid to them - with three exceptions: "De toutes lesquelles deffences l'on n'observe presque rien, fors de se démasquer à 24 heures sonantes, et ne mesler chose aucune de religion ni dans les habits, ni dans les brocards de masque; encore que Nodé ait assure à Orestes d'avoir vu dans le cours un vestu de long, avec un bonnet carré, qui tenant un grand livre en main faisoit semblant de dire son bréviaire, faisant de grands signes de croix. Outre ce, l'on garde, encore fort religieusement qu'aucune femme n'aille masquée."⁷³ The clergy, in general, was among the categories expressly forbidden from appearing on the street - unless it enjoyed the power and prestige of the Barberini family! Only in the eighteenth century were things to change considerably from the days when cardinals took an active part in the carnival festivities, and paraded so proudly on the streets. In the preceding century, despite the more rigorous control exercised, the higher clergy still enjoyed a remarkable degree of freedom to appear in the carnival.

Another category excluded from the fun was that of the courtesans. This group, like women in general, was not allowed to mask or to appear in the street, but could view the proceedings from windows or balconies. The courtesans had, of course, enjoyed

considerable prestige in Renaissance Rome, as elsewhere in Italy. The repressive measures of the late sixteenth century had had some effect on them, but they still obviously enjoyed a great deal of prestige and protection, accorded by the aristocracy and the high clergy. Du Bellay, writing in the 1550s gives us an impression of their arrogance, riding through the streets on horseback, or in coaches, accompanied by prelates or sitting at windows, or, at carnival time, taking part in the amusements in the public square.⁷⁴

Villamont in his accounts of the carnival in Rome and in Naples, in the 1580s, gives a curious example of a tribute paid to them, treated as if they were great ladies: "Mais ce que j'admire plus, c'est que les plus grands de Rome, passans au devant de la fenêtr^e de Madame la Courtisane, ils la saluent en toute humilité, lui baisant les mains, et passant devant elle comme c'étoyt une princesse ou quelque grande Dame."⁷⁵ Bouchard's description of 1632 includes this detail, but indicates furthermore a rather different kind of tribute, of ribald and vulgar shouts: "Devant chaque porte de garce il y avoit quelque masque qui luy disoit mille vilenies et injures."⁷⁶ This detail is already there in Villamont's description, with the added comment that such tribute was received with as much pleasure by the courtesan as the most respectful salutation: "à laquelle les Stratulles & Zanits disent mille brocards où elle prend plaisir, comme d'une harangue faicte à sa louange."⁷⁷ This mixture of reverence and ribaldry, of praise and abuse, is a regular feature of carnival.

Although the courtesans still received powerful protection and patronage in the seventeenth century, the 'bandi' which forbade them from appearing in the street, or wearing a mask, could be enforced by the Governor; an example of this is the flogging in 1637 of the famous Checca Buffona, mistress of Cardinal Antonio Barberini.⁷⁸ They

continued to defy the ban, however, and in doing so contravened another strict edict which forbade women to appear in male dress; we are told by a number of commentators that courtesans were particularly fond of appearing in male costumes, and masked. Such cross-dressing, which should be a standard feature of carnival reversals, was in fact limited to men (as we see in the case of Bouchard, dressing up as a French girl). It extended to the stage where, in plays and operas, female performers were not allowed in Rome; this situation applied almost to the end of the eighteenth century.

One very striking feature of the Roman carnival before the eighteenth century was the general exclusion of women from direct participation. The rule applied equally to ladies of quality and courtesans (it was difficult to tell the difference, some visitors grumbled!); they only appeared as spectators, admired and admiring, of the festivities - 'carri', masking, processions - as they had at the tourneys and bullfights of Agone and Testaccio. There is almost no evidence of women of the lower classes appearing on the Corso before the eighteenth century, and their presence does not seem to become general until the following century. Women, presumably representing a source of evil, were to be kept away from such dangerous, and potentially disorderly, places as public theatres (even as spectators), or the streets of the city in carnival time. To appear in the guise of a man or in any kind of mask was, in the eyes of the Church, an abomination! In this area, too, the carnival laws of contrast or inversion offended the Church, though it showed a certain male bias in accepting the custom of men dressing as women, but regarding the converse as going against the laws of nature, and, more importantly, against the laws of God. The French seventeenth century writer, Savaron, in his attack on the custom of masking, does not take such a partial reading of the words of the Bible, though he does

choose a female victim to illustrate the horrible punishment which could be meted out to offenders - including burning at the stake: "... oyez le Dieu éternel, 'la femme n'aura point les habits de l'homme, & l'homme ne vestira point les vêtements de la femme; car quiconque le fait est abomination au seigneur Dieu' (Deuteronomy, cap. 22) ... & ce fut le seul sujet pourquoy les Anglais ietterent le sort sur la vie de la Pucelle d' Orleans, d'ailleurs innocente."⁷⁹

In the second half of the seventeenth century we do see, however, a gradual relaxation of the 'bandi' on the appearance of women in theatres, on the street during the carnival, and on the wearing of masks and male clothing. Or rather, we find the edicts persisting, but a blind eye being turned towards their transgression. Gigli's diary cites an example from as early as 1641: "A dì 13 de Febraro fu il primo giorno di Quaresima ... Il carnevale fu bel tempo, et si mascherorno di molte Donne, non perchè havessero licenza, ma perchè si chiudeva gli occhi."⁸⁰ And examples of this indulgence multiplied in the course of the century, until the bans were eventually removed in 1686, another epoch-making year in the carnival. Veryard, in the 1680s, is already reporting that the ladies have more liberty than for all the rest of the year, during carnival "being permitted to go to Balls, Comedies, Operas and the like".⁸¹ It is not impossible that the example of Queen Christina in these years might have had some bearing on the relaxation of the bans. Right from the start of her stay in Rome she impressed, and shocked, by the freedom of her behaviour. "sia nel vestirsi che nel comportarsi, trascurava tutte le usanze, e teneva fermo, anche in Roma, a quella libertà di rapporti fra l'uomo e la donna, comuni nei paesi germanici."⁸²

5. The 'Trionfo'

It could be argued that the process by which the Roman carnival was brought under the control of the Church and the State, firmly established by the early years of the seventeenth century, and the weakening of its links with popular culture, with the concomitant relegation of the people to the role of spectators rather than actors, can be traced back to Paul II's move to the via Lata in 1466. It was only a partial move, as we have seen, but Paul's innovations, the concentration on the masquerade and the races, set the format of the carnival for the next two centuries, and with some changes and modifications, together with the masking and the addition of the confetti and flower battles and the 'mocoli' ceremony, for the rest of its history. These changes and modifications will be looked at in the following chapter. In this section there is room for only a brief indication of the individual masking on the Corso (and elsewhere). To complete the survey of this chapter it remains to say something about the two innovations of 1466, and how they were modified over the next two hundred years.

Mantovano calls the masquerade the most important innovation of Paul II, giving as it did a magnificence to the occasion which it had not had before.⁸³ There had been grand processions of the 'rioni' in the games of Agone and Testaccio, but nothing to equal the scale of this first masquerade, or 'trionfo', with its classical figures. According to Premoli there was by this time in Rome a long tradition of festive 'trionfi' inspired by ancient models and the Humanistic studies of the period, under the influence of the Accademia Pomponiana.⁸⁴ The new pagan element introduced by Paul II caused a certain outrage among some members of his entourage, but most of them accepted it quite happily; when cardinal Ammanati protested against

the change he was laughed to scorn.⁸⁵ As the name implies the 'Trionfo' is an expression of victory, or success; the obvious reference is to the Triumph of the Roman generals. The practice was remembered in connection with the tributes of the conquered cities to Rome in the games of Testaccio and Agone; and it also came to represent the triumph of the people of Rome in re-establishing a democratic form of government.

With Paul II's masquerade we have another important feature, which tended to dominate in later years. The celebration of the city of Rome continued, but alongside it there was the celebration of the Papacy, even the celebration of the pope himself. The procession, watched by Pope and cardinals from the balcony of his palace, was a magnificent one:

"Precedeva uno stuolo di giganti dalle teste ciclopiche, seguito da un gruppo di amorini, con arco e faretra, i quali scagliavano lungo la via dardi d'amore. Veniva quindi, a cavallo, Diana cacciatrice, raffigurata da una nobile dama, nel suo provocante costume di dea. A lei faceva corona uno sciame di ninfe seducenti e civettuole, che studiosamente mal celavano le artistiche forme, sotto gli agili veli che le ricoprivano. Seguivano altri 160 giovinetti, biancovestiti, i quali marciavano a schiera con ordine militare, recando bandiere variopinte di seta e di velluto, donate dal Prefetto dei giuochi, e dopo di essi, una turba di re, di regine e di duci, vinti dai romani, nelle loro barbariche armature. Si notava fra questi Cleopatra, bellissima, mollemente adagiata nel suo trono di porpora e d'oro e, a lei vicino, Cesare Augusto, invocante gli amplessi ammagliatori. Poi appariva l'Olimpo, e, tra fauni e baccanti, invasati dal furore del nume, la Casa di Marte, dei ed eroi, con i loro mitologici simboli. Chiudevano il corteo quattro grandissimi carri, che costituivano l'apoteosi del Pontefice. Erano preceduti da una folla di plebei, che

levavano in alto le insegne e i vessilli del popolo di Roma e da trombettieri elegantissimi, le cui trombe d'argento squillavano allegramente, mentre uno stuolo di poeti declamavano e cantavano sui carri versi e poesie in onore di Paolo II, "vero padre della patria, ottimo, massimo."⁸⁶

In 1500 there was not the triumph of the Pope, but of his son Cesare, a magnificent procession which featured, naturally, the 'triumph of Caesar'. Premoli tells us the 'trionfo' became in 1513 the representation of the Pope's victories. The 'Triumph of Julius' made of the carnival of that year one of the most splendid in the history of the event.⁸⁷ With the exceptions of that of Paul II and the one held in 1492, these 'trionfi' were not for the most part 'tableaux vivants', but wooden and 'papier mache' constructions.⁸⁸ With the 'carri di trionfo' of the seventeenth century there was once more the presence of real people, in fact the Roman aristocracy themselves appearing in the guise of gods and goddesses, mythological and historical characters, followed by a retinue dressed in the same style.⁸⁹

The period of the Reformation provides examples of 'trionfi' which refer to the religious and political situation. The struggle against the Turks became the subject of carnival processions, in 1539 and again in 1545: "Il tema del trionfo sui Turchi si estendeva anche al corteo di Testaccio, dove comparvero schiere di staffieri vestiti da schiavi Mori, 'volendo rappresentare li triumpho antiqui Romani in detta festa et gioco; poi si vistero li carri trionfali ripieni di diversi trophei".⁹⁰ In this particular procession there was even a triumphal chariot for the Pope himself, where Paul III appeared (in effigy), in all his pontifical splendour.⁹¹ In the carnival of 1539 there appeared a triumphal procession representing the Church's

victory over heresy and the anathema of Luther.⁹²

As we have seen, the 'carri' of 1539 and 1545 were the last great occasions which saw the full display of the might of Rome and the Roman people. After this period the games of Agone and Testaccio died out, and the carnival moved into a rather sombre period. When it recovered some of its splendour in the following century it did so as a reflection of the wealth and vanity of the Roman court, of the new papal aristocracy. The court 'fête' of the Baroque period was reproduced in the street festival. The theatrical brilliance of this period was to be seen in most of the notable carnival manifestations of the age; an age dominated by the multi-faceted talent of G.L. Bernini, whose every production showed his theatrical flair - from the Cornaro chapel in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria to his carnival plays, written, directed and more often than not acted by him.⁹³ As we have seen, even the religious function of the Quarant' Ore adopted Baroque theatricality to reach its audience.

Among the aristocracy the high prelates still played a considerable role in the mounting of carnival entertainments, and were foremost among the purveyors of a new, nocturnal, theatrical and musical event. An early example of this is cited by Clementi in 1578; through the main streets of the town proceeded "una galea, tutta dipinta, tirata da cavalli" with music and dance, which stopped in front of the "case notabili", dove furono esequite 'gratiose scaramucchie 'con grande letizia del popolo, che, acclamando, lo seguiva." Clementi, also, in describing the carnival of 1606, refers to another such 'carro musicale' remembered by Pietro della Valle in a letter of 1640 to Lelio Guidiccioni; "fu delle prime ationi in musica che in Roma si sieno udite"⁹⁴; an important moment in the history of the opera in Rome, just prior to its establishment as operatic centre

of Italy in this period.

6. Individual masks

But what of the carnival of the people, in the midst of all this aristocratic splendour? They, too, had their 'carri', less elegant and displaying a rougher, more knockabout humour than was to be seen and heard on the 'carri nobili', with their professional musicians, dancers and acrobats; putting on plays or sketches such as those encountered by Bouchard in 1632: "... par toute Rome, où il vit quantité d'extravagances, n'y ayant coing de rue ou il n'y eust ou bien une petite comédie à trois ou quatre personages, qu'ils appellent zingaresca, ou un assemblage de covielli, dottori, pantaloni, raguetti etc. qui se rencontraient se chantoient pouilles."⁹⁵ Some of the masks to be seen were already familiar ones by the early years of the century; others did not survive into the following century, like some other features of the seventeenth century carnival. What follows is an exploratory look at the pre-history of the masking in Rome. Here we are entering into one of the most problematic aspects of the phenomenon, since there is a particular dearth of documentary material; being the least studied area of the carnival a fair amount of use in the reconstruction of such scenes would have to be made of the comparative method. These are the scenes which the chroniclers of the 'Avvisi di Roma' dismiss as "la solita gazzarra sul Corso"; typical of this attitude is one such quotation given by Clementi from 1603: "La consueta gazzara carnevalesca non manca anche in quest'anno; ma non si hanno inventioni di qualità poichè - recano gli 'Avvisi' - pochi signori principali si sono mascherati."⁹⁶

Mention of individual masks, rather than of generic references to splendid oriental costumes or to 'buffoni', are extremely scarce

before the seventeenth century. For much of the preceding periods chroniclers speak vaguely of 'mascare' or 'larvati', as, for example, in the apparently apocryphal account of the games of 1372 by Nardo Scocciapile quoted in Clementi: "tanti erano li mascari che non c'era nè fine nè fondo."⁹⁷ And in an account of a century later, again quoted by Clementi, we find Sixtus IV seeking refuge from the maskers: "nel giorno dei baccanali recavasi alla sua vigna "ut larvatos fugeret"⁹⁸; carnival merry-making obviously continued in this year, 1482, even if the games had not yet been resumed since their interruption after 1475.

There were masks in these years, then, but there is a great dearth of references, let alone descriptions of them. The idea of a carnival without masks is, of course, inconceivable; they are a fundamental part of the festival. Descriptions of carnival revels, or those of occasions like Twelfth Night or the Feast of Fools, indicate very simple, primitive disguises; ashes or mud smeared over the face, for example, or clothes turned inside out, sackcloth coverings, sheep or cowskins. These simple masks take us back to the roots of the phenomenon; to primitive man who disguised himself with what was immediately at hand (dirt rubbed into his face, animal skins, etc.); to a time when masking had a powerful practical and ritual significance - propitiation^a of the gods, hunting, the exorcism of evil spirits, etc. Identifying himself with the animal to be hunted could, for example, give the hunter certain power over it, to defeat it: "The ritual expert arranged himself in the skin and antlers of a stag or the feathers of a bird and imitated the behaviour of the species".⁹⁹

Animals represent natural forces, irrational forces, which make them inevitable presences in the carnival subversion of reason, order, authority. For this reason, too, masks were feared and condemned by

the Church. Such rites survived into the early Middle Ages, despite the advent of Christianity and the attacks of the Fathers of the Church. We find them in the Rome of the sixteenth century, through the eyes of a Florentine arriving in carnival time: "Oh! io veggio una gran turma, / mezi-lupi, golpe et orsi / mascherati in piazza corsi, / va lor drieto molta ciurma, / parmi facin tucti a morsi, / di cinghiali tori et chani / contrafacte han le lor mani, / son qui gente di tua fede."¹⁰⁰ And Savaron in the seventeenth century, and du Tillot in the eighteenth century, indicate their continuing presence: "Maintenant en nos masquerades on ne laisse rien à faire, il y a des masques qui représentent des ours, des loups, des chiens, des taureaux, des cerfs, des monstres, des Satires, des Diables, on les débite publiquement, on les porte; ceux-là n'ont ils pas perdu l'image de Dieu, la ressemblance de Jesus-Christ qui se transforment en simulacres rempliz de sacrileges?"¹⁰¹

The animal mask bears some relation to the devil mask. The devils in the medieval mystery plays, we are told, appeared covered with wolf, calf or goat-skins. Toschi points out, for example, that the figure of the devil-mask is at the centre of the theatrical experience, in its turn generating the mask of the clown.¹⁰² The devils in the mystery plays, who were given licence to run about in the streets wearing their costumes and 'attacking' people, have possibly some relationship to the young men in wolf-skins who ran through the streets of Rome in the Lupercalia. The sixteenth century clown, as seen in Francesco Bertelli's series on 'Il carnevale italiano', still wears the pointed animal ears that were worn by the devils in the mystery plays.¹⁰³ Historians of the Commedia dell'Arte have indicated the affinity between the devil mask and the mask of the 'zanni', ancestor of the popular masks of Arlecchino, Pulcinella,

etc., and between these masks and the animal masks.¹⁰⁴

The theatrical comic masks were in great evidence in the seventeenth century carnival. We find in Berger's list the masks representing the different Italian cities - Venice (Pantalone), Bologna (Zanni - rather than the Dottore), Naples (Cola), Acerra (Pulcinella)¹⁰⁵. The first Commedia dell' Arte mask to appear in the Roman carnival was probably 'zanni'. There is mention of troupes of improvisers in the city from as early as 1546. One of the first reference to a specific mask is to the Venetian Pantalone or, as he was still known at this time 'il Magnifico'. This is in Du Bellay's sonnet from 'Les Regrets' ('Voicy le carnaval ..."). In the brief compass of the sonnet the poet manages to include several features of the carnival at this time (the 1550s) - the chivalric 'jeu de la barrière' (mentioned later by Montaigne), the buffalo-race ("Et voyons par le nez le sot bufle mener"), the horse-race ("le pal ... à la mode ancienne"), the throwing of perfumed eggs, or 'fusées', and, most interesting for us at this point, "son Magnifique à la venitienne!"¹⁰⁶ This Pantalone could be a stage mask; he is referred to as Marc'Antoine; Premoli indicates that a certain 'Marcantonio Veneziano' performed in Rome in 1550¹⁰⁷; and there is mention of Commedia dell' Arte troupes in the city as early as 1546. Clementi confirms the use of dialect masks in the carnival during the pontificate of Julius III (1550-1555).¹⁰⁸

The question of which comes first, carnival mask or stage mask has much preoccupied historians of the Commedia dell' Arte and has perhaps yet to receive a satisfactory answer. If Du Bellay is speaking of the actor, Marcantonio, Grazzini's lines, also from the 1550s, clearly refer to Commedia dell' Arte masks in the streets of Florence during carnival: "Facendo il-bergamasco / e'l veneziano / n'andiamo in ogni parte, / e'l recitar commedie / è la nostra 'arte ... Questi

vostri dappochi commediai / certe lor filastrocchole vi fanno ...
 Commedie nuove abbiam composte in guisa, / che quando recitar le
 sentirete, / morrete della risa, / tanto son belle, giocose e
 facete."¹⁰⁹ The scenes witnessed on the Corso by visitors like
 Bouchard have an obvious similarity to the situations and the
 exchanges of dialogue to be found in the improvised comedy: "La plus
 part de tous ces gens là sont gens ordinaires qui vont à pied, et se
 rencontrant les uns les autres aus coings des rues, font des espèces
 de comédies, se disant mille injures et sonnettes, tant entre eus
 qu'aus autres passants, dont il y en a de tres plaisantes et argües,
 les Italiens estant naturellement fort éloquents en ces matières
 là".¹¹⁰

Apart from the Commedia dell' Arte masks, like Pulcinella and
 Arlecchino, another category which will be looked at in the next
 chapter is that of the traditional masks which can be found in any
 carnival (and which are also to be found in the comedy) - such as the
 Doctor, the Lawyer, the Astrologer; figures which relate to the basic
 imagery of carnival, and are to be witnessed performing scenes on
 foot, or on 'carri', in the street. The next chapter will also be a
 more suitable place to look at those masks which relate to other
 aspects of the festival - social and sexual reversals, giants,
 grotesques; etc.

This section may be concluded by looking briefly at a few of the
 masks which are included in Bouchard's account of 1632, the longest
 and most detailed which we have for this period, and by looking also
 at some which, popular up to the seventeenth century, were not so
 common in later periods. Foreign masks, for example, enjoyed in
 Bouchard's day - and later - a certain amount of popularity. Bouchard,
 naturally, mentions the French, the 'Raguetti' (he himself chose the

costume of a French girl, complete with looking-glass); he also mentions the Swiss¹¹¹ (familiar in Rome in the guise of the Papal Guard, and in their fondness for drink): we see the Swiss guard in the paintings of the 'Bamboccista' Jan Miel. Germans do not figure in Bouchard's description, but they were popular masks in this and in the following century.¹¹² Nor do Spaniards, perhaps surprisingly given the numbers of them who were in Rome at the time - or perhaps not so surprisingly, given the enmity between France and Spain. Some years later Lassels gives the description of a bizarre double-mask "a moral Hermaphrodite and walking Emblem of peace between the two nations" - a masker who strode along the Corso, with one half of his body representing a Frenchman, the other half a Spaniard.¹¹³

Other foreign masks whose popularity, dating back to a much earlier period, survived in the seventeenth century are the exotic eastern ones so beloved of the aristocracy. These were to be seen very often in the early years of the sixteenth century and were, it appears, particularly favoured by cardinals, like the cardinal of Aragon who appeared 'da mamaluco' in 1501.¹¹⁴ These costumes indicate a fashion of the time, not limited to carnival, and were among the rich masks and costumes manufactured in Ferrara, which was particularly famous for their production - awaited eagerly each year in Rome and in other Italian courts for carnival and other feasts. Turkish, Moorish, Hungarian and Polish costumes were still favourites for a large part of the seventeenth century, and occasionally in the following century.

7. The races

The final feature to look at is the other innovation of Paul II in 1466. The horse-race itself can best be reserved for study in the

following chapter in terms of its normal procedures and sequence, which remained more or less unchanged from the late seventeenth century through to the end. Here it will be looked at only insofar as it differs from the later event. Races were a feature of the Roman carnival, we presume, from its earliest days. Cancellieri in his notes 'De Baccanali', quotes a document of 1256 which indicates 'Mons Palius' as an alternative name for Mount Testaccio.¹¹⁵ The word 'palio' for us, aware of the continuing popularity of the event in Siena, signifies a horse-race; but the 'pallium', referring to the richly-woven cloth which formed the prize, could refer to any kind of race, and even to other kinds of contest, such as the tourney. The race could be a foot-race, as is the one Dante uses as an image of Brunetto Latini's swiftness: "e parve di coloro / che corrono a Verona il drappo verde / per la campagna." When Cacciaguida, on the other hand, refers to his birthplace by recalling the spot of 'il vostro annuale gioco'¹¹⁶, he is indicating a horse-race.

There is some dispute regarding whether the horse-race featured in the Roman carnival from the start. De Antonis tells us that horse-races were rare; Gregorovius, on the other hand, sees it as a feature of the carnival right from the start¹¹⁷, Clementi makes clear reference to races held on Testaccio in 1271.¹¹⁸ The race formed the highpoint of the festival in an Italian medieval town, and had a very precise civic function. The aim of the Siena 'Palio' was ostensibly to offer a tribute to the Virgin Mary; in practice it could be re-scheduled to celebrate any important personage or event.

It was only in the seventeenth century that the horse-race became the focal point of the carnival; the event around which the revels of each day were organized. Paul II, with his move to the via Lata did not allocate that primacy to it; it was only one among many - asses, buffaloes, boys, young men, old men, Jews. One of the innovations of

Paul II was, in fact, to open up the races to different groups, as we have seen in the quotation from Premoli.¹¹⁹ He enlarged the role of the races, and in raising the number of 'palii' to eight, one for each day of the festival, he established the duration of the carnival celebration, for the rest of its history.

As we have seen, the games of Agone and Testaccio did not end in 1466; nor did the use of other locations. Before this date there had been a variety of venues for the races, apart from Testaccio; this continued in the following years. Moroni reports that "Le corse non solo per la via Lata, ma, come si disse, ebbero luogo prima di essa per la strada Florida o Giulia, o per la via della Lungara, o per quella della porta Cavalleggeri".¹²⁰ Like the venue, the distance covered tended to vary (although we should note that it varied, too, according to the type of race and the participants). Up to the middle of the sixteenth century the 'corsa dei barberi' was run as far as St Peter's as in the splendid carnival of 1539; this custom was discontinued by Pius V.¹²¹

There were, it seems, races to be taken seriously, and those which were simply for fun, with a strong suggestion of parody, and also a certain cruel humour, a delight in the mocking of the competitors, in their discomfort and discomfiture. The horse-race was obviously one to be taken very seriously, and was followed with a passionate devotion by the crowd. This was clearly not the case with the first foot races on the via Lata, as we gather from Platina's 'Vita di Paolo II': "Il lunedì 9 febbraio 1466 si ebbero le prime corse sulla via Lata, la quali riuscivano, scrive il Platina, con tanto piacere di tutti che per le risa grandi poteano a pena starne la gente a piè."¹²²

The high-point-of the proceedings, the race held on the final

day, was the buffalo-race. The choice of such a slow, lumbering animal for a race seems to be a perfect example of carnival reversal - a creature which had to be coaxed and goaded into performing, and the cause of a great deal of hilarity among the spectators. There was clearly an element of parody in this race (such as we have seen in the tourney or the bullfight). Bouchard gives us a description of this race in 1632, but an even more interesting account comes from a century earlier, an account in verse on the occasion of the grand carnival of Julius II, in 1513, written by a certain Jacopo Penni: "Era la corsa più allegra e gradita: 'perchè quest'animal trotta e non corre / Talor si ferma e spesse volte avviene / L'ultimo si arà il Pallio".¹²³

The ass-race is presented as taking place on the last day, with the buffalo race in Bouchard's description: "ânes montés par de jeunes garçons, ou chassés à coup de batons ou d'aiguillon par leur maître sous les sifflets du public, puis les bufles conduits par des gens à cheval, à 7 ou 8 pour un seul, défilé plus que compétition véritable dans l'étroit Corso."¹²⁴

A note of cruel humour and ribald mockery is to be seen in the foot-races. In an age which deighted in inflicting pain on dumb animals, in the name of fun, there was humour to be found, too, in the contemplation of physical deformity. Ademollo notes this in a 'corsa di gobbi' held in 1633.¹²⁵ The cruel humour may be found in other foot-races which, up to the seventeenth century were, it seems, a stronger attraction than the horse-races (even if the buffalo and ass races held pride of place on the closing day). There would hardly be much scope for mockery, one would imagine, in the races for young men or boys, though probably the fact that it had rained so much in the race witnessed by Sanuto, in 1519, that the boys fell about in the mud must have been a strong source of amusement.¹²⁶

The race reserved for the Jews was, we are assured by several commentators, not intended initially as a humiliation or a mockery. Like other foot-races, it is stated, participation was voluntary; if no one presented himself for the race it simply did not take place. This view is taken even by Jewish writers like Waagenar. The latter accepts the suggestion that Paul II, in increasing the number of races, had had the intention of presenting the people, in different categories (including the Jews) with an occasion for emulation, and the sense of participation in a civic event: "All 'inizio gli ebrei avevano applaudito all' idea quanto tutti gli altri romani ... nulla di oneroso, anzi, di riconoscenza come parte della popolazione, con la sola discriminante che dovevano correre in una categoria a se' ... Passarono parecchi anni prima che i Romani si accorgessero che la corsa degli ebrei, specialmente di quelli vecchi, faceva sganasciare dalle risa." This is rather puzzling, since on the next page, Waagenar points out that 1466 was not the first year that the Jews had taken part in the carnival celebrations, citing fourteenth century 'partite di caccia' in which the Jews served as mounts for the Roman hunters. Anti-semitism had obviously existed in Rome before the sixteenth century, in the latter half of which in particular there was a strong resurgence of the phenomenon; in this period, Waagenar tells us, the Jews lost their enthusiasm for the race.¹²⁷

Earlier, the Jews had appeared in rich robes, accompanied by a splendid procession of their own people, as we see in Grossino's description of 1499.¹²⁸ By the late sixteenth century this had changed; the scornful remark of a chronicler in 1587 gives eloquent testimony of this and also the fact that they were forced to run in all kinds of weather - the worse it was, the greater was the enjoyment of the people: "Lunedì i soliti ebrei corsero ignudi il pallio loro,

favoriti (?) di pioggia vento et freddo degno di questi perfidi mascherati di fango a dispetto delle grida. Dopo queste bestie bipedi correranno li quadrupedi."¹²⁹

By this point the race had obviously become an ordeal for the Jews. They were handicapped, quite apart from the abuse of the crowd who ignored the 'bandi' which specifically forbade ill-treatment or mockery of Jews, by the fact that the distance was increased, so that few of them completed the course; Bouchard reports that only three out of ten starters reached the post.¹³⁰ The 'palio' for the race was the poorest in quality of them all. The anti-semitism of the closing years of the sixteenth century did not lessen much in the course of the following century. From 1609 dates the first 'carro' or 'giudiata', directing fierce mockery against the Jews and their religious customs.¹³¹ The race continued up to 1668, when the Jews bought the right to forgo this 'tribute', and replaced it with a ceremonial act of homage to the Pope, for his annual permission to allow them to remain in the city (the so-called 'omaccio'), and with an annual offering of money.

The horse-race itself had been a rather hybrid affair for some time. The classic image of the race is that of the 'corsa dei barberi', of riderless horses; this was not the case up to the late seventeenth century - or, at least, it was only partly the case. Both Montaigne and Villamont, in the 1580s, describe saddle-less horses mounted by boys, or servants.¹³² Bouchard, in 1632, mentions a race with twelve horses, only two of which were mounted, by twelve year old boys; Bouchard also adds the details that these boys were stuck on with pitch, and that their main function was to frighten and ward off other competitors, for which purpose they were equipped with sticks, which they used to urge on their mount and strike each other.¹³³ They were frequently the victims of accidents, often fatal. Clementi gives

examples from 1596 and 1606 in which a jockey was killed; in the latter example the accident was caused by a personage of some importance whose horse reared. Despite the edicts warning horsemen and coaches not to venture on to the street during the race, in this case the culprit was not punished: "La Corte non hebbe ardire di far prigione detto maschera reputato per persona di qualità ... ma poco pratico cavaliere".¹³⁴ Villamont is one of the earliest commentators to mention this edict, and he saw a Roman being punished for transgressing it.¹³⁵ The race with jockeys was finally abolished after a fatal accident.

The closing decades of the seventeenth century found the Roman carnival somewhat changed. Its format was now more or less as it would remain to the end; only the 'mocoli' ceremony of the last evening was still to be added. Certain features which had been essential parts of the games of Agone and Testaccio had disappeared, or figured only infrequently in later years (jousts, tourneys, bullfights, foot-races, ass- and buffalo-races). The Corso was firmly established as the exclusive venue of the main features of the event, official and non-official. The aristocracy had discovered the delights of the 'festino' in a public theatre; this, together with the theatrical entertainments became the most important part of the festival for many foreign travellers.

The year 1689 might, perhaps, be taken to represent the end of a particularly brilliant phase of the carnival's history¹³⁶; a period which, for Clementi and for Ademollo, marked its high-point. This year witnessed the most brilliant carnival which Rome was to have for many years. Large-scale masquerades, after this period, were presented only occasionally; after many decades of domination by the aristocracy of Rome, and the elaborate 'carri' designed by the leading artists of the

age, was to come a long period in which the carnival would be given over to the enjoyment of the people, and the visitors to the city. After the lavish spending of this period some of the leading families of Rome were on the verge of bankruptcy, particularly some of the older ones who could not compete with the Barberini or the Borghese. Foreign embassies and colleges would take over the role of the aristocracy as providers of lavish entertainments. A sign of the diminished spending power of the nobility may be seen in the custom of the 'festino' in the public theatre; still something of a private entertainment for their class, but now organized by a number of noblemen, collaborating to keep down the costs and at some point opened to the lower orders on payment of a ticket.

One area where the nobility still maintained a monopoly was the horse-race; this persisted well into the eighteenth century. The passion for horses had been for a long time now noted by visitors, such as Du Bellay in the 1550s, or Montaigne in the 1580s. Villamont tells us that the horses in the races belonged to the aristocracy, who also provided the jockeys and the grooms.¹³⁷ This passion increased in the following century. When we look at the horse-race in the next century we shall note the fierce rivalry which existed between the aristocratic families in the race to win the 'palio'.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

1. The opening years of the century. 2. Foreigners and their views on the people. 3. The Corso. 4. The Masks. 5. The Confetti battles. 6. The 'Moccoli'. 7. The races.

1. The opening years of the century

The period covered in this chapter is the eighteenth century; or rather, since the phases of the Roman carnival, like those of any other human institution, do not coincide neatly with the beginning and the end of succeeding centuries, with a period which goes from the last decades of the seventeenth century to the late 1780s. The year 1789 seems an appropriate and obvious one to mark the end of a whole period in the history of the carnival. The following decades will, of course, bring notable changes in the festival, and other, less noticeable ones, in the attitudes of the Roman people. Even before the arrival of the French in 1798 the effects of the Revolution were being felt in Rome. The impact of their arrival on the carnival will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Documentation for this period is quite plentiful. These were the years of the Grand Tour, and British and foreign libraries contain ample evidence of the interest taken in the phenomenon of the carnival by travellers to Rome; a large proportion of these left diaries, letters and books to record their impressions. The earliest writers to be quoted in this chapter describe Rome in the mid seventeenth century - the latest, Goethe, gives in 1788, on the eve of the French Revolution, the most methodical and detailed description of the carnival which we have for this and possibly for any period. Goethe's

account could be seen as a kind of resume of the festival for a whole historical epoch. The early years of the French occupation of Rome will see a number of changes imposed on the carnival, to give it a new form, more 'worthy' of the glorious ancestors of the city - an attempt to resurrect the spirit of the ancient Romans, to help the present inhabitants turn their backs on the 'barbaric' centuries of Church rule, or tyranny; the people, unfortunately, did not rise to the occasion, and within a few years, in the second French occupation during the Napoleonic period the carnival had largely reverted to its old forms.

By the beginning of this period the Roman carnival had achieved the form it was to retain, with occasional variations, for the next two centuries, its effective duration; only one major innovation occurred in this period. The duration had been established by the fifteenth century; it covered a period of eleven days, of which three were 'dies non' - when carnival festivities were not allowed. The place was the Corso; the focus was firmly fixed on this long, narrow street, and although there were, just occasionally, mentions of other venues in the period, none of them constituted a rival attraction to the scene on the Corso. By now the games of Agone and Testaccio were a thing of the past, and these places had no part in the carnival of the eighteenth century. These games had been effectively defunct since early in the preceding century, having already lost their importance in the second half of the sixteenth century.

The form was now fixed, with the survival of some and the disappearance of other important features of the old games. The most notable of these were the ones involving human competition and prowess. On the one hand, with the decline of aristocratic control of the festival seen in the preceding century, those forms inherited from the games of the Middle Ages, jousting and tourneys, disappeared from

the scene. There were only a few scattered examples of no particular importance in the course of the eighteenth century. In the same way, there are occasional references to bullfights, another essential part of the earlier festival. With the element of human prowess and strength, the element of danger disappeared; carnival had entered a much gentler phase; or rather the danger which still existed referred almost exclusively to the horse-races and to spectators rather than riders.

Foot-races no longer existed in the eighteenth century; the races of boys, of old men and of Jews having died out between the 1640s and the 1660s; and with these went the presence of a strong note of mockery, derision, parody - an essential factor in the earlier carnival, but now to be found among the maskers and not in the crude, even brutal races of earlier periods. Carnival had entered a more graceful, elegant period. Only the horse-races remained. Here also, were abandoned the cruder, rougher forms with a strong element of slapstick, which had aroused the uproarious laughter of the public in earlier years - the ass-race, the buffalo-race. The horse-race was, by now, entirely of riderless horses. The practice of using boy jockeys had been discontinued after a fatal accident.

The French, in 1798, came with the professed intention of reviving the spirit of ancient Rome. Among the various innovations destined to help effect this was the introduction of a new content and a new form for the carnival - to make it a people's festival ('la Festa Saturnale'); to combat what they saw as the more deleterious manifestations of the festival, attributable to many centuries of barbarous rule of the Bishop of Rome, and the lack of Enlightened ideas. As it turned out, the French were mistaken in their estimate of the ability - and the will - of the Roman people to change: they

underestimated the effects of those very centuries of economic, political and social conditioning under Papal rule. What had been hailed in the preceding century as the most modern city in Europe, and had offered such a splendid welcome to foreign visitors arriving through the Porta del Popolo, had little of the air of a capital city, of the 'Caput Mundi'. 'Roma Nova' had a rather rustic and backward quality and this was reflected in the people and its pleasures.

The French were correct in their view of the carnival as the people's festival, but were wrong in thinking that they could impose a new form on it - something alien to the spirit of the occasion and to the character of the Roman people. The form of carnival could not be dictated; what had evolved over a long period of time corresponded to the character of the people and its basic conservatism. Goethe in his account of 1788 made two important points. 1) "The Roman carnival is not really a festival given for the people but one the people give themselves. The state makes very few preparations and contributes next to nothing. The merry-go-round revolves automatically and the police regulate it very leniently." 2) "It seems that in earlier times these gala coaches were numerous, more costly and more interesting, because they represented subjects taken from myth and allegory. But lately for some reason or other persons of rank have come to prefer the pleasure of losing themselves in the crowd during this festival to that of distinguishing themselves from others."¹

In the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods, with the central role played by the city magistrates and 'caporioni', carnival had been an occasion for the display of civic pride and strength and it had held a central place in the official calendar; to be chosen as champion in the games had been a source of pride for young men; the processions of the carri of the 'rioni' were usually elaborate, allegorical 'trionfi', and had included the participation of the cities subject to

Rome, such as Tivoli, which supplied champions for the games as a form of tribute. The role of the people had long since lost its importance: the presence of Senator and 'caporioni' in the opening procession was a purely formal one. The Governor, a cleric, and a non-Roman, chosen by the Pope, led the procession, holding pride of place, and effective power lay with him.

The aristocracy had lost its controlling interest. Also long past were the splendid 'Trionfi', processions, tourneys, masquerades, of the seventeenth century (the 'carnevale di signori'). The closing decades of this century had seen the end of the lavish spending of the Barberini, Colonna, Chigi and other leading families, the dazzling displays witnessed by visitors like Queen Christina, the rivalry of the leading families of Rome in the mounting of the floats, 'trionfi' masquerades, 'festini', the plays put on with the help of the leading artists of the time. The aristocracy, however, still retained the possession of the winning horses in the races.

Excluding the possibility of any return to the official, civic function of the occasion, the interesting point to emerge from Goethe's second statement is the suggestion of two rather different views of the Roman carnival. On the one hand we have the view of Ademollo: "I ricchi con lo spendere facevano il vero carnevale dei poveri Ma oggidì è tutto il rovescio."² This refers more specifically to the seventeenth century carnival. On the other we have that of L. Schudt for whom the great period was the eighteenth century, thanks to the active participation of the people of Rome, of which there are so many descriptions particularly from foreign observers.³

The rivalry which had existed among the aristocracy was to some extent continued by foreign embassies and colleges. The receptions given in the French Academy after its move to the palazzo Corsini on

the Corso were highlights of the eighteenth century carnival (from here in particular visitors were afforded an excellent view of the horse race). The Academy also put on an occasional splendid masquerade on the Corso, like the Chinese one mounted in 1735.⁴ The aristocracy did sometimes put on a lavish spectacle on the Corso. Père Labat witnessed one in 1710 composed of triumphal chariots filled with the gods and goddesses of antiquity, mythological heroes, musicians.⁵ As in the preceding century aristocrats themselves represented the figures in this 'Trionfo della Bellezza'. Beauty took on the form of the Duchess of Segni Cesarini, and Valour that of Prince Alexander Sobieski of Poland.⁶ Another example comes from the anonymous author of the 'Voyage historique et politique de Suisse, d'Italie et d'Allemagne', who gives us some description of the coaches: "Ce ne sont pas proprement des Carosses. Les uns ont le forme de Gondoles, d'autres de Vaisseaux, d'animaux & d'autres choses; même ils ne ressemblent pas mal par la diversité des figures aux traineaux d'Allemagne ... Ils sont ordinairement découverts, afin qu'on puisse voir & être vu."⁷ Such displays, however, were rare during this century.

The nobles' participation in the public festival tended to be limited to the patronising of the horse races and to mixing with the people on the Corso. Unlike that of the people the 'carnevale di signori' had never existed purely as a public phenomenon. It was the public manifestations which fell under the veto of the government on certain occasions. While the people were denied their pleasures the nobility could enjoy their private banquets, hunting on their estates, and an important innovation dating from the end of the seventeenth century, the 'festino' in a public theatre. It occurred in 1690, and was reported by the Marquis de Coulanges: "Le Prince Antonio Ottoboni donna aux dames romaines une fête à la mode de son pays, c'est à dire

de Venise; elle fut pour Rome un spectacle nouveau et qui réussit très agréablement. Le dernier jour du carnaval qu'on représenta sur le théâtre public de Tordinona, le grand opera, le parterre, fermé au public, fut disposé en salle de bal."⁸ The 'festino', or masked-ball, became the highlight of the carnival for the nobility of Rome and for foreign visitors. Bergeret de Grancourt informs us that several noblemen would club together to pay for the theatre, and sell tickets. But Bergeret was writing in 1774, when the occasion had probably lost some of its glitter: "La chaleur et l'ennui nous en ont chassé bientôt, ainsi que l'affreuse compagnie ... c'est la compagnie de tout ce qu'il y a de plus bas peuple qui est masqué et faite pour dégoûter à jamais du bal."⁹

The people's carnival, on the other hand, does not make sense except as an open-air celebration. If the carnival is forbidden, for whatever reason, the people are denied their pleasure. The opening of the century was, in fact, a difficult time for public celebrations. The carnival of 1701 was a dull affair, Valesio suggests: "Non si fanno che due soli carri di giudiate, cioè di Piazza Navona e Borgo, dal che si puo arguire la poca allegrezza e moneta che è nella plebe."¹⁰ (As we shall see, the 'giudiata' was an important part of the people's pleasure in carnival). In December 1701 there was extensive flooding in Rome. This was followed by an extraordinary Jubilee in 1702 to mark the beginning of the reign of Clement XI. Then, in December 1702, came more flooding followed on 14 January of 1703 by the first of a series of earthquakes.

These were so severe that a solemn vow was made by the people of Rome to forgo the pleasures of carnival for five years, up to 1708.¹¹ This episode reminds us that carnival was not granted automatically each year; therefore there was particular anxiety and eager

expectation in 1709 when the five year 'penance' was officially over. The people were disappointed, however, when Clement XI declared a Jubilee in that year.¹²

Finally in 1710, things were definitely back to normal; Cecconi's diary for that year informs us that Rome had enjoyed a "carnevale assai allegro, stante la copia di forestieri".¹³

2. Foreigners and their views on the people

There was, in fact, from this point on a noticeable increase in the number of foreigners who came to Rome for carnival. With the great increase in travel to Italy, the carnival had become an important item in the tourist's calendar. The season normally lasted several months in Rome, foreigners generally spent in the city the period from November to April, giving a fair amount of time to the monuments of antiquities. Quite often, before Holy Week (an essential attraction) they would pass a short period of time visiting Naples - some even managed to combine visits to the carnival in both cities - given the longer duration of the Neapolitan carnival, and the relatively short time required to reach that city, this was quite easy.

British visitors were particularly in evidence now - Rome had never been officially off-limits to them in earlier periods, though for some time after the Reformation it was considered a rather risky proposition to visit the centre of Roman Catholicism. Diplomatic links had been cut since the sixteenth century, with a brief resumption in the reign of James II. An intriguing entry in Clementi's book refers to the presence of the Prince of Wales in 1737 in Palazzo Corsini for a 'festino' in his honour.¹⁴ The reference is to Charles Edward Stuart, the most illustrious foreign resident in Rome during the century. The presence of the Stuarts in the city obviously aroused a

certain mistrust in the British authorities, the harbouring of Jacobite exiles in Rome posing a constant threat. A key function of Sir Horace Mann, British Resident in Florence, was to keep an eye on their activities, and he had his spies in the city to help him effect this. The presence of the Stuart Pretender, far from deterring British tourists, served rather as an added attraction - one further 'sight' to be taken in by the curious. Therefore, over the years, we find a number of references to the Young Pretender, in particular, during the carnival period - from his handsome youth¹⁵ to his sad decline in later years, as described by Smith: "Here the 'exiled majesty of England' might be seen every afternoon, lolling in his coach, the very image of a drunken Silenus, more asleep than awake, and apparently tottering on the brink of that grave to which he is since gone."¹⁶

The number of travellers who chose to be in Rome rather than Venice, for the carnival, increased sharply; up to this period Venice had been clearly in the lead. In the popular imagination of today, of course, Venice represents the Italian carnival 'par excellence'. This was not the case during the eighteenth century; over the opening decades Rome gradually took the lead. Seventeenth century travellers had generally arranged their trip to include the last days of the carnival in Venice, Holy Week in Rome, and the Octave of the Sacrament in Bologna. Those seeking more material kinds of enjoyment were attracted by the reputation which Venice had for sexual intrigue, and were disappointed by the lack of this (or the relative lack of it) in Rome. Count Tolstoy complained about the brevity of the Roman carnival (which, obviously, in its short duration, compared unfavourably with the apparently never-ending carnival of Venice, and also about the lack of freedom in the Roman carnival.¹⁷ For De Merville, however, Rome was undoubtedly the finest of Italian carnivals: "Il ne dure qu'une douzaine de jours, mais certainement c'est le plus beau de l'

Italie, par le nombre and par la propreté des Masques."¹⁸ And, according to Archenholz, writing probably in 1780, many Italians made the trip to Rome for the carnival - even from Venice!¹⁹

These visitors provided a large part of Rome's income. By now, tourism was an essential, if not the main part, of Rome's economy. Many travellers in this period such as Smollett and Sharp comment at length on the lack of commerce and industry in Rome, and of the oppressive hand of the Church on any possible development. The industry which did thrive was the service industry - hotels, catering and all the ancillary occupations (coachmen, guides, tradesmen, antiquarians, etc.). The money brought in by the carnival was of considerable, even vital, importance to Rome. It was potentially disastrous for the city if, for any reason, carnival was banned or curtailed, leading as this did to tourists seeking their entertainments elsewhere. Duclos, writing in 1767, gives us some idea of the harm which loss of carnival income could do the economy of Rome.

The state was, he says, on the point of famine. Yet in this very year, the Pope ordered the banning of carnival: "Tout aurait été plus cher si le carnaval eût eu lieu cette année à Rome, ou il est le plus brillant qu'aucune ville d'Italie. Le pape, affligé de la disette, l'avait défendu par une dévotion très contraire à la politique; car il priva Rome de plus de deux millions que les étrangers auroient dépensés."²⁰ The Pope was obviously influenced, in his decision, by considerations on the senseless frivolity of the carnival in such grim circumstances; but naturally the cure proved more damaging than the illness. The pious idea of forbidding celebrations in Jubilee years could make some economic sense, (since the loss of revenue from carnival income could probably be offset by the revenue from visitors

for the Holy Year), but not in such a time of distress. It must be noted that the Pope in question (Clement XIII) was known as a notoriously anti-carnival Pope, whose final blow against the public festivities was his dying during the carnival in 1769.²¹

One of the main sources of income during carnival came from the renting of apartments. Although many of the more illustrious visitors in the seventeenth century bearing letters of introduction were offered hospitality by aristocratic families of Rome, already in that century the practice of renting private apartments (even princely apartments) had become established; and the key features of the apartments on the Corso were themselves for hire!: "Poichè la frequenza hebbe poco meno che dell' incredibile ... e le finestre de' Palazzi, e delle case, che formano l'istessa Piazza furono sempre piene di nobiltà forestiera, e Romana ... et per havere un luogo comodo d'una finestra, d'un balcone, d'un palco hanno sborzato 20, 60 fino a 100 scudi."²² Later commentators were to stress the importance of ensuring that the rent of the apartment during carnival included the use of the balcony or windows, which otherwise could be taken over by the landlord and his friends.²³

The attitude of foreign travellers, particularly the British, tended quite often to be rather a superior one. It was coloured, in part, by their sense of belonging to a great country, an empire - and, moreover, an empire which had taken the place of ancient Rome as arbiter of the world. They regarded the Romans as 'base degenerate progeny' of the old empire; this view was to be echoed often in this and in later periods. We must not expect then, ^a too sympathetic or even a particularly observant picture of the people and their behaviour in the carnival. An aspect which struck the proud British, with their Puritan work-ethic and their sense of belonging to a prosperous nation, was the idleness of the Romans. One feature of the old Roman

Saturnalia which particularly appealed to the Romans was the abstinence from work - except, of course, for the minority who directly profited from the carnival period - sellers of masks, chairs, confetti, flowers, etc. The "natural" attitude was accentuated by the carnival spirit, which was seen as representing to perfection the feckless attitude of the people, and the climactic moment in their passion for play, for holidays.

A reiterated statement made throughout this period and later is to the effect that the Romans are children - but basically good-natured children, despite their reputation for quick temper and recourse to the knife to settle arguments. They could be as demanding and as undemanding as children; they are capricious, occasionally violent and have the child's love of simple, rather crude humour; they are as volatile and unpredictable as children; and they have a passionate love of play (and, as we shall see later, of play-acting - in their carnival masking). But like children they require a firm hand or they can degenerate into disorder; they need to be coaxed and cajoled.

The Pope, we are told, knew how to handle his children/subjects. The point was made by Dupaty, in 1785: "De toute l'administration politique, la seule partie qui affecte vraiment le peuple, c'est celle qui le touche immédiatement, c'est à dire le prix des denrées. Quand les denrées haussent, le peuple murmure ... le peuple vient il crier, le gouvernement baisse le prix mais il diminue la mesure; le peuple romain est content."²⁴

Carnival, like the people itself, had by now been tamed by Church and State. It had become a less violent, less vulgar, less dangerous occasion. Yet it still afforded the people a great deal of pleasure, was still a keenly-anticipated moment of the year. It still, according

to some commentators, represented the continuation of the spirit of the ancient Romans - not the proud defenders of the Republic or the warlike, conquering, triumphant creators of the Empire - but the pleasure-loving rabble of the declining years of the Empire; those castigated by Juvenal, in his famous lines on 'Bread and Circuses', who had abdicated any desire to have some say in the running of their own affairs and had become passive creatures in the hands of their governors. Gorani repeats the charge towards the end of the century: "'Du pain et des spectacles', voilà ce qu'il leur faut."²⁵

This was, then, a docile, easily-controlled, easily-manipulated people. The Corso was well-policed but there seem, in fact, to have been no great disturbances in this period - such as were to be very often observed in earlier centuries and which were to occur later. Nevertheless, the punishment for transgressing the edicts regulating carnival could be seen in the street and the piazza. Those relating to the carrying of firearms, to the wearing of masks after dark, to entering houses wearing a mask, were still in vigour. Public executions were still held on the opening day of carnival or, less often, at its conclusion: "Le carnaval de Rome commence à Noël ou aux Rois; s'il y a quelques exécutions à faire on les garde pour ce temps là', afin d'intimider le peuple, & de l'avertir d'éviter les désordres auxquels peut conduire le licence du carnaval."²⁶

Two notable examples from the first half of the century were the decapitation of G. Volpini in 1720²⁷ and that of Count Trivelli in 1737, both of them very young men and both guilty of the sin of satirical and seditious writings. The Scottish baronet Sir William Dick was present on the latter occasion, and commented on the crime and the instrument used: "February 23. The first day of the Carnival, went to see the execution of Justice (so called at Rome) upon the Abbe Count Trivilli [sic] who wrote a satire against the Pope and the

Camera, not near as bitter as are daily wrote in our public papers against the King and ministry. He had his head cut off by a machine exactly like our maiden in Scotland ... he died with the greatest resolution and firmness ... everybody seemed to be very sorry for his fate. But as we say in Scotland, it may be said here of the Pope and the Priests 'Beware to attack the De'il and the Laird's bairns'."28

Such violent examples, however, seem scarcely necessary if we are to believe the evidence of a number of commentators in this and later periods. The Romans, by most accounts, were not the stuff that revolutionaries are made of. They were incurably passive, politically apathetic - a 'Popolo Pulcinella', easily satisfied, easily amused and entertained. But they were also described by some as being a basically serious and sober people, who did not normally indulge in the mad behaviour which was characteristic of the carnival (an indication that they were responding to carnival as a time for the release of tensions accumulated in the course of the year). The anticipation, the suspense before the opening of carnival was intense. The preparations began very far in advance; for weeks before its opening, we are told, there was an air of excitement in the city. There are numerous testimonies to the sacrifices made by the poor people of Rome to achieve a full enjoyment of the carnival, such as the renting of a carriage to appear on the Corso or the hiring of old clothes from Jewish rag-merchants to make a costume. Some simply wore their own everyday clothes - peasant girls from the hill-towns around Rome, fishermen; others appeared in simply-made and inexpensive beggar masks.²⁹ But there were those commentators who declared that the lowest orders ('la canaille') were not allowed to appear on the Corso. Labat is one of the first to strike this note; there is no place here for he tells us "la canaille où elle ne manquerait pas de faire des désordres et de causer de la

confusion."³⁰

Richard's comment seems to be much nearer the mark: "Le soin de se masquer occupe les grands & les petits, les femmes & surtout celles du peuple, qui dans le cours de l'année, ne peuvent guère prendre part à aucun spectacle que celui là".³¹ The 'people' must be taken in the widest sense of the word; Labat's distinction seems to negate the whole spirit of carnival, adopting as he does the stance of aristocratic disdain which tended to become rarer in the latter part of the century. Most commentators stressed the fact that everybody participated in the fun, and paid tribute to the good-nature of the people - and its tolerance. No one, we are told, gets angry or offended at the jokes and tricks played in carnival. The importance of this latter point is well illustrated in Labat's story of a practical joke played on a priest during the carnival; the man, who of course should not have been on the Corso in the first place, rather than having the good sense to keep quiet had the bad taste to get angry - which only increased his ridicule, and also constituted a cardinal sin in the context of carnival.³² Despite the general appearance of chaos, of complete anarchy, there were, it seems, certain rules to follow, and licence was to be kept within certain limits.

To return to the point raised by Labat's reference to the absence of 'la canaille' on the Corso, such tolerance and good nature seem to imply an at least momentary rejection of distinctions of class. If the festival is of the whole people, class barriers must fall; foreign commentators noted in fact with shock and disapproval in the case of some British observers, a generally easy and familiar ^arelationship between Romans of different social classes at all times of the year. The easy-going acceptance of people of whatever social level rather disconcerted the young painter Russel, who speaks of how difficult it is to tell a lord from a lackey.³³ Roland de La Platière, on the

other and, talking of the Neapolitan carnival, comments on the community feeling to be found still in Italy, particularly in evidence on festive occasions: "Notre prétendue décence a tellement concentré la société que nous ne prenons plus aucune part aux amusements publics, que nous avons nommés en consequence amusements du peuple; & nous tenons pour ignobles tous ceux auxquels il se livre. Les Napolitains n'en sont pas encore à ce point ... ils se travestissent & courent les rues, comme les Parisiens faisaient au commencement du siècle."³⁴ This equality in the period of carnival was perhaps seen at its best on the 'Mocoli' evening, but could be noted on all sides in the Corso during the general masking and confetti-throwing.

3. The Corso

The focus is now firmly on the Corso, the scene of the carnival revelries, the central point where the maskers congregated. We know that the people were to be witnessed celebrating off Corso, especially in certain piazzas such as Montanara, Barberini, la Rotonda, Navona, etc. For some later commentators, such scenes constitute the heart of the Roman carnival. There are occasional references to these in this century, and not a great many more in the nineteenth century; most foreign and native observers limit themselves to the Corso, and there probably was not a great deal of difference in the little scenes acted out by the masks in any venue (even indoors, as we see in some nineteenth century examples, 'in osteria'). What is new in the information on scenes off - Corso are the songs and dances of the people, and the improvised poetry, much of which would have been lost in the confusion and noise of the Corso. The idea that the festivities taking place off-Corso represent the real carnival of the people points to another area of research. However, since this study is

concerned with presenting an overall picture of the occasion in which all classes of Roman society, and an increasingly large number of foreigners, mingle together, and in the absence of more definitive information on such off - Corso scenes, we can take those on the Corso as representative of the people's participation.

The seventeenth century Corso had been dominated (or so it appears in most descriptions of the period) by the 'carri' of the aristocracy; the people assuming the passive role of spectators, 'receivers' of the bounty of the aristocracy. The scenes on the Corso had been structured, in a Baroque format; everything in the aristocratic offering had been carefully prepared and elaborated. As such it had not been so different from the elaborate allegorical scenes which formed such an important part of the official carnival of the Middle Ages and Renaissance - except that here the allegories glorified not the city of Rome, like those put on by the different 'rioni', but the pride, pomp and power of the aristocratic families. It lacked spontaneity - the quality which we find in the people's contribution - the so-often dismissed 'gazzarra sul Corso'.

But before going on to look at the scene on the Corso it seems appropriate to consider some of the rules and regulations which limited participation on the Corso. The grim sight of the executioner's block was still in evidence; and the 'corda' was there, too, for less 'heinous' offences, punishment for which could be administered on the spot - or shortly after the offence. The annual 'bandi', however, in the opening years of the century, had lost some of their rigour. Carnival had moved into a rather more liberal era and a milder mood prevailed. The opposition of the Church to the whole idea of carnival was still in evidence - in the form of the 'Quarant' Ore', instituted at the end of the sixteenth century. We encounter a number of scenes on and off the Corso in which maskers and penitents

come face to face; the maskers kneel devoutly until the others have passed - then the fun recommences after this brief interruption.³⁵

The dignity of the Church had to be preserved. In 1748 a Papal encyclical was issued by Benedict XIV, forbidding the appearance of maskers in church on the morning of Ash Wednesday, a reference to the habit of revellers who had passed the night in the last pleasures of carnival attending Mass before returning home.³⁶ 'Bandi' were still in force on the appearance of clergy in the public manifestations of carnival. The Corso was out of bounds to them; they could, however, be seen at windows, on balconies, and in the side-streets: "Car la défense ne s'étend pas au delà de cette rue."³⁷ The 'bandi' were fairly elastic; only a little discretion was required of the clergy to enjoy the carnival. In private, in their monasteries and colleges, it is pointed out that monks and nuns could enjoy fully the pleasures of carnival: "les Religieux et les Religieuses mêmes, qui ne peuvent partager avec le Public ces divertissements, en ont de particuliers dans leurs Monasteres."³⁸ There were those who, not satisfied with this, ventured to appear disguised in the street. Hervey reports the death of a man, felled by a horse during the race, who turned out to be a priest. "They will think it a judgement upon him, for frequenting profane diversions."³⁹

Masks imitating the clergy were still forbidden. Here, too, the dignity of the Church had to be preserved, and penalties for transgression of the ban could be quite severe. The clergy would otherwise have been the natural targets of satire - exercising as it did temporal as well as spiritual power in the city; clerical masks were, in fact, not unusual in other Catholic countries such as Spain, as is indicated by Caro Baroja: "mascaras vestidos de cardenales que echaban absoluciones y pasos burlescos".⁴⁰ Costumes which too closely

resembled clerical dress were also banned, as was the case in 1776 with the mask of the 'Domino Rosso' - too similar to a cardinal's robes.⁴¹

Another category still excluded from the Corso was the courtesan, one presumably intent on taking dishonest advantage of the occasion. There is every reason to suppose that this exerted a strong attraction on them, given the presence of so many wealthy foreigners in the city. One change of notable importance in the carnival of this period is the relaxation of the 'bandi' forbidding women to appear wearing masks on the Corso. So far, they had been relegated, like the clergy, to the side lines, watching the proceedings from windows, balconies and carriage windows, but not in the street taking an active part in the fun. They were also, as we have seen, forbidden to appear in theatres - unless for special performances open only to female audiences; and women were also forbidden to appear on stage in Rome (hence the profusion of 'castrati' and the use of male singers and actors to play female parts, which so scandalized some foreign visitors). There are ample indications that the authorities for some time now had been turning a blind eye on the appearance of women, masked (usually as males - officers) in the theatres and in the streets during carnival. By the second half of the century women, particularly the women of the people, were taking an active part in the scenes on the Corso - as we have seen in the earlier quotation from Richard.⁴² This freedom increased, and became a persistent note in nineteenth century descriptions of the carnival - the one occasion, we are told, in which women were allowed such freedom. One final point in this connection concerns not a ban on appearances in the carnival but what appears to be rather a curious oversight on the part of observers - or possibly a simple lack of interest; this is the relative rarity of references to children; these do not increase greatly in the following century.⁴³

With the relative relaxation of the 'bandi', with the decline of aristocratic control of the carnival and the large-scale manifestations which had tended to dominate the Baroque period, the people seemed to claim their share of the carnival fun. Considerably more space is devoted to their carnival by commentators in this period, and we are left with a strong impression of a kind of take-over of the Corso. This impression is a mistaken one, as is the impression given by earlier official chroniclers and commentators of an essentially aristocratic festival. It is true that the emphasis on the aristocratic carnival as a public manifestation had declined in this period and that, as Goethe puts it, the aristocracy preferred to mix with the crowds on the Corso. However, it is also true that we simply have much more evidence of the part played in these years by the people. It is highly unlikely that in earlier periods it took a less active role in the carnival celebrations. People obviously did participate wholeheartedly and energetically in those earlier days; we only have to look at the number, and the repetition, year after year, of the edicts relating to carnival, to see just how boisterously they had participated. The excesses, the crimes which were punished so severely were (apart from those motivated occasionally by private or political resentment) the result of people giving themselves up too enthusiastically to the spirit of the carnival, which is a time of excess, of licence. There are a large number of references in historians and travellers to the disorders of carnival - some striking examples which will be quoted here are those relating to the horse-race, for which the Romans had a fanatical dedication. The 'Avvisi di Roma' and the 'bandi' give us some indication of the kind of things which were forbidden in carnival and which were nevertheless constantly committed, as proves the monotonous repetition of the

'bandi'.

The task here is to attempt the description of a scene of disorder and confusion. How can one, as Goethe puts it, describe the scene on the Corso? The truth is that in Clementi's history of the Roman carnival, and in the smaller volume of Ademollo, we find very little attempt to give such a description. Clementi takes his cue from the 'Avvisi di Roma', from which he quotes so extensively; he shares their disinterest in the "Solita gazzarra sul Corso", the recurring phrase with which the people's part in the proceedings is dismissed. In earlier periods, the attention of the commentators, native or foreign, was concentrated on the aristocratic carnival - as was that of chroniclers of the 'Avvisi'. Foreign visitors for the most part belonged to the same class whose activities they were describing. It is also true that descriptions tended to be rather brief - even in so far as they relate to the aristocratic carnival. This century brings a much larger amount of documentation and, more importantly, a keener interest in the Roman people. It would have been possible for Clementi, in the second volume of his study, to have made the same diligent researches in this area as he did in the first volume (the amount of material collected and perused by him is considerable); but he was, as he himself admits, basically not really interested in the later period, where the aristocratic domination of the carnival had declined. Witness his words in the preface to the second volume (published almost forty years after the first). He only continued the work when urged on by friends. When he published the first volume in 1899 it was, he says, his intention to limit himself to the 'carnevale classico': "Esitai lungamente, perche la gazzarra tutta propria del carnevale dei secoli XVIII e XIX non e, come scrive Goethe, cosa la quale si possa scrivere."⁴⁴

Clementi makes occasional references to masks on the Corso, but

almost always without giving any details. He does give us a list of masks for the year 1731 - but no more than that.⁴⁵ His attitude comes out clearly in his remarks on the carnivals of the 1550s: "Naturalmente, dato il carattere libero, popolare e chiassoso del carnevale di questi ultimi anni non c'incontriamo in spettacoli di eccezionale importanza."⁴⁶ These are three points, in fact, on which it would be useful to have some comment. The material is there, and Clementi himself is aware of it, since he quotes on numerous occasions from foreign accounts, and makes frequent references to others.

But, in fact, how does one describe this scene? Millin's words of a slightly later date, give some idea of the problem: "la description d'un drame de huit jours, exécuté par plus de 50,000 acteurs, dont les principales scenes se sont passées sous mes yeux, dans lequel j'ai figuré moi-meme et dont mon esprit est encore pénétré."⁴⁷ The Corso was a stage, with a huge number of actors, but it was a multiple stage, in which numerous little scenes were acted out at the same time - but amid a dreadful noise and confusion. Single actors or masks stood out; but how could one appreciate the interplay between the various masks, or the wit of the players, so much being lost in the general uproar? Even the description, let alone the interpretation, of the more structured scenes of the official carnival, or the aristocratic carnival, as we have seen, could be difficult - given the complexity of the allegorical references, and the absence of information on the local circumstances and topical references. The scene on the Corso during this period presented an equally difficult, if rather different problem.

The sheer density of the population on the Corso was impressive; sometimes the crush was so great that coaches were forced to move into the side streets. The noise, too, was impressive; if we look at the

prints of the period and later ones, we can see both the mass of people, and the instruments and voices producing the noise. By all accounts it was ear-splitting and stupefying - the voices, the music, the singing, the blowing of horns, the sound of slapsticks, bladders, bells, trumpets, horns, tambourines, drums, squibs. Noise is an indispensable part of the carnival experience - the warding off of evil spirits, the welcoming of benevolent ones, in this critical moment of transition from the old year to the new; the joyful noises which greet the new, and augur well for it; the noises of derision and mockery directed against the old, the dying cycle. Commentators usually concentrated on a few figures, and seized on the most obvious characteristics - and on the visual rather than the aural elements. Language was, of course, a problem; in some cases the foreign observers would be unfamiliar with Italian; but even with an understanding of the language, could they have coped with the Roman dialect used by the masks? And was it possible, anyway, to distinguish anything said in the midst of such a bedlam? We should be grateful for the occasional observers who were able to describe certain scenes and give us some idea of the interplay between the characters.

Before looking at the individual masks or scenes on the Corso, a few general words should be said on the masking. We have seen that some categories were excluded from appearance on the Corso; among these in earlier periods had been women; but even now, although permission had been granted, a fair number preferred to appear on the Corso unmasked, especially those who wore the pretty costume of the peasant girl; an uncovered, attractive face was the natural accompaniment to this costume. This emphasises the fact that the wearing of a mask was optional and that some preferred to go unmasked; many, both Romans and foreigners, quite happily denied themselves the

pleasure. Opinions vary regarding the number of people who did not wear a mask. What usually happened was that on the opening day of carnival, a small proportion of the population appeared wearing a mask; and then, as the carnival progressed, day by day, more and more people would don it. Bergeret, for example, noted, on the first day, only six masks, and spoke of a gradual increase up to the final day.⁴⁸

Then there was the fact that the actual period of masking was severely restricted (if compared to the Venetian carnival, in particular, but also to the other Italian carnivals). The masking days themselves were only eight; the mask was allowed only during daylight, and even then for only three to four hours; it was not allowed till mid-day and was strictly forbidden by the 'bandi' after dark (Richard informs us that at night, masks were no longer under the protection of the government).⁴⁹ This last detail mentioned by Richard brings us to another aspect of central importance in the carnival masking - the inviolability of the mask. Misson writing on the Venetian carnival, talks of the privilege of the disguise - it is forbidden to give offence "for the mask is sacred".⁵⁰

This inviolability was unofficially guaranteed by the maskers themselves (something not appreciated by most foreign observers), but was also enforced by the authorities - soldiers, for example, were forbidden to insult or ill-treat masks. Masks could be and were punished for misdemeanours, of course, and there were occasional cases in Rome of the anonymity guaranteed to offenders in Naples, as reported by Confuorto in 1684: *Il signor Vicerè ... ha ordinato che ognuno potesse far mascare, e, nel mentre che stesse mascherato, ancorchè fosse inquisito di qualsivaglia delitto, non potesse essere riconosciuto.*⁵¹ So important was this question that once in 1671 when, as often happened, a quarrel broke out between masks, and was

taken to law, a special jury was set up to pronounce on the dispute, coming to the conclusion that "da maschera a maschera non vi'è offesa".⁵²

The lively scenes on the Corso were the heart of the Roman carnival. Valentini, writing much later emphasised the central part such scenes played in carnival "essendo in fondo esse scene la tendenza o lo scopo principale per cui il Romano si maschera".⁵³ The kind of little plays acted out by the masks on 'carri', mentioned in the accounts of commentators such as Lassels, Huyssen, Labat are, we may imagine, more elaborate versions of the scenes played out by two or more masks on the Corso. Whereas commentators say that the majority of masks proceeded in silence, Bouchard, as early as 1632 speaks of the scenes which could be witnessed at street corners: "n'y ayant coing de rue ou il n'y eust ou bien une petite comédie à trois ou quatre personages, qu'ils appellent Zingaresche ou une assemblée de covielli, dottori, pantaloni, raguetti etc. qui se chantent pouilles."⁵⁴ Regrettably what description there is of such scenes tends to be very sketchy.

Bouchard, as numerous other commentators do, praises the wit and inventiveness of the masks of the Roman people. This final point, denied by many foreign observers in the early decades of the following century, will be returned to in Chapter 4. It may suffice for the moment to mention the testimony of the 'Voiage hist': "J'ai dit déjà qu'un homme sans esprit n'oseroit risquer de se masquer ainsi, parce qu'il faut répondre spirituellement à toutes les questions qu'on peut faire, sans quoi on est sifflé".⁵⁵ This quotation may serve to help answer the question raised by some in relation to the performances of the masks; were they, in fact, for an audience, or were they really simply put on for the masker's own amusement? Goethe states, for example: "When they arrived early, very few of the maskers can have

come with the intention of creating a sensation or drawing particular notice to themselves."⁵⁶ If we assume the desire to communicate with an audience, this raises the further question of how impromptu were such scenes; was there not a certain amount of preparation and collaboration beforehand - rather than off-the-cuff witticisms and gags? Certainly the Romans had a reputation for quick-wittedness. Moroni, in the mid-nineteenth century, pays a glowing tribute to his townsmen: "Imperocchè quelli che soprammodo contribuiscono a render brillante il carnevale Romano sono i romaneschi ... cioè quelli particolarmente di alcuni rioni della città, come di Monti, Regola, Trastevere ... in mezzo ai rustici modi, d'altronde cortesi, spontanei, senti palesarti sentimenti sì generosi, ingenui, e di un delicato gusto, insieme a motti arguti, graziosi, e pieni d'energia, che ben per essi si è spiegato come Roma sia la patria perpetua dell'immaginazione."⁵⁷

To pay tribute to the wit and imagination of the Romans and to see in these scenes the result of a certain amount of preparation, seems as natural as to stress the genius of the great actors of the Commedia dell'Arte, and accept at the same time the idea that they did, if not have what we know as formal rehearsals, get together beforehand to work out some basic routines, having of course familiarized themselves with the scenario beforehand. The analogy between carnival scenes and sketches (and, in some cases, complete, if short, plays) with the masks and routines of the Italian improvised comedy, need not surprise us, since the masks were in many cases the same; the doctor, the lawyer, Pulcinella, Arlecchino, etc. were popular carnival masks. Just as the lawyer, for example, in the Commedia dell'Arte, had his fixed role, his 'mask' in fact, a character-type handed down, with the same basic traits and

peculiarities, from player to player, from generation to generation (and had a stock of 'generici' to fall back on when inspiration failed, and a number of stock 'lazzi' for appropriate occasions) - so the carnival masker had a fixed role to play out, with certain stock situations and 'gags' which hardly varied over the centuries, which could be studied and prepared for in the same way, making use of a basic set of routines and situations.

The missing 'scenario', which provided the framework for the Commedia dell' Arte performance, could perhaps be substituted by scenes which can be related to present day carnival plays and which represent the spirit of the occasion and its symbolism. (We have, it must be admitted, something of the difficulty here which we find in attempting to reconstruct the typical Commedia dell' Arte performance; and, even making use of the occasional more extended description, we can only achieve a vague approximation of these scenes). To arrive at a closer image it would be necessary to make extensive use of the comparative method; we can have recourse to the Commedia dell' Arte analogy, to similar scenes in present-day carnivals (in Italy and elsewhere in Europe), and in the case of the Roman carnival, to examples from the nineteenth century (so much more plentiful than at any other time, given the vast number of publications on Rome throughout this period). The ritual of carnival is virtually universal and little changed over the years. A particularly valuable analogy may be found in the published texts of the Neapolitan carnival play 'La canzone de Zeza' - in terms of characters, situation and ritual significance.⁵⁸

The little scenes played out at street corners by groups of masks witnessed by Bouchard could evolve into more elaborate^a performances on foot or on carts. De Merville, indicating his suspicion that the maskers on the Corso prepared their pieces, goes on to speak of

troupes of players stationed in front of palaces reciting whole plays or detached scenes, and the fact that private individuals put on plays in their houses during carnival.⁵⁹ In these plays appeared the typical masks of the carnival - the Doctor, the Lawyer, the Astrologer (or Fortune-teller), the Charlatan, the Jew. Each of these could be seen in the extremely popular 'commedie a carro' which proceeded, drawn by oxen, through the streets of Rome during the seventeenth century and part of the eighteenth century. The most durable of these was the 'Giudiata', which survived well into the nineteenth century as a stage form. In these 'carri' the Jews appeared as carnival victims and scapegoats, their religion subjected to savage mockery and the piece ending with the death of Jew: "in esse non si tratta d'altro che di contraffare e schernire gli Ebrei in stranissime guise, ora impiccandone per l gola, ora strangolandone ed ora scempiandone ed ora facendone ogni' altro miserabile gioco."⁶⁰

The form of the 'Giudiata' resembled that of the 'Zingaresca' or the Neapolitan 'Canzone de Zeza', being a mixture of dialogue, song, music and dance, the dialogue probably evolving from the 'contrasto', a typically popular form and much in evidence during the carnival.⁶¹ The plays usually ended with a dance, 'saltarello' or 'tarantella' in which the audience participated. The sequence of the performances seems to have been much the same for each form. First there was the procession of the 'carro' through the city streets, stopping at various points; then a performance in one of the main squares; then, in some cases, an indoor performance in an improvised theatre. This can be observed in the case of a particularly famous 'carro' of 1639, that put on by the Neapolitan artist Salvator Rosa, in which he himself appeared as Formica (a variant of the comic mask of Pasquariellō), in the guise of a Charlatan, and delighted the people

of Rome with his satiric wit. Martucci tells us that he based his 'carro' on the 'Zingaresca' or 'Giudiata'.⁶²

The choice of character, whether for the 'Commedia a carro' or for simpler scenes on foot, was important: it had to be suited to the individual - in terms of age, height, character, histrionic ability and comic invention. For example, the young and nimble could cope with the skipping, jumping Arlecchino or Quacquero; the older and less physically active could play the solemn Astrologer; the quick-witted improvisers could play the Lawyer, Doctor, Poet. What Misson says of the Venetian carnival applies to the Roman: "You may put yourself in what Equipage you please; but to do it well you must be able to maintain the character of the person whose dress you have taken. Thus, for example, when two Harlequins meet, they jeer at one another, and act a thousand fooleries, the Doctors dispute, the Bullies vapour and swagger."⁶³ Thus we have scenes such as the one witnessed by Goethe of the lawyer who shouts up at windows, buttonholes passers-by, whether in fancy-dress or not, and threatens to prosecute every one of them ... reading out a long list of ridiculous crimes, debts, etc. in a shrill voice.⁶⁴ Similar scenes are described by Hans Christian Andersen in his novel 'The Improviser'.⁶⁵ We find, in fact, more examples of preparation and rehearsal and of the clever way in which characters interacted with each other in descriptions of the nineteenth century carnival.

4. The Masks

Let us now look at some of those scenes on foot and on cart on the Corso, and the kind of masks which appeared in them. The Astrologer might be an appropriate one to start with - a quintessential carnival figure, who in the nineteenth century was

normally referred to as 'il Mago'. The fore-telling of the future, prophecies and predictions are constantly associated with seasonal rituals and propitiation rites, and are found in this figure, in the representation of the twelve months, in the 'Zingaresca' performances which took place during carnival - all of them springing from the primitive desire to influence the future.⁶⁶

The first reference to be found in Clementi to this particular mask is from 1646: "Carro di Astrologi, governatori del mondo i quali tutti portavano un motto alla schiena".⁶⁷ He is one of the favourites of Père Labat: "À mon goût les Astrologues et les charlatans sont les plus divertissans. Ils sont pour l'ordinaire assis dans un fauteuil antique sur une estrade, portée par huit ou dix faquins habillés grotesquement. Les Astrologues ont devant eux des globes, des sphères, des instruments de Mathématique, & sur tout un long tuyau de fer blanc, ils s'arrêtent de tems en tems, font des discours les plus plaisans du monde."⁶⁸ Unlike other masks they do not approach people directly, but stop to tell the future of those who question them, using the tube held to their ear, to ensure the 'confidentiality' of the request, then speaking through it to broadcast their reply. Labat goes on to describe the scene when two Astrologers meet; they enter into a fierce dispute, a charlatan comes along and tries to get them to agree, this attempt at reconciliation is a failure, and this leads on to a new scene.⁶⁹

Labat brings together two figures, the Astrologer and the charlatan or quack doctor, which belong to the 'teatro di piazza', the market-place; both of them, the one dispensing predictions for the future, the other remedies for illness, were very popular with the people. They were rogues and vagabonds, often outlawed by the authorities, who traded on the superstitions and gullibility of the people; but they were entertaining rogues who, in their harmless

carnival guise provided much amusement: "Una donna voluminosa e barbata, la cui ora è vicina, prega soccorso, e il dottore la libera, in seguito a qualche manipolazione, di un enorme mellone. A un'altra donna, che si lamenta di mal di cuore, trae una zucca dal petto, e a un uomo che giura che soffre già da quattordici giorni di stitichezza, porta via una rapa dal di dietro e la morde per il divertimento generale. Simili buffonerie sono molto correnti a Roma."⁷⁰ The doctor in these scenes, from the early part of the nineteenth century, is playing the role of the *Commedia dell'Arte* charlatan.

The doctor, on the other hand, represented a figure of some authority, of the kind who were particular targets of carnival humour - middle-class figures, like the lawyer, rather than upper class ones or the clergy who were too dangerous to be chosen as targets for satire or ridicule. These professional characters were alien to the people's vision of life, and were potential or actual exploiters of the people's ignorance and simplicity; they represented an area (knowledge and science) from which the people felt excluded. Mockery of them became a kind of exorcism, a protection against their arcane powers.⁷¹ The form which such mockery took, in the true carnival tradition, was often that of reversal - 'the world upside-down'; rather than the charlatan, or 'cerretano', the clever schemer, the exploiter of the simplicity of others, the doctor could be presented as an ignorant and pompous fool. Intelligence and learning were turned on their head; in the place of intelligence there was the stupidity of the ass. The caricature was not individual or personal, as in the case of the 'Charivari', or many other carnivals, ancient and modern, though Clementi does give one example, relating to the year 1701 of a mask representing a lawyer who "esalta l'asinità di Mons. Ciotti, giudice criminale." -This impertinent fellow was sentenced to the

'strappado' and seven years exile from the Papal states.⁷²

The severity of the punishment is perhaps sufficient explanation of the relative scarcity of such examples of individual satire; this was generic, relating to categories and types rather than to individuals. Later in the carnival there are suggestions of personal satire, but such examples remain isolated. What could perhaps occasionally have been mistaken for this are the scenes of lawyers haranguing people in the streets, at windows and on balconies, as in the example from Goethe already quoted. The theatrical mask of the doctor illustrates, then, the reversal of the norm - the degrading, the dethroning of those who presume to possess knowledge and science, the reduction of the man of medicine, the healer, to the level of the incompetent, whose 'cure' is more lethal than the disease; it must be added, however, that the type in his carnival guise appealed particularly to those who possessed a quick and sharp wit.

The lawyer ('il Dottore') figures rather more frequently in the pages of travellers' accounts. Here we find the same law of inversion operating, alongside the same display of intelligence and prompt repartee on the part of the maskers. Related to the 'Dottore', in fact, is the mask of the 'Abbattaccio' - representing the dishonest and intriguing lawyer; the reversal of the idea of justice and fairness - honesty ridiculed and abused, swindling and dishonesty protected by the law; people's love of justice in conflict, perhaps, with their love of repartee? In present day carnivals the reversals are seen most clearly in the typical phenomenon of the 'testament', which, at the death of Carnival, bring together the lawyer and the doctor, when carnival makes his burlesque will - leaving to his heirs absurd and ridiculous bequests. Unfortunately it is difficult to find examples for the Roman carnival of this very important feature before the nineteenth century, where we have a number of examples of the

lawyer, the doctor and also the 'Quacquero' attending the dying Carnival.

Among the most amusing scenes quoted by Lassels are those which introduce lawyers: "And if by chance two such doctors meet, they make sport enough, for half-an-hour, by their abusing one another. Four of these pretended doctors, with their gowns and caps on, and their books of the Codex before them, got an ass into their coach, who had also another book before him."⁷³ Huyssen repeats this scene in his contemporary account, but adds that the ass is meant to represent the university, guilty of making so many asses into doctors! "... das sie allzu oft solche Leute zu Doktorn machen wollen, das es eben so wenig meritieren als dieser vierbeinigte studiosus."⁷⁴ The analogy between the lawyer and the ass is evident in the coupling of the 'Dottore' with the Pulcinella, both sitting astride an ass, as is seen in a painting by the seventeenth century Dutch artist, resident in Rome, Jan Miel.⁷⁵

Pulcinella was another mask which the Commedia dell' Arte shared with the carnival; in fact, he was the most popular of all, and seems to have been a kind of guiding spirit, often getting the fun going on the opening day. Pulcinella had become the most characteristic mask of the carnival, almost a representative of the quick wit and satiric inclination of the people. He is, clearly, the Neapolitan mask, but provides a striking example of a perfect transplant from one city to another. The curious thing is that Pulcinella did not lose his native language or accent in the move to Rome - he still continued to speak in Neapolitan dialect. According to James Woods, writing in 1817, the mask displayed very little wit, although his sallies aroused a great deal of laughter ("a barbarous language and pronunciation were more than half of the jest").⁷⁶ Pulcinella was the survivor of a number of

Neapolitan masks which were popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth century carnivals, of whom we find evidence for example, in a poem of Bartolommeo Del Tufo, towards the end of the sixteenth century, where he is illustrating the pleasures of the people's carnival in Naples⁷⁷; similar scenes were recalled by Bouchard in 1632.⁷⁸

The popularity of the Neapolitan masks is clearly seen, once more, a few years later, in the 'carro' of Salvator Rosa. The artist played the part of Formica and, according to Cantu: "dir Formica volea allora a Napoli presso a poco come dir Pulcinella".⁷⁹ Pulcinella, like Arlecchino, was a late arrival among the masks of carnival and the Commedia dell' Arte. Bouchard makes no mention of him among the Neapolitan masks in Rome in 1632, though he had been popular on stage for some time. In these years the Neapolitan masks were those of Cola the 'dottore', Pasquariello, Coviello. The success of Rosa's 'carro' indicates (as witness his subsequent successes on the stage) that Neapolitan masks - and Neapolitan players - were very popular on the Roman stage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and, in the case of Pulcinella into the nineteenth century. However, while we find references to Pulcinella in the Neapolitan carnival in the 1660s, he is not mentioned by observers in Rome before the eighteenth century.⁸⁰

Despite the monograph of Bragaglia, who collected a mass of fascinating information on the subject, there still remains much to be said about the mask of Pulcinella. For example, how close a resemblance is there between the stage Pulcinella and the carnival mask? Are they identical, or are there important differences? We can note similar features, situations, scenes, 'lazzi', verbal gags, etc. in both; it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw a clear distinction between the two, given the close intertwining of the two masks, and the near contemporaneity of the appearance of the Commedia dell' Arte masks in the improvised comic theatre. If Toschi's thesis

of carnival as the origin of the comic theatre is accepted, it is tempting to see in the mask of Pulcinella, as in others, indications of its roots in much older carnival forms and masks, despite the fact that he, like Arlecchino, appears much later in the carnival.

Like the mask of Arlecchino, which has been traced back to the figure of Hellequin and the story of the 'Mesnée infernale', Pulcinella can be related to the devil masks of the medieval carnival: "in alcune regioni i diavoli carnevaleschi sono stati ormai del tutto sostituiti da Arlecchino, Zanni e Pulcinella"⁸¹; Toschi points out that the black mask is an unlikely indication of the servant or the porter, and he identifies it with the devil mask.⁸² Rossi and De Simone, in their interesting study of the carnival in present day Campania look closely at the relations between Pulcinella and the underworld - for example, the derivation of the name from 'Pulcino', a creature which scratches (or digs) in the earth; note here also the high-pitched voice⁸³; the white costume, so like the white sheet of the ghost mask, or the costume of the original 'zanni', itself so similar to that of the 'Matto' - the carnival figure who developed also from the devil mask - those devils who in the mystery plays were sometimes allowed to run freely around the streets, 'scaring' people, rather like the 'Matto' running around in the carnival.

The crudeness and lewdness of the character, indicative of his roots in older popular tradition, and more obvious in the puppet theatre, are not so evident in the descriptions of Pulcinella which we have in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in the course of the nineteenth century (the phallic horn which he carried gave him numerous opportunities). There is a fleeting reference in Goethe to a certain rather unseemly movement: "As he talks to women, he manages to imitate with a slight impudent movement the figure of the ancient God

of Gardens - and this in holy Rome! - but the frivolity excites more amusement than indignation."⁸⁴ The figure had been obviously refined and toned down in the course of its history. The grossness had been reduced to a certain playful naughtiness. We see him waving his horn at men as an indication of their cuckolding or their jealousy, he can indulge in slightly indecent gestures, in rather risqué language - but always, it seems, keeping within the limits allowed in the so-called 'licence' of carnival; similarly the crude, lavatorial humour of earlier years, the emphasis on the defecatory, on the lower bodily functions, had been notably refined. These were much clearer in the Pulcinella of the preceding century, in for example the phallic significance of his alternative name 'Cetrulo', or certain rude gestures made with a salame.⁸⁵

Such vulgarity is for the most part out of place in the eighteenth century Pulcinella, whose popularity knew no limits of sex, age nor social class. There are occasional references to children wearing the mask, and also many women, according to Goethe: "and I must confess that they often manage to look very charming in this ambiguous disguise." He also points later out that each of the masks was "wearing his own individual variation of this commonest kind of fancy dances. One wears a wig, another a bonnet, and another has a birdcage on his head instead of a cap, in which a pair of birds, dressed up as an 'abbate' and his lady, are hopping about on perches."⁸⁶ The element of social reversal, too, played its part in the choice of this mask, its popularity with the aristocracy being akin to fashionable ladies' predilection for the costume of the peasant girl. But Pulcinella is essentially of the people and for the people; by the beginning of the following century, in fact, according to Millin, the mask was used almost exclusively by them: "ce déguisement est abandonnée en général à la dernière classe du

peuple."⁸⁷

There is here perhaps an element of satire in the mask, though not on a personal or individual level. Reference has been made to the presence of the lawyer alongside Pulcinella, where the latter may be seen as a figure derisive of authority. In the same way we find him deflating the boasts and pretensions of the braggart soldier, the 'Capitano'. This, too, is illustrated by Goethe (in a rare reference to this military figure): "Not far from the French Academy, the so-called 'Capitano' of the Italian theatre, in Spanish dress, with feathered hat and large gloves, steps forward from a crowd of maskers on a stand and begins telling the story of his great deeds by land and sea in stentorian tones. Before long he is challenged by a Pulcinella who, after pretending to accept everything in good faith, casts doubts and aspersions on the hero's tale, and interrupts his rodomontade with puns and mock platitudes. Here again, everyone who passes stops to listen to the lively exchange of words."⁸⁸ Barletta sees in this aspect of the mask the imprint of the 'giullare', ready to serve any master, but also to question authority.⁸⁹

The vulgarity of the mask may be seen more clearly in its role in the puppet theatre, indicating its links with older ritual forms, and images of death and resurrection - as in the story of Punch, the crude, foul-mouthed, wife-beating and homicidal braggart. Speaight reports an example, seen in the San Carlino theatre of Naples in 1840, of the episode of Punch triumphing over death, when he tricks the hangman into hanging himself!⁹⁰ The connection between Pulcinella and death discussed by Rossi and De Simone may be seen in relation to the figure of Carnival, sometimes substituted by Pulcinella in modern carnivals. There are a number of references to the crowning of Pulcinella as king, an early one, for 1711, being found in Clementi:

"una lunga compagnia di pulcinelli che scortavano il re dell' Acerra, cavalcante un asino, e circondato da alabardieri", and it is to be seen in Goethe's account.⁹¹ There is, however, little mention of the death of this Carnival figure before the nineteenth century.

Arlecchino, compared with Pulcinella, receives relatively little attention from observers in this century, despite the fact that he was obviously a very popular mask and appears in most of the prints of the carnival from the eighteenth century onwards; he is not featured in Goethe's description; mention of him in foreign commentators comes, for the most part, from the nineteenth century. Like Pulcinella, Arlecchino was also an immigrant from another city; like Pulcinella, he retained much of the quality of the original mask. A certain amount of what has been said of Pulcinella could apply to Arlecchino; but compared with the satiric, derisive force of Pulcinella, he seems a light-weight figure, with none of the vestigial crudeness which can be seen in the Neapolitan mask. Arlecchino seems altogether a very eighteenth century figure - he has grace, a childlike, mischievous charm, and an innocence. To be truthful, the 'frisking, dancing, jumping nonentity', described by MacFarlane, at a later date⁹², does not really seem so far removed from the one we see in the Venetian carnival of 1834; but here we also find a certain satirical quality: "egli faceva scambietti, e complimenti, a questo e a quello, formandosi d'attorno circolo, al quale disputava, ed il quale tratteneva ... A questa maschera che mai cessa di ciarlare per suo naturale, anche nel teatro il celebre Goldoni poneva in bocca certe sentenze e certi detti che non si permetterebbero ad altri."⁹³ Just as we are told by Lalande that "toutes les querelles & les disputes des Pulcinella finissent par des poignées de dragées"⁹⁴, so we have a similar gracefulness in the reference to the Arlecchini who go around with a bellow blowing powder from wigs, and then brushing it off with

little brooms; this is shown by Andersen in his Roman diary of 1834.⁹⁵

Pulcinella and Arlecchino are imported masks; the doctor and lawyer are masks to be found in any carnival. Other popular masks were typical of Rome itself and its surrounding countryside - what might be called local masks. Rome at this time (and throughout most of the following century) was a town which had very strong links with its countryside; visitors often commented on the rustic quality of the place. Peasants from the hill towns around the city were familiar figures in the streets and market-places; they were to be seen, in later periods, serving as models for painters; and their characteristic and picturesque dress proved very popular with the maskers in the carnival. These villagers would flock to the city during carnival, and they themselves in their normal country dress, or townspeople in disguise, provided very attractive figures - the most characteristic being that of the 'giardiniera' or 'giardiniera'. These masks, too, tended to be taken up by the aristocracy; not so much, perhaps, the 'giardiniera', but certainly the peasant girl's costume.

Clementi reports an example of a plebeian masquerade put on during the brilliant carnival of 1741: "Erano tutti vestiti da vignaroli, sia gli uomini che le donne, con 'il loro camiglio di lino Rosso e le donne portavano di più un cappelletto di paglia in capo'. La maschera era preceduta da uno 'che suonava la pila, secondo si costumava nelle vignate d'ottobre e un altro che suonava un timpanello'".⁹⁶ Such large-scale phenomena are rare; the main rustic presence was in the area of individual masks; and this went back at least to the early decades of the seventeenth century. In Bouchard, for example: "Les gens de qualité vont en carrosse ou à cheval; la plus part pour se masquer ne prennent qu'un habit de campagne tout simple avec une

fausse barbe, ou un habit à la françoise."⁹⁷

Another familiar local figure, encountered already, is the Jew. The 'giudiata' continued with undiminished popularity in this period, and was played regularly in improvised theatres during carnival; the use of 'carri' did not continue in the later part of the century. The mask of the Jew was perhaps still to be encountered, but the odious foot race had, of course, been long discontinued; the 'omaccio', presumably, was to be witnessed in the opening ceremony on the Capitol - but few mentions of it from foreign observers are to be found in this period. The mask of the Jewish girl does not seem to have achieved its popularity yet - this, too, will be seen in the opening years of the following century, during the Napoleonic period. One of the activities, probably the main one, of the Jews - denied other areas of commerce - was the buying and selling of old clothes ('the rag trade' which is typical of Jewish immigrant activity elsewhere). And, of course, such old clothes were particularly sought after in the carnival period since they were colourful, often quite splendid, and obviously cheap to hire.

Among the most popular of such old-fashioned dress was that of the 'Conte', or 'nobile spiantato', a caricature of the impoverished nobleman. Perhaps the concept of the 'Contea venduta' can be related to the placard, proclaiming 'Est locanda', placed so prominently on the back of a masker in some carnival prints who resembles the description of the 'Conte' - (though it is possible that this figure could be a lawyer or a poet. This mask is another clear example of social reversals found in carnival; it was favoured particularly by the poor people because of the possibility it gave of 'living' the part of the aristocrat (albeit an impoverished one), of making good-natured fun of a particular recognisable type and also because of its cheapness. The costume was a mixture of the splendid and the

grotesque, using materials which were relatively cheap and easily obtainable (the hired dress, the fruit and vegetables which adorned it). There are a number of references to this figure in this century, but fuller ones come from later periods, particularly the early nineteenth century. These later descriptions also indicate that the 'Conte' is a satirical mask. In this respect he may at times be confused with the Poet.⁹⁸ The satirical remarks were directed particularly at the ladies: "i conti che prodigano lezioni di morale alle zitelle e alle maritate, e ne svelano gli intrighi amorosi, le improvvide speranze e le amare delusioni".⁹⁹

Another figure with whom the 'Conte' may be confused is the 'Quacquero', who wears similarly old-fashioned clothes. The latter, however, devotes a keen attention to the ladies. Goethe does not include the 'Conte' in his account, but his description of the 'Quaker' is strikingly similar in some ways: "the wearer must be corpulent ... this figure is very like the 'buffo caricato' of Italian comic opera, and like him, the 'quacchero' usually plays the part of a silly, infatuated and betrayed old fool: but some of them also play the vulgar fop".¹⁰⁰

The 'Quacquero' himself is a problematic mask whose origin is not at all clear. He was presented by some foreign observers as a foreign rather than a local mask, and therefore, it might be argued, should be examined at a later stage. One of the first mentions of a Quaker is from 1779, during the war of American Independence and may be discounted immediately. This is found in Henry Swinburne's account of a masked ball in which were seen masks representing American colonists. The description indicates a very different type from those seen in other references to this figure: "The American provinces were represented by thirteen men and women, meant for quakers, dressed in

round pink hats, encircled with ribbons, on which were inscribed M.W.M.C. and 'devinez'; short coats, white and pink, with slashed sleeves. The men wore long beards. They gave away English engravings of an angel breaking the chains of a negro."¹⁰¹

For Smith, writing in 1786, he clearly represented a mockery of the English ... "a burlesque of our nation", dressed like a quaker, shaking hands with everyone, saying not a word, but emitting at times a strange high-pitched trilling sound."¹⁰² This feature of the 'Quacquero' - his silence - creates a certain perplexity; how can a nationality be assigned to him on the basis of dress and gesture, without any reference to speech; there are other masks which do not speak, but they are not usually classed as foreign. The idea of the Quacquero as Quaker or as Englishman seems very suspect. Englishmen are not particularly noted for expressing themselves in a high-pitched trill; presumably, as we hear on other occasions, they might be expected to indulge in the occasional 'Goddam'! Anyway, not all of the 'Quacqueri' were silent; in fact, as we have seen, they were shown making advances to women.

Gastineau in his description stresses the sound: "joufflu, obèse, marchant sur le bout du pied et collant son petit oeil rond à de grandes anneaux sans verre, il fait des déclarations ridicules aux dames, qu' il termine par un cri perçant auquel répondent en chœur tous les Quacquero les plus bruyants du carnaval italien."¹⁰³ Given the need for the actor to suit the part - physically and vocally - the description might not seem to agree with the suggestion that the Quacquero is a mask for the young man. This would explain, however, his quick, precise movements - at least when a number of them came together, as Goethe indicates: "Hopping about on their toes with great agility ... They make low stiff bows and express their delight when they meet each other, by leaping straight up in the air several times

and letting out high, piercing, inarticulate cries, joined together by the consonants brr."104

Goethe states, too, that there were a large number of 'Quacqueri' (a very popular mask, obviously) - he noted about a hundred.¹⁰⁵ The very number would also seem to argue against the foreign origin of the mask; foreign masks certainly had a fair amount of popularity, but in no case do we find them being numbered among the most common ones, alongside Pulcinella, Arlecchino, the 'Dottore', the 'Conte', etc. As with the 'Conte', the cheapness of the costume, despite its apparent richness was an added attraction; again, like the mask of the Conte it was very popular with the poor. One final point, which is of great significance, and which also argues against foreign origin, is the presence of the Quacquero at the death and funeral of carnival.¹⁰⁶

Now a few words on the real foreign masks. The eighteenth century saw the continuing popularity of the strange and the exotic masks, so beloved of the sixteenth and seventeenth century aristocracy, such as the Moorish or eastern costume - part of the general vogue for eastern subjects, which characterized this century. This can be seen in the masquerade put on by the students of the French Academy in 1735.¹⁰⁷ Eastern European costumes like the Polish or the Hungarian were still popular with the aristocracy in the first half of the century (as they had been in the preceding one).¹⁰⁸ Among the European costumes there seems to be a remarkable absence of the French, who had been quite common in the preceding century; nor is there much mention of the Swiss; and Goethe's reference to the Spanish 'Capitano' was an isolated one. Wehrhan points out as something lacking in Goethe's account the detail of drunken Swiss guards riding in the Corso.¹⁰⁹ The Swiss, like the Germans, and the young 'Mylords' of the Grand Tour, had a reputation for drinking too much, as did the Germans. By

Goethe's time, the mask of the 'Cascherino,' or German baker apprentice, was a common one: "The German baker apprentices have a reputation in Rome for often getting drunk, so figures may be seen, dressed up in their ordinary or slightly decorated costume, staggering about with flasks of wine."¹¹⁰

Certain foreigners were so familiar by now that they might almost be said to constitute a kind of local mask; Goethe, on the same page as his reference to the 'cascherino', tells us that foreigners were made fun of - since their clothing already seemed like a fancy dress. Among those particularly familiar were the foreign artists who, as we might expect, threw themselves into the enjoyment of the occasion. Rapidly becoming very familiar figures indeed in the course of the century were the British tourists; Smith, in 1786, talks of "our English clothes serving most completely as a masquerade dress".¹¹¹ They even figured in occasional masquerades. Bagnar in his diary for 1738 refers to a masquerade of English sailors put on, according to him, by Prince Rospigliosi; Clementi also refers to one in 1738, but assures us it was organized by an Englishman.¹¹² But, before the 1780s there are few references to individual masks of Englishmen which were to be more noticeable in the following century.

The extensive use of cross-dressing or sexual reversals in the carnival has been noted in commenting on the increased freedom of women to appear, masked or unmasked, on the Corso, and to social reversal, in relation to the 'Conte' (or the 'Quacquero'). Sexual and social reversals are closely related and carry us deeply into the whole area of carnival symbolism, and the spirit of the old Saturnalia (so often invoked by descriptions of the occasion). At the heart of the world upside down, the topsy-turvy world of carnival, lies the reversal of social categories, as in the swapping of roles, briefly, between master and servant in the Saturnalia. Spence, writing of the

Venetian carnival of 1732, had seen "great numbers of gentlemen dressed up like country fellows, with wooden shoes, and I have seen one of them all covered with sheepskin playing upon a bagpipe before thirty couples at least of people of fashion dressed up like country people."¹¹³ In the earlier period the mixing of the classes was not so clear as it became in the eighteenth century; in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century nobles, dressed in their own robes or in rich oriental costumes were accompanied by servants, dressed as clowns - "avec leurs pantalons, stratules & zanits".¹¹⁴ Richard, in 1762, tells us that several princes drove themselves¹¹⁵; in 1766, Lalande tells us that Pulcinella is the most common mask - even among princes, noting a Roman prince dressed as Pulcinella, sitting beside his wife who was wearing peasant costume.¹¹⁶ Some years earlier Hervey includes the final touch - servants rode on coaches, while the masters walked.¹¹⁷

Coach-drivers provided the most common examples of cross-dressing, and they were singled out for particular attention by most observers. If the British mentality was somewhat disconcerted by the easy mixing in Rome of social classes in and out of carnival, it was positively scandalized by the practice of transvestism. The tolerant attitude of Lassels and his concept of the safety-valve, to justify such exaggerated behaviour, was shared by few of his fellow-countrymen over the next century, and would really be accepted as an inevitable and essential part of the proceedings only in the nineteenth century. But even in 1823, Webb found it "shocking that the majority of maskers are of the other sex".¹¹⁸ Transvestism is integral in the present day, small-town carnival such as those, for example, studied in Campania in the early 1970s by Rossi and De Simone; in fact, in such carnivals women do not take an active part. Dressing up in the clothes of the

opposite sex can encourage the timid to find the nerve to act, safely hidden by the disguise. But it can also serve as a shield for the liberation of feminine tendencies.¹¹⁹ It was advisable for the young man not to resemble too closely a member of the opposite sex. In the eighteenth century and nineteenth century examples there is usually no doubt about the sex of the individual although, it must be admitted, there were a number of cases of mistaken identity reported in the later period.

The carnival feature of contrasts or pairs served to make identity quite clear in most cases: "Here were numbers of coarse athletic carmen dressed as women, fanning themselves with a pretended delicacy and listlessness highly comic, and hanging on the arms of their mistresses, whose little slender figures, strutting in breeches, made no less ridiculous an appearance. This kind of metamorphosis, on such an occasion and in such a rank, is entertaining enough, though not in my opinion to be tolerated in anything like regular society."¹²⁰

In the little scenes reported by Goethe, and others, in which transference of sex reaches the point of the mask giving birth, there can, of course, be no confusion. Goethe gives an example of a group of young men dressed up as women, one of them heavily pregnant, strolling with other young men dressed in the Sunday clothes of the common people. These young men started to quarrel, and huge knives of silver cardboard were drawn; bystanders intervened to calm them down: "Meanwhile, as if from shock, the pregnant woman is taken ill. A chair is brought, and the other women give her aid. She moans like a woman in labour, and the next thing you know, she has brought some misshapen creature into the world, to the great amusement of the onlookers. The play is over, and the troupe moves on to repeat the performance, or some farce like it, elsewhere."¹²¹ Such scenes emphasize the

grotesque, the exaggerated - as with the enormous bearded 'ladies' who drive the coaches. The natural harmonies are upset; reversal extends to the physical appearance of many people and things. Exaggerated proportions and physical deformities were to be seen in abundance.

Russell noted this stress on the grotesque, the unnatural. "About two every afternoon, the whole face of things began to be altered by a universal metamorphosis of men, women, children, horses, asses, etc. . . . Everybody, it seems, being dissatisfied with the shape and station, which nature had allotted them, chose an entire alteration, or even a perfect inversion."¹²² These deformities related very often to the reproductive process, bellies, humps - symptoms of pregnancy or reproductive powers. The end result of the Meyer examples quoted earlier, even more than Goethe's, brings out the quality of crudeness, grossness - the mock birth, the man suffering from constipation, (parody of birth?).¹²³ Elsewhere there are images not of birth but infancy, the babe in swaddling clothes (represented by a cat or an adult male). J. Spence in 1732 gives us an example from the Venetian carnival of a great fat fellow in swaddling clothes who continuously spat out the pap he was fed by his 'nurse', to the delight of the onlookers - but not of the English sailor who received it full in the face, and had to be restrained by Spence and his companions from seriously endangering the inviolability of this particular mask.¹²⁴

The final note in this section concerns the combination of the element of terror and the grotesque in what is the oldest type of mask - the animal - deriving as it does in part from the hunting rituals of primitive people. While having an important role in other countries, like France and Spain, animals do not seem to figure prominently in Rome. They are to be seen in prints of the eighteenth and particularly the nineteenth century carnival but there are a few references in

eighteenth century witnesses, such as those in Sacheverell Steven's account of the 1750s in Florence where there is a coachman masked like a Russian bear, with footmen behind in the guise of baboons or apes, the horses made up to resemble stags, bulls, camels, asses; and Clementi quotes an example from a poem on 1776 carnival, relating to the use of animal mask: "Scimmie, Gallinacci, Orso, Cane, Gatto ..."¹²⁵

5. The Confetti battles

Foreigners in this period do not seem to have participated much in the masking; the comment of Hervey in 1761 is probably quite typical: "The masking is not a diversion very much to my taste, however, as when you are at Rome, you must do as they do at Rome. I, yesterday, went to partake of their diversions. I was not masked, for there is no obligation of appearing with a visor upon your face".¹²⁶

It must be said that in the confetti battles and 'moccoli' evening, at least, some foreigners did participate whole-heartedly in the carnival (though this increased sharply in the following century). For the most part, they displayed little feeling for or appreciation of the spirit of the carnival. They showed little enthusiasm, in general, for the horse-races, so beloved of the Romans, nor for the most part did they show any great appreciation of the wit of the maskers, Goethe being one of the most notable exceptions. They tended to be more observers than participants in the fun. Robert Adam enjoyed, it seems, all the events of the carnival - in Rome and in Florence.¹²⁷ Horace Walpole, like Charles de Brosses arriving for the carnival of 1740, was denied it in Rome, but took full advantage of it in Florence. Their pleasure in the event, and their lack of inhibitions about joining in, contrast somewhat with the attitude of earlier visitors - as in the case of the young John Evelyn or Joseph

Addison - who took a rather more sober view of the proceedings. Such scenes were something new for the majority of these visitors, and especially for the British, carnival being a relic of pre-Reformation England which had largely disappeared; however, Puritan reservations did not spoil enjoyment of the occasion.¹²⁸

This enjoyment consisted for foreigners, as for the wealthiest natives, in parading along the Corso in a coach, and throwing sugar-plums. This custom seems to have been a novelty, too, for the French. "Ce que les masques font en Italie, qu'ils ne font point en France, c'est de jeter quantité de dragées sur les spectateurs."¹²⁹ Progress was, inevitably, painfully slow, given the narrowness of the street and the number of coaches involved; it could take two hours or more to cover the length of the Corso, and sometimes the crush was so great that coaches had to be diverted into side-streets. The situation was made even worse by the fact that the central area was reserved for the carriages of important people, and had to be left free. "Mais ce qui peut paroître encore au dessus, c'est la quantité des carrosses qui se promènent à la file dans cette rue sur deux rangs, (le milieu étant réservé aux Princes Romains, qui seuls ont le droit d'y passer) la parure des domestiques & des chevaux."¹³⁰

This was not entirely true, as other important personages enjoyed this privilege - ambassadors and foreign residents of note - Swinburne in 1779 observed the Maltese ambassador making use of his privilege and driving down the middle of the street¹³¹; this privilege and its occasional misuse, was at times a source of tension among the people on the Corso. The most notable of the foreign residents who enjoyed it was the Pretender, Charles Edward Stuart - seen by Smith shortly before his death, in 1786. The permission to ride in the centre of the Corso was almost the only mark of rank that the Pretender enjoyed, the Pope having long required him to lay aside the style and title of

king. The people commonly nick-named him "The King of the Twelve Apostles" because he lived in the square so-called.¹³²

The scene was, of course, one of considerable noise and confusion - and potential friction and fractiousness. Foreign visitors commented on the almost unfailing good-humour of the Romans, imagining what such a scene could degenerate into in London or Paris. The evidence of the 'bandi' is sometimes at variance with the reports of foreigners; over the years they indicate that there had been a fair amount of violence in the earlier days of the carnival; the list of objects the throwing of which was forbidden shows the kind of objects which had been thrown despite the severity of the punishment. Here is a random choice between 1563 and 1602 - in 1563 there was a ban on the throwing of "melangoli, uova e zaganelle"; in 1592: "melangoli, rape, mele, ed uova piene d'acqua"; in 1602: "... nè anco deturpare con ampolle d'inchiostro, o altra immonditia, ancorchè non toccasse nè con animo d'offendere: sotto pena della forca."¹³³

Premoli quotes a lament for the sixteenth century carnival from 'La Ruffa' of Ippolito Saviano. "O Carnasciale galante, Carnasciale buono, o Carnasciale da bene, nel quale non si fa altro che mascare, livree, giostre, caccie di tori, correr palii, commedie, veglie et puttane in volta a piè e a cavallo quanto l'arena e Io non vorrei esser padron di Roma per altro se non per far ch'egli durasse tutto l'anno; oltre alle sue galanterie, vi sono questi soffioni de zaganelle, che si chiamino che mi piacciono fuor di modo, e poi che si dice che elle hanno da bandire."¹³⁴ There are reference at times to the rabble throwing mud (an indication of class-hatred?), and, much more damaging than these projectiles, there was the throwing of stones.¹³⁵

Could there be a relationship between such violent customs and

the throwing of confetti and flowers in carnival in the eighteenth and nineteenth century? a faint echo of an ancient agrarian rite, with its element of combat and ritual violence? As Muchembled puts it: "Car toute fête à l'époque connaît des affrontements ... Même si le sang ne coule pas, elle s'exprime par une bataille rituelle"¹³⁶; there is an ambiguity in this part of the carnival as in others - the throwing of pleasant, fragrant objects as a kind of tribute to the ladies; the throwing of offensive, non-fragrant objects. It must be said, however, that the throwing of offensive objects does not seem to have been so common in the eighteenth century.

Rotten eggs (or worse!) had been among these projectiles in earlier periods; but a particularly graceful compliment was the throwing of perfumed eggs; nobles on horseback were followed by attendants with baskets full of eggs, who handed them to their masters as needed; the object of these eggs - the ladies at windows and balconies - is revealed in prints of the time¹³⁷, or in Bouchard: "estafiers vestus en Pasquarielli, qui leur portent des paniers fort joliment peints, pleins d'oeufs, qui estant trouez par les deux bouts, et videz, se remplissent ou de poudre de C(h)ypre, ou de confitures, ou de farine, ou d'eaus de senteurs mais la plus grande part ne sont plein que d'eau simple ... L'on se sert aussi de serinques, avec lesquelles l'on jette de l'eau aux masques, et d'oranges."¹³⁸ They formed a very graceful tribute, but like the obviously offensive projectiles, they could cause damage, as Bouchard discovered. To protect his face he used a mirror; but his clothes were soon soaked through from the exploded eggs.¹³⁹ Two years after Bouchard's visit, a 'bando' of 1634 forbade the throwing of filled eggs: "... dagli inconvenienti, essendo stati macchiati vestiti di valore ... et anche cavati gli occhi ad alcuni ...".¹⁴⁰

By the end of the sixteenth century already the more gentle (or

genteel) confetti had been introduced - obviously it was only the aristocracy which could afford such tribute (as was the case with the perfumed eggs). According to Moroni, it was the fierce Sixtus V, in 1585, who introduced the custom of throwing confetti, or sugar plums: "Non si vide più gettata addosso, o in volto la polvere, e la farina, e non i razzi matti di fuochi artificiali; ma fu introdotta la costumanza di tirare per gentilezza confetti".¹⁴¹

The custom was widespread by the end of the seventeenth century. Count Tolstoy, in 1698, describes streets covered like snow with confetti.¹⁴² They were popular for most of the eighteenth century too, though in the course of the century we find the use of mock confetti - made of plaster or lime-covered pellets becoming widespread - a much cheaper substitute, and within the reach of anyone. James Russel, in 1741, refers to both kinds: "In passing they salute one another by throwing in a genteel manner handfuls of sugar plums, etc. The lower gentry, who march on foot, make their salutations like your ladies of Billingsgate; and when their tongues are put to a non plus, they pelt one another with hard sugar plums as big as nutmegs, which terribly discompose a well powdered peruke, and more cruelly bruise the tender bosoms of the fair."¹⁴³ Goethe describes maskers accompanied by friends who handed them fresh ammunition, while confetti-sellers ran from one combatant to the other, weighing out as many pounds as were asked for. The damage caused was not just to the person, but to the carriage windows. "Je ne trouve pas cette galanterie là si plaisante, car il en tombe quelquefois une grêle si considerable, qui j'ai crû que les glaces de notre carosse en casseraient."¹⁴⁴ Some years earlier, Richard had explained the procedure to avoid this and at the same time given some explanation of the form of the carriages. "On ôte les glaces du carosse, l'impériale

se partage: le devant & le derrière de la voiture se rabbaissent en dehors, ce qui leur donne une forme alongée, en fait une espèce de char de triomphe où sont ordinairement des masques avec goût."¹⁴⁵

The reference to salutations in these reports leads to the question of the rules governing the throwing of confetti - for rules there were, apparently - well-understood by the locals, ignored or guessed perhaps by the foreigners. A greater awareness of these was shown in the following century - but also a more rowdy disregard of any order - in the behaviour of foreigners. An unstated rule was that the confetti should not be thrown at those who were not masked. Some commentators report the idea that they should only be thrown at acquaintances; "but the best on't is, that either by their cloaths or their Equipage, everybody is known."¹⁴⁶ A target treated particularly unmercifully was the abbé: "c'est surtout un grand plaisir que d'en atteindre les Abbés, les Religieux vestus de noir, de les couvrir de marques blanches qui s'impriment sur leurs habits."¹⁴⁷

6. The 'Mocoli'

The main feature introduced in this period - and one into which, again, the foreign visitors could enter with increasing fervour was the 'Mocoli' (or 'Mocolletti') ceremony which closed the whole period of carnival on the evening of Shrove Tuesday. This ceremony, in which the revellers attempted to protect their lighted taper, or candle, while endeavouring to extinguish those around them, until finally all went out at a given signal, marking the end of the whole carnival, provided the one feature which had been missing to complete the picture of the festival in the last century of its existence.

An early reference to the custom is in Archenholz, in 1780: "Man hat seit 1778 ein possierliches Vergnügen mit dem Ende des Carnevals

verbunden. Unter der scherzhaften Idee, das Carneval zu grabe zu bringen. Einige lustige Köpfe bekam vor ein paar Jahren den Einfall den abschiedenden carneval hindurch die letzte Ehre zuerweisen, und nun brennen schon Millionen Lichter."¹⁴⁸

This is very interesting in not just referring to the existence of the phenomenon but in attributing it to the personal intervention of a number of people. It raises the intriguing possibility of an individual inventor of the ceremony. Beckford, in fact, in the account of his Italian visit of the same year professed to know the originator. "It has been the custom lately ... to put lights out of the window ... interrering the carnival. If I mistake not, Duke Braschi told me that he was the inventor".¹⁴⁹ The detail of the lights at the window ties in with the description of Goethe in 1788; and so does that of Roland da La Platière who was present at the carnival of 1778: "On illumine les fenêtrés, les balcons. Les laquais, les masques, portent des bougies, des chandelles allumées, sur la tête, aux mains, des batons fourchus."¹⁵⁰ Clementi dates the ceremony from 1773, the great novelty of that year; the author of 'Via del Corso', however, tells us that it first appeared in 1760 - but limited to an area around the Ruspoli and Fiano palaces - in mid-Corso - and was extended in 1773 to the whole Corso.¹⁵¹

There were, at the time, and in the decades that followed, a number of attempts on the part of foreign commentators to explain the phenomenon. Faraday in 1815 tells us that it was the custom of the masks to parade on the last day, intoning a dirge, 'Morto è Carnevale'; according to him the 'mocoli' replaced this phenomenon; with the Pope back in Rome, there were to be no more 'mocoli', no more mockery of burial customs.¹⁵² The 'mocoli' in fact were banned by the papal government in 1790 but not for the reasons put forward by Faraday. The dirge was already mentioned by Swinburne in 1779 - people

walk about singing the dirge for the funeral of the carnival, the houses being illuminated (but here there is no mention of 'mocoli' being extinguished in a mock battle);¹⁵³ for the French period, there is the testimony of Millin: "'on entend, pendant quelques moments psalmodier ces mots: è morto Carnevale! è morto Carnevale!".¹⁵⁴

Dickens in 1846, returns to the idea of a parody of the Catholic religion, a burlesque mourning.¹⁵⁵ Moroni, on the other hand, relates it to the pagan feasts of Bacchus and Ceres. A memory of the passage from pagan to Christian festival seems possible here; the survival of older customs and forms, such as we find elsewhere in the history of the Christian religion.¹⁵⁶ The 'mocoli' night might, for example, be connected with 'Candelora' (2 February), and ultimately with the Hebrew rite of the benediction of the candles as the Purification of the Virgin is with the Lupercalia.¹⁵⁷

Putting together lights (Mocoli), funeral dirge and the idea of a purification rite we have a kind of representation of the death and burial of carnival. A problem presents itself here, however; where is the figure - human, animal, guy, which represents Carnival? Where is the corpse which is to be buried? only one example in this period has been encountered; it occurs in Mrs Piozzi's account of 1780: "The death of Carnevale who was carried to his grave with so many candles suddenly extinguished". A number of examples of the ceremony of the procession and death of Carnival will be observed in the course of the following century.¹⁵⁸

The idea of violence, of death - but transposed in a cheerful, joyful vein - was attached to the ceremony of the 'Mocoli'. As E.O. Jones says, "as in many spring festivals, there is a joyous and sinister side to the proceedings."¹⁵⁹ The physical violence was in the attempts to extinguish the taper of the others and protect one's

own; every means was used to achieve this - simply blowing it out, using snuffers of various kinds (cloths, sticks, brooms, even bouquets of flowers) and using deceit and cunning to trick the others into a false sense of security. Here, once more, in a harmless form, was the element of contest indispensable to carnival (confetti-battles, horse-races, the 'Moccoli' - even, perhaps, contests of wits between the maskers); the only harm was the damage done to clothes by the melted wax and the confetti. There was verbal violence, too, on this occasion. The idea of death was there in the sound - the lament for the dying or dead carnival; but, curiously, this was not mentioned by many observers in this period; nor is there mention of the low, humming sound heard by some nineteenth century observers. What eighteenth century accounts described is the mock-violent cry of the revellers: "Sia ammazzato chi non ha lume!"; obviously omitting to carry a taper was seen as a breach of carnival decorum - everyone was expected to participate (not the case with masking, which was optional); but the curse was extended to all and sundry, whether or not they carried a lighted taper (or bunch of tapers - as is so often to be seen in descriptions and prints); the curses could be individualised -- Smith mentions a few against 'abbati, barbieri, cappucini, milordi like myself'.¹⁶⁰

This is a very violent curse - but uttered joyfully and indicating no desire for harm to come to the individual addressed. Just as in other languages curses and obscene words are often used as expressions of joy or admiration, so in this evening the true meaning of 'sia ammazzato' was completely forgotten, and it became a password, a cry of joy. It is one of the deeply ambiguous aspects of carnival - perhaps nowhere more clearly seen than in one of the examples given by Millin in his account of a lover to his mistress: "sia ammazzata la bella Laura!".¹⁶¹ The cry was obviously not to be taken literally; it

seems to be rather one of those phrases used to ward off the evil wishes on the person, and wish him good luck, such as 'Break a leg!', or 'In bocca al lupo!'. Bakhtin notes this ambivalence - fire combined with the threat of death, in which the louder the cry the more the threat loses its direct threatening meaning.¹⁶²

One other feature which Goethe points out in this cry is the freedom it implied in addressing anyone - irrespective of the sex, the age, the social class of the individual so addressed; the 'Moccoli' evening, much more than the confetti battle, was the great leveller in the Roman carnival. Distinctions of sex, age, authority etc. could be cheerfully ignored, as in Goethe: "Sia ammazzato il Signor padre!" - the boy claiming the freedom of the evening to curse his father all the more vehemently.¹⁶³ At work here too, of course, is the inversion inherent in carnival - the world upside-down, "the rude child [striking] his father dead".

7. The Races

The final point to be looked at in this chapter is the horse-race; the one least favoured by foreign observers and most fanatically pursued by the people, which suggested to Richard the passion of the ancient Romans for the games.¹⁶⁴ It was now generally called the 'corsa di barberi', the other races having been discontinued for some time. The name does not automatically indicate, however, that it was only Barbary steeds which took part - far from it, in fact, considering the often derogatory comments of foreigners; they were often, as in the earlier periods, a mixture of different types. As before, these races remained the province of the Roman aristocracy for the greater part of the century and rivalry was fierce between the various families for the honour of winning the 'palii': Ademollo gives

a good example of just how far this zeal could be taken, and how much importance was attached to the winning of the 'palio', in narrating an incident between the Rospigliosi and the Corsini which took place in 1757. A horse of Prince Rospigliosi having won the race after a false start, the 'palio' was duly awarded and there were celebrations in the Rospigliosi palace; after the correct start the winner was declared to be a horse belonging to Prince Corsini, and another 'palio' was sent with full pomp to his palace.¹⁶⁵ Silvagni gives us another example, from 1780, when the Orsini horse beat the Colonna horse to public acclamation: "Si sarebbe detto che gli Orsini avessero vinto i Colonna in qualche fazione di guerra".¹⁶⁶ The public acclaim is perhaps understandable, because the various families could be very generous on the occasion of a win, the Rospigliosi being particularly favoured by the people for this reason.¹⁶⁷

The aristocratic monopoly lasted for the greater part of the century. Richard tells us in 1762: "Les seuls princes Romains ont le droit d'envoyer des chevaux à ces courses & se font un point d'honneur d'en avoir qui remportent les prix. Le Prince Chigi, quoique fort économe, fait une grande dépense pour avoir d'excellents chevaux."¹⁶⁸ But only a few years later things would change. By 1766 the privilege had been lost and the races were won by horses belonging to commoners: "Il est permis a tout le monde de faire courir des chevaux; c'étoient ordinairement les Princes Rospigliosi qui envoient les leurs; actuellement ce sont les maquignons."¹⁶⁹ Volkmann tells us that anyone can run horses in race now - but usually, he adds, under the patronage of a Prince¹⁷⁰; and this, it appears, was still the case in the early part of the nineteenth century, as we see in Simond (1818): "Autrefois, les premières familles de Rome envoyaient leurs chevaux à ces courses, maintenant ce sont tout simplement les maquignons; ils

obtiennent cependant un noble protecteur".¹⁷¹

Bouchard was one of the first foreigners to refer to the training of the horses - for one to two months before the event¹⁷²; Goethe informs us that horses were walked along Corso to accustom them to it and the street itself was strewn with 'pozzolana', to prevent the horses from slipping (if it rained this precaution became, of course, quite counter-productive!).¹⁷³ The order, conduct and sequence of the races had been largely established by the end of the seventeenth century, and, in some important details, by the end of the preceding century. Villamont described the procession of the 'Conservatore', with the 'pallii' from piazza del Popolo to piazza San Marco, where he would judge the outcome of the race (another official in piazza del Popolo ensured the correctness of the start).¹⁷⁴ An innovation of this period was the 'Mossa dei dragoni', in 1779, in which a troupe of horse guard careered along the Corso to clear it for the race.¹⁷⁵ The number of horses in each race seemed to vary considerably, from day to day, from year to year. Kephhalides looked back nostalgically to the days when Prince Rospigliosi ran up to twenty horses in a race and treated the people handsomely when he won - as he did, not surprisingly, very often.¹⁷⁶ Bergeret, in 1774, speaks of up to fifteen horses (though he saw only three in the first race).¹⁷⁷

La Condamine measured the length of the Corso and carefully timed the race to calculate the speed of the horses - nearly 37 feet a second.¹⁷⁸ Lalande quoting de la Condamine, added that they were much slower than English horses.¹⁷⁹

The fact that the race could not be properly viewed from any one point created difficulties in judging it. What we have for the race is a number of incomplete, sketchy descriptions, which have (as is the case with the masks) to be put together, like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, to achieve some kind of composite picture of the whole. But

there is one extended description - the most conscientious and exact account of the whole period, that of Bergeret de Grancourt in 1774. Bergeret had heard so much about the event, but was a little sceptical; he found the first race, in fact, not very impressive; the second, however, was rather better, he thought; eventually, he did not miss a single race. He was, therefore, able to give a very detailed and methodical account, and to overcome (as far as was possible) the problem presented by a description of the race. The governor in Piazza San Marco was able only to judge the outcome; the correctness of the departure could only be ascertained in Piazza del Popolo. Probably the best places for a general view of the occasion were the palaces in the middle of the Corso; one of these, a most prized position, belonged to the French Academy - Palazzo Mancini: "L'Ambassadeur de France va au Palais de l'Académie, où il reçoit les cardinaux & toutes les personnes de qualité qui veulent voir la course."¹⁸⁰

Bergeret decided that the race could be judged properly only if viewed from three different vantage points. The best place, he thought, providing the liveliest scene, was at the start - or 'Mossa'; Bouchard, again, is the first to mention this, using the word 'mossa'.¹⁸¹ Bergeret does, however, criticize the clumsiness of the grooms, which makes him doubt 'que ces chevaux en mains intelligents remoueraient très peu'.¹⁸²

The excitement of the horses was commented on by most observers, and almost all explain the reason for this - they were very savagely stimulated in various ways, most commonly by spiked iron balls, but flapping silver paper, crackers and even fire, were used; and Zeppegno gives us other examples of goads: "Pare che già nel '600 e nel '700 usassero le 'bombe', cioè i beveraggi drogati ... subito prima del via, si alzava loro la coda e si sbatteva in un luogo assai delicato

una bella mestolata di pece bollente".¹⁸³ The horses were stopped in Piazza San Marco by sheets stretched across the street and caught by the waiting grooms.¹⁸⁴ Richard, convinced that the horses were impelled by a natural sense of emulation, noted that the losers seemed ashamed at the hoots of the people which greeted them.¹⁸⁵ The winning horse and its owner, on the other hand, were hailed by the people joyfully, and the horse paraded along the streets with the 'palio', as may be seen in one of David Allan's drawings.¹⁸⁶

The interest taken by foreigners in the races could not, however, come anywhere near the passion shown by the Roman people. The British, in particular, found them a very poor spectacle, Wilkes, in 1765, dismissing it as "the most ridiculous of all sights to an Englishman ... a horse-race on a pavement."¹⁸⁷ The quality of the horses was commented on by many - not quite the Barbary horses of the seventeenth century. Bergeret, a good judge of horse-flesh, being an ex-cavalryman, could not give a good judgement on them: "Comme amateur de cavallerie et ayant quelque usage depuis 30 ans je ne peux me rendre à tout l'esprit qu'ils donnent à leurs chevaux ... Je n'ai vu que chevaux très communs, très communs".¹⁸⁸

The narrowness of the street was the cause of numerous accidents; some found it amazing that horses could run through so confined a space; the street had, in fact, been straightened and widened on a number of occasions¹⁸⁹, but movement on the Corso was still difficult. Circulation was not helped by the difficulty of clearing the Corso, for the race, of horsemen and carriages; among the 'bandi' were those strictly forbidding such obstruction. But the arrogance of princes, ambassadors and cardinals in the past had been difficult to overcome; there are a number of examples of police coming into conflict with arrogant coachmen, ambassadors' coaches causing particular trouble (just one of the examples of abuse of diplomatic privilege in

seventeenth century Rome). In 1628 the French Ambassador had fallen foul of the crowd by interfering with the race and had escaped its anger but lost his carriage! "per aver li barberi mal ridotti", and in 1689 an accident had been caused by the coach of the Venetian Ambassador.¹⁹⁰ Carriages on the Corso at times prevented the race from taking place at all, as in 1695: "Infatti il martedì non si potè correr per una carrozzata di principesse che si pose in mezzo nel tempo della mossa."¹⁹¹

The narrow Corso was made even narrower on the occasion of the race, because a row of parked coaches was allowed on either side, after it had been cleared; horses were often injured against the sides of these coaches.¹⁹² Accidents were also caused when a horse tripped and fell, provoking a pile up, and those behind would start running back along the Corso towards Piazza del Popolo; the same thing happened on occasions when the grooms could not stop a horse at the 'Ripresa' - again it would start back along the street.¹⁹³ The reason for the accidents on these occasions was the excitability of the crowd. Quite carried away and showing little or no self-discipline or common-sense, people would crowd into the street after the horses had passed; this naturally led to disasters. The passion of the people was inexplicable to many foreigners; Richard, as we have seen, could only compare it to the ancient Roman love of gladiatorial sports. The danger involved seems to have been an added attraction; Bergeret assures us that the Romans enjoyed accidents!¹⁹⁴

Severe edicts existed to prevent accidents, but to no avail. The savage 'bando' of 1586 had gone so far as to promise hanging for the corpse of anyone found guilty of interfering in the race, whose action caused his own death.¹⁹⁵ And such foolhardy behaviour was, in fact, not at all unusual. People threw themselves in front of the horses,

waving cloaks, trying to scare them. Bergeret de Grancourt tells us that those who attempted this were sometimes killed.¹⁹⁶

Horses were frightened - even wounded or murdered. Bagnar gives an example from 1737: "A dì 13 [March] Mercordì la mattina, fu condotto sopra di un sommaro per la strada del Corso, ed altre Contrade di Roma, con il cartello avanti il petto e cartello dietro alle spalle, quello che ferì alla ripresa de' Barbari, nella sera dell' ultimo lunedì di carnevale ...".¹⁹⁷ The first mention of a fine for interference in the race comes as early as 1271 - "per aver trattenuto un cavallo"; the culprit was fined L.100, subsequently reduced to L.50, and finally absolved through the intervention of Pio Colonna; this compares very favourably with later punishments.¹⁹⁸

Why was there such passion? Why did Romans dare the edicts so frequently on the occasion of the races, when they could be so well-behaved on other occasions? This leads naturally to the question: What had they to gain from interfering? The logical answer seems to be that they had money on a particular horse. The puzzling thing, however, is that so many foreign commentators claimed that there was no betting involved at all. Beckford was being inadvertently ironic when he said: "Luckily the common people in this country seldom bet; if they did many a good horse would suffer".¹⁹⁹ A fair amount of rivalry was involved, since people had their particular favourite and the 'barbareschi', probably had a material interest in the winner, judging by their quarrels at the 'Mossa', and their ecstatic reactions if their horse won.²⁰⁰ The claim of no betting seems a rather far-fetched one, if we consider the Romans' passion for another form of gambling - the lottery. And in a much earlier period of the carnival, Clementi gives what looks like a clear indication of betting - in the example quoted of interference in the race in 1271, on Mount Testaccio (Clementi had, shortly before this point talked of heavy betting

taking place on the occasion of the race; the form of the horses could be studied (as at Siena in the weeks before the race).²⁰¹ Clementi gives an example from 1737 (the same one quoted by Bagnar) of a celebrated horse running, which led to considerable betting; the horse was wounded by a man who had lost two bets on it. Having been paraded through the streets, the culprit was then imprisoned for ten years.²⁰² The most notable testimony to the people's passion by a foreign observer comes from Richard:

"Les parieurs se placent ordinairement à l'extrémité du cours du côté de la Place Saint Marc. C'est là que l'intérêt leur fait risquer même la vie, pour assurer, s'ils le peuvent, la victoire au cheval pour lequel ils ont parié. Un des intéressés voyant passer un cheval qui alloit trop vite à son gre, en voulant l'effrayer, fut tué sur le champ d'un coup de poitrail. Le lendemain un autre parieur voulut arrêter un des chevaux de course, il fut renversé, & ne vécut que deux heures après. J'ai été témoin de ces violences. Il y eut quelque chose de plus affreux, deux chevaux des Princes Corsini & Rospigliosi furent poignardés dans l'endroit où on les arrête, avec des couteaux empoisonnés; on ne peut pas pousser la fureur plus loin; cependant elle est exercée par le peuple le plus foible & le plus timide, mais le désespoir d'avoir perdu dans un instant tout ce qu'il avoit d'argent, le porte à des excès inconcevables."²⁰³

A sign of things to come was the presence of English horses in the race, from at least the middle of the century. There would, in fact, be a passion for English horses in later years - which increased along with the growing presence of British visitors in Rome. Jagemann, speaking of the horse race in Florence, tells us that they can belong

to native owners or foreigners - but must run under the name of a noble of the city, as was the case with commoners' and foreigners' horses in Rome. Lalande also referring to Florence in 1765, tells us that 'le grand diable' was an English horse owned by a Mr Alexander.²⁰⁴ This was the very horse which Jagemann chose for special consideration - a wondrous animal, he tells us, which for sixteen years had won almost all the prizes in Florence, Rome, Siena and Pistoia, thereby earning its name of 'il gran Diavolo'. When it died at the age of twenty-one, its owner had a monument raised to its memory, and poets wrote in celebration of its qualities.²⁰⁵

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE

1. Revolution. 2. The Napoleonic period. 3. The Carnival of the Revolution. 4. The Masks.

1. Revolution

This chapter will cover a fairly short and clearly defined period, its limits established by the historical events of the years between 1789 and 1815 - the years of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire - which were to leave their mark on Italy, and Rome itself. For Rome, and for the carnival, the period represented a partial interruption in normal service. For most of these years the Romans had the experience of occupation - French, Neapolitan, French once more. There was a short-lived attempt on the part of the French to change the nature of the carnival. Carnival became the occasion for political demonstrations; the element of contestation introduced in these years, of which there had been occasional glimpses in earlier periods, would in the following century become a dominant one. The possibilities, provided by carnival, for political subversion or challenge took a rather novel form here; the most notable feature of these years was the people's boycott of carnival in 1809, as a gesture of support for the Pope and defiance of the French.

The period represented an interruption in the flow of foreign visitors to Rome, particularly British. With Europe at war travel was not so easy, and the consequent reduction of income from foreign revenue was one of the reasons for which the Romans felt resentment towards the French. The decade preceding 1789 had seen a large increase in the number of foreign visitors, and the increasing presence of Germans, though the English still dominated. D'Espinchal,

arriving in the city in October 1789, noted this large influx, and also that the salon of Cardinal de Bernis, the French ambassador was the focal point for so many visitors, and not just for the French: "les Anglais s'y regardent comme chez eux."¹ For twenty years or more de Bernis had been the most lavish host in Rome.

Documentation for this period is somewhat scarce, given the drop in the number of visitors. However, despite the tension in Europe, those who did make the trip were still surprisingly numerous, especially during the years of the Napoleonic Empire. Much of the material in this chapter will come from historical studies of the period, and to a lesser extent from primary sources, such as the diary of G.A. Sala and a number of non-British visitors. The British still visited Italy in these years; they tended to gather in Naples, or Sicily and there are some descriptions of their appearance in the Neapolitan carnival which may cast some light on the Roman carnival. There was even an occasional British presence in Rome during the period of Neapolitan control of the city; one who will be quoted is Skene, in 1803. One notable British presence in Rome during these years was a four-legged one. The preference for English horses, already established by the middle of the eighteenth century (witness the remarkable successes of 'il gran Diavolo') became even more noticeable. Skene refers to the winner of the race which he saw as being an old English hunter "purchased by the Prince of Santa Croce from some one of my travelling countrymen." Unused to such a race, he tells us, the horse carried right on running past the goal, and out of the city; he also informs us that this horse was later murdered in Florence - stabbed with a stiletto ("one of the most characteristic traits of the Italian turf I have ever met with.")²

The opening years of this period were marked by a kind of 'phoney war'. Up to 1796 Italy was neutral territory, and Rome felt relatively

secure under the protection of Piedmont and Austria and in the belief that the war would be confined to Germany and the Rhineland.³ But even before the arrival of war in Italy there was a certain tension in Rome. This, in fact, was noticeable from the start; there were those who welcomed the news from France in 1789, and looked forward to the end of the old regime. The government noted this and, for the carnival of 1790, banned the most recently introduced feature of the occasion - the 'mocoli ceremony'. The thought had obviously occurred that this custom might present a certain danger - the gathering together, after dark, of a very large number of people in the centre of the city provided too many possibilities for subversive activity. The edict of the Governor, Mons. Renuccini was, however, worded very carefully in order not to indicate the real fears of the authorities:

"La costumanza introdotta da qualche anno di fare nell' ultima sera di Carnevale delle illuminazioni, conosciuta volgarmente sotto la denominazione di 'mocolletti', se potè dissimularsi nel suo principio, perchè ristretta a poco numero di persone ed in una sola contrada, non eccedeva la dovuta moderazione, si è ora resa insopportabile, giacchè propagatasi gradatamente di anno in anno ad ogni ceto di persone ed a tutta la città, si è dovuta poi vedere una numerosa moltitudine, che con meraviglia e disapprovazione di tutti li buoni, debaccando senza ritegno per le strade, o con una o con altra sorta di lumi e di faci, alzava infiniti clamori, prorompeva in espressioni indecenti e scandalose, ed affrontava con insulti villani ed ingiurie chiunque incontrava, che non si fosse uniformato ad un tal contegno, in guisa che oltre alla perturbazione della tranquillità pubblica si è reso evidente il pericolo d'incendi, di risse, ferite ed altri gravi disordini."⁴

The 'mocoli' did not reappear again till 1811, in a by now more relaxed atmosphere, and with the French firmly in control. The chronicler of the 'Italienische Miscellen' expressed, in 1804, what must have been a general regret over this long interruption, complaining that the carnival was no longer the one which Goethe described since it lost its closing scene; without it there was nothing to rival the splendour of the illumination of the cupola of St Peter's.⁵

The years immediately after 1789 gave little indication of carnival activities. Between 1790 and 1793 it apparently took place; then, in 1793, in view of the very serious situation in France, Pius VI published a Jubilee for the Church State, forbidding masking and all theatrical performances for the whole year. This prohibition was then extended to 1795⁶. The government was extremely nervous, especially after the execution of Louis XVI; the economic situation was worsening, there was a shortage of food, and unrest in the Campagna, and there were doubts about the loyalty of the people in such difficulties. Foreign envoys in the city reported an atmosphere of anxiety and suspicion; De Felice quotes the opinion of the Venetian ambassador in 1794: "Il popolo Romano non è più in quella buona disposizione, che si è manifestata due anni sono"; and, in 1796, with the arrival of the war in Italy, he indicates that the Pope and the aristocrats were on the point of fleeing the city⁷; and this despite the preferential treatment which the Romans enjoyed in comparison with the other inhabitants of the Papal states. Given the rather scathing comments expressed before and after this period, on the character of the Romans and their docility to the Papal regime, such fears as are expressed by sensitive observers like the envoys must indicate a considerable degree of discontent. It is true that when he speaks of the urban and peasant masses as being anything but averse to the

revolutionary ideology, De Felice is speaking of Italy in general⁸; when the French did arrive in Rome there was no immediate rebellion.

The French themselves seemed convinced of the existence of potential revolutionary material in Rome, and had been at work encouraging this long before the arrival in the city of General Berthier's troops - perhaps to offset the anti-revolutionary propaganda of the émigrés who had been finding refuge in the city since 1791.⁹ French agents had been active spreading anti-government propaganda and pro-French sentiments. Apart from official agents like Basseville, the students of the French Academy, as we might expect, played a leading role, the Academy becoming the focus of pro-French feelings and the object of anti-French demonstrations.¹⁰ In earlier days there had been no great cause for mistrust of foreign visitors in Rome; for many years now they had not been seen as potentially subversive influences, and had consequently enjoyed a great deal of freedom, provided, of course, that they did not offend the religion of their hosts. As a rule, of course, these earlier travellers had had little contact with the natives - except those who had some connection with the tourist trade, innkeepers, coachmen, guides, renters of houses, etc. - whose company would give them a rather distorted view of the Roman people. These travellers made little attempt to enlighten the people, or to proselitize for any 'subversive' cause. This, of course, would have been rather difficult, since there was little in the way of progressive, let alone revolutionary ideas, in the typical young Grand Tourist. There seems, on the other hand, to have been little awareness of new ideas among the aristocrats and intellectuals with whom these young men might come into contact. Compare the rather stagnant cultural climate in Rome with the situation in Venice or Naples in the preceding years.¹¹

The tolerance shown to foreigners in Rome had now greatly diminished, however, and the French in particular had fallen under suspicion. Cardinal de Bernis reported that foreigners were under surveillance, and he advised French students to behave themselves or to leave the city (shortly before he was dismissed as French ambassador in Rome): "On renouvelle les lois de la police pour tous les étrangers qui arrivent dans les hotélleries de Rome. On veille de près les gens sans aveu et surtout les jeunes artistes, presque tous franc-maçons, que le Pape Benoit XIV a proscrit dans l'État Ecclésiastique."¹²

Despite government anxieties, however, the Roman people did not show itself very favourable to the revolution, or at least to the French. The anti-French feeling was quite intense, as Del Cerro indicates in a collection of verses in his book 'Roma che ride'.¹³ Lapauze reports that the news of the Republican emblem being placed on the house of the French consul in Rome, in January 1793, led to a rebellion in Trastevere, and an attack by the crowd on the palazzo Mancini (at this time still seat of the Academy).¹⁴ In this period the Academy tended to become the object of people's resentment at moments of crisis. The most serious incident on this occasion was the killing of Basseville. There is an extended account of this event in the Abate Benedetto's diary.¹⁵

The joy of the Romans at the death of Basseville was great, and the event passed without any reprisals being taken by the French. But France's reaction to the death of General Duphot, four years later, was quite decisive. On the 28 December 1797, the people of Trastevere rose up and attacked the Corsini palace, seat of the French embassy. General Duphot was killed in this encounter as he attempted to end the uprising.¹⁶ This event led to the breaking of diplomatic links between France and Rome, and the dispatch of a military expedition,

which under General Berthier entered the city on 2 February 1798 and seized control of the Castel Sant Angelo.

The following day was the first day of the carnival, and was immediately marked with the stamp of the Revolution when the Tree of Liberty was planted in the Piazza di Spagna and in the Piazza del Popolo. The choice of the latter may have been dictated, apart from the fact that it marked the centre-point of the carnival, by the name which probably had an auspicious sound for the French (seeming to refer to the People rather than, as it in fact did, to the poplar-tree). Pinelli points out the solemn and symbolic significance of the spot where it was placed: "Oggi al Corso in quel sito medesimo in cui prima trovavasi l'istrumento della corda, è stato eretto un bell Albero della Libertà."¹⁷

If General Berthier and his troops had expected the Roman people to rally round them they were sorely disappointed. Some Romans had been waiting eagerly for their arrival, but they were a small minority of the population. One or two of the leading families, like the Borghese or the Santacroce, lent their support; but, for the most part, the pro-French faction was formed of professional people, small businessmen, shop-keepers, a section of the populace. The majority of the people, especially the Trasteverini, and the aristocracy formed the opposition; and there was little support from the surrounding Campagna. What support there was tended to be dictated by opportunistic motives rather than sincere conviction; many were tempted by possibilities of financial speculation (for example country merchants), of access to public positions, of the seizure of Church lands, of social and political advancement¹⁸; the kind of individuals who would profit materially from the occasion, to the detriment of the people, and therefore a class which would incur the hatred of the

people. There was also, as we shall see, a very different category who stood to gain from the presence of the French - the Jews; a circumstance which inflamed the anti-semitic sentiments of the people.

A notable contemporary account of the events of this period is the diary of G.A. Sala, who had little sympathy for the new regime and its ideas, and had no doubts about the people's rejection of the new state of affairs; describing a 'festino' at the Teatro Aliberti, he found it a pretty poor show, concluding: "Ma la gente ha più voglia di piagnere che di divertirsi", and, at the end of the carnival: "Eccoci agli ultimi momenti del Carnevale. Noi lo abbiamo passato in lutto ed in pianto."¹⁹ Del Cerro gives some blood-thirsty examples of the people's feelings towards the French as for example, from the poem 'I Romani a Pio VI' which begins: "O Santo Padre, dateci licenza / D'ammazzar tutti quanti li Francesi."²⁰ But this was before the arrival of the French, and before the departure of the Pope; which, it should be noted, the people reacted to with a certain equanimity, and certainly without indulging in any blood-letting.²¹

The rebellion did come very soon, however, and was sparked off by an action of the French designed to underline the new egalitarian society which was to be set up in Rome; this was the opening of the Ghetto and the removal of distinctive marks for the Jews (part of a centuries-old repression which had its counterparts during the carnival period in the 'giudiata' and, earlier, in the Jew's race; and, up to the year 1847, the humiliating ceremony of the 'omaccio').²² The Jews, needless to say, were jubilant at these measures, and their obvious pleasure only helped to exacerbate the resentment of the Romans, who were furious to see them parading around bearing tricolour flags and wearing the cockade, and quickly found a way of indicating their displeasure: "i Trasteverini soffrendo di mal animo che detti ebrei non abbiano piu sciamanno, e che portano la

coccarda eguale a quella degli Uffiziali, hanno preso il partito di metter in mezzo alla loro coccarda una crocetta."²³

There was also an economic reason for the attitude of the Romans; the liberation of the Jews from certain restraints, such as those limiting their activity to the rag-trade, would lead to serious competition for the rest of the population: "Molti artigiani e specialmente commercianti dovettero indubbiamente risentire notevolmente della rinvigorita concorrenza ebraica."²⁴

The French, rather than liberators, bringing new ideas and new possibilities, seemed to be coming to destroy an old system which had served the Romans quite well up to now. The economic situation had, in fact, deteriorated since the arrival of the French. The high ideals which they proclaimed, the new model of society which they proposed, did nothing to hide the reality of a brutal exploitation; the republic was a 'république pour rire'. And with the economic exploitation came also an arrogant, insensitive treatment of the sensibilities of the people, in particular their religious sentiments. The Convention, in its hostility toward the Catholic religion, had instituted in the place of the old religious feasts the lay 'fêtes' of the Revolution, the place of God was taken by the Supreme Being and: "La Natura si confonde con l'Essere Supremo, la Libertà, l'Umanità, il Popolo. Di Cristo e del Vangelo non si fa più menzione."²⁵ The worst offence, though, seems to have been given by the Roman Jacobins who profaned the holy places with their republican rites and made a mockery of the clergy and of the Catholic religion itself. Clementi reports the appearance on the stage of the Aliberti theatre, in a play called 'L'ingresso dei Francesi a Faenza' in 1798, of a comic actor "in abito prelatizio con croce venerabile in petto e delle femmine vestite da monache", in a play which also contained the representation of a

democratic marriage under the Tree of Liberty. Another comedy represented the democratizing of Paradise, carried out by devils who, entering Paradise, put the tricolour cockade on God.²⁶

The main impulse, however, behind the rebellion of 1799 was economic rather than religious, directed against the ruthless exploitation exercised by the French and the republicans.²⁷ By November of that year Neapolitan troops were at the gates of Rome, during the last feast of the Republic. A few days after this there was a ceremony of deconsecration whose victim was the bust of the republican hero, Brutus, which was dragged through the streets on a cart, smeared with excrement, attacked by the crowd and finally thrown into the Tiber together with the republican flag.²⁸ The formal procession, the abuse, the obscenity and the final disposal of the victim in an elimination rite is reminiscent of the dethronement of King Carnival. The elimination of Brutus was counterbalanced some months later, in July 1800, by the triumphal return of the Pope, the newly-elected Pius VII.

2. The Napoleonic period

Information is scarce for the opening years of the century. The Romans were to find that life was not much easier under the occupation of the Bourbons, and carnival did not for a few years recover its splendour. Between 1800 and 1803 it was an insipid affair; for the first three years masks were not allowed. This year, apart from the return of the masks, brought a revolution of its own when the Governor allowed female singers on the operatic stage; this was all the more audacious in that it was one of the novelties proposed by the Republic.²⁹ A reprise took place with the carnival of 1804, known as the Borghese carnival; Camillo Borghese had married Napoleon's sister,

Paolina, in November of the previous year. This carnival marked a brief return to the kind of lavish masquerades which the nobility had put on in the seventeenth century. This brief revival of the 'carnevale di signori' is in sharp contrast with the edict issued by the Governor in 1798 which: "Prescrive l'abolizione dei titoli, dei distintivi, dei segni delle livree e ordina l'abbassamento di tutti gli stemmi."³⁰ An even more splendid carnival was to be that of the following year. Rome had a number of foreign visitors, making the festival the liveliest for years.

There are a number of descriptions of the carnival of this year, among them that of Mme de Stael, who later used some of the material in her novel 'Corinne'. We have a fairly detailed account in the 'Italienische Miscellen': "Man war schon einige Tage auf eine Kostbare und schöne Maskerade gespannt, welche ein Fürsten und Fürstinnen veranstalten wolten, und die mehrere tausend Thaler gekostet hatte. Der Gegenstand war die Hochzeit der Psyche." In a series of elaborate 'carri' the gods of Olympus paraded along the Corso, with a chorus of Fauns and Satyrs. The chronicler refers to some of the leading aristocratic ladies of Rome vying for the role of Venus, and the rage of one of the ones who was passed over, and who attempted to avenge herself by putting on another masquerade in which she appeared as Beatrice, leading Dante, Virgil (and Alfieri!).³¹ He also refers to some of the satirical comments made on the lack of correspondence between the character of the individual and the part he or she represented; he also speaks of a full-scale satire of the masquerade being produced. A later volume of the 'Italienische Miscellen' tells us that the masks produced in the carnival of 1806 were outstanding, some of them the work of leading artists for their friends.³² The sculptor Canova may have been among these artists; certainly he was the designer of the famous masquerade of the previous year, 'Le Nozze

di Psiche' perhaps a conscious attempt to emulate the 'carri' of the Baroque period, and based, according to Clementi on the Raphael frescoes in the Farnesina.³³

The carnival of 1806 was the last of any importance in Rome for several years. In the following year the French were once more in effective control of the city, although the troops of General Miollis did not occupy it till the next year. 1807 found the Papal court and the French in opposition; carnival was held that year, against the wishes of the Pope, and only after the French had forced the carpenters to build the stands in the Piazza del Popolo, after the latter had refused to co-operate.³⁴ This refusal to co-operate was successful in the carnival of 1809, and constituted one of the most curious chapters in the history of the carnival - the boycotting of the event. This resistance should not have come as a surprise to the French, perhaps, given the events of the previous decade. However, as it had been for Berthier in 1798, so now it was for Miollis: "la déception fut grande tout d'abord ... Les soldats entrés à Rome en 1808, se sentirent glacés par l'hostilité."³⁵

The Pope had forbidden the carnival, immediately after the arrival of the French. Miollis, on this occasion, did not attempt to force the issue, and the carnival of 1808 was therefore a disaster. The Corso was deserted; De Antonis tells us that there was only one balcony occupied in the street, that of the old French Academy. There was some activity eventually, however, in the theatres when polite society capitulated. The failure of Miollis in 1808 to hold the carnival in the face of the Pope's opposition, was exceeded by his failure in the following year, when he did attempt to force the issue. Carpenters were obliged to work on the stands but refused payment for this, claiming that convicts were not paid; the 'palii' were taken by

force; the Corso, in the absence of Papal guards, was presided over by French officers. On the first day hardly any people were on the Corso when the Capitol bell rang to announce the opening, the windows and balconies were empty and devoid of hangings or carpets, seven horses ran before a tiny, mainly French public. Since the Papal ban did not extend to the theatres, the one part of the carnival which showed signs of life was the 'festino', frequented by the French themselves, the pro-French nobility, and various hangers-on.³⁶

The support given to the Pope on this occasion exceeded all expectations, and was not to be repeated again. The solidarity was virtually complete; even the Jews refused their participation in the carnival. Miollis had to accept defeat and suspend the festival, ordering the stands to be taken down. The following Sunday, as if to proclaim their victory, the people crowded the Corso which had been deserted during the previous week; and, very pointedly, not long afterwards, the whole town was illuminated to celebrate the anniversary of Pius VII's election. A spate of 'pasquinate' and satirical verses marked the occasion of Miollis' defeat such as "L'orso, non l'uomo, balla col bastone" or these lines from a sonnet reproduced in Cancellieri's 'De Baccanali': "Di mostrarsi poi nessuno ardì / Nè d'aprir le finestre alcun osò / E il Corso di sbirraglia si riempì / Tutta la truppa il General mandò / Soldati, cani e Sbirri la guarnì / Così il bel Carnevale terminò."³⁷

Relations between the Pope and Miollis were at their lowest point in this period. A decree of 17 May 1809 declared Rome an Imperial City, and appointed a new governor. This move was followed by the Pope's excommunication of the Emperor; which, in turn, prompted the deposition and dismissal of the Pope into exile. This turn of events was met by a placid response from the people; after the defiance of the previous year the carnival, despite the dismay of the people, was

resumed once more; it was a brilliant one, distinguished further by the theatre season being extended into the whole period of Lent. And in the following year, as we have seen, the ceremony of the 'mocoli' was restored. This reprise of carnival activity coincided, however, with another gloomy period for Rome. These were the finest days of the Napoleonic Empire; but they also saw preparations for the ill-fated Russian campaign; and the Romans, like other Italians, were to pay the price for this in terms of extra taxation and military conscription. Brigandage was once more rife in the Campagna. Yet the carnival went on.³⁸

3. The Carnival of the Revolution

As the end of this period approaches, it might be appropriate to turn back to the short-lived republic of 1798-99 and look at the aims and intentions of the French in relation to the carnival. Their first action, on arrival, is indicative; the setting up of a Tree of Liberty in the Piazza di Spagna and in the Piazza del Popolo - the latter on the symbolic spot where the instrument of torture 'la corda' had stood.³⁹ Papal oppression and brutality were to be replaced by the image of a new Rome, in which the people played a central role. The French had arrived to announce the start of a new era and the birth of a new people. Their ostensible aim was to restore Rome to its past greatness, to redeem it from the degradation into which it had fallen after so many years of Papal tyranny - a degeneration which had been deplored by so many foreign visitors in the past. The words of the young Bonaparte to his soldiers in 1796 give us some of the flavour of this rhetoric: "... Ristabilire il Campidoglio, risuscitare il Popolo Romano da molti secoli di schiavitù sarà frutto della nostra vittoria!"⁴⁰

The 'fete' assumed a role of central importance in the new

revolutionary concept of the people. For Robespierre and others it was the way to recreate periodically the social ties uniting the nation and, as had been the case with a very different object in the Baroque period, recourse was made to the leading artists of the time to create the scenery and the costumes for the spectacle. David, in fact, became in the Jacobin period the organiser of the republican 'fête': "la sceneggiatura della festa è orchestrata da una complicata e rigida regia."⁴¹ To reflect a new image of the people, the feasts of the people had to be reformed and re-formed: "Ma le antiche feste - residuo dei tempi barbari - non potevano andare a garbo ai nuovi governanti. Bisognava riformare anche queste, ispirate a nuovi ideali e nuovi costumi. La Repubblica doveva essere un continuo carnevale ... come era Roma antica." - a dubious method for regenerating the spirit of a people!⁴² A special commission was, nevertheless, given the task of drawing up a project for the new national feasts, with the appropriate revolutionary titles - 'Autunnale, Floreale' etc. And as the venues of these feasts they chose, among others, those of the old carnival games: "La prima festa che si presenta all'anno, è l'Autunnale. Radunerassi il popolo nei vasti prati che sono ai piedi del Monte Testaccio, situazione di cui si prevalse in altri tempi Roma per le sue feste ..." "Luogo prescelto per la Festa Cereale sia il Cerchio Agonale "...: " La festa Saturnale aprirà l'antico carnevale che avrà luogo per quindici giorni consecutivi: ma con qualche giorno di riposo (!!!)."⁴³

The programme outlined in these pages is an eloquent testimony to the importance which the republicans attached to public feasts, and a curious and rather surprising attempt to increase the already considerable time devoted by the Romans to public festivities. There is no mention of religious feasts, of course, which these new ones were designed to replace, and which had constituted the bulk of public

holidays. The programme also indicates the concept of a very highly-structured festival; there is little room here, it would seem, for the "Solita gazzarra sul Corso", which was regarded by the French as part of the "Residuo dei tempi barbarici" - aimless, formless and noisy. The carnival of 1798 was about to start when the French arrived, so little could be done to transform this first republican feast in Rome. Some attempt was made to set a republican imprint on the theatre; not very successfully, if we are to believe Sala's description of a rather tawdry 'festino' at the Aliberti theatre on 12 February: "Vi furono molti Nobili, ma per pochi momenti. Il resto tutti Uomini, per la maggior parte mal in arnese e persone con la semplice camiciola. Donne pochissime ... non poche imitavano la figura della Libertà, portando un corpetto di seta a maglia che le faceva comparire nude nel petto."⁴⁴ The reform of the calendar of feasts came later in the year, and was represented by the carnival of the following year. Now the focus was on the Forum and the Colosseum rather than the Piazza del Popolo: "la sera la citta fu tutta illuminata e, nel Foro Romano vennero sparati i fuochi d'artificio."⁴⁵

The changes proposed went against the spirit of carnival, which may be regulated to some extent, may change in detail and evolve over the years, but which cannot be revolutionised, programmed or imposed. As Pio Baroja puts it: "El Carnaval es una fiesta anarquica de masas desorganizadas, de individualismo, que puede ser fino y amable o rajado y violento ... El Carnaval ordenado, municipal, socialista, es aburrido; no tiene color ni sabor."⁴⁶ The French, in purporting to go back to the old celebrations of the Roman people, were in fact imposing their vision on it and detaching it from its roots in the people - the people as they actually existed, not the false, idealised image the French were peddling to the Romans. Goethe had been right in

calling carnival the people's festival; in saying this he was drawing on his observation and understanding of the people, and his knowledge of popular culture. The emphasis on the values, the ideals, the heroes, the institutions of ancient republican Rome had their influence on the carnival, as they had elsewhere - in painting, literature, fashion, etc.⁴⁷

The emphasis on the virtues of the ancient Rome, in particular, could not last long. Not only were they an impossible ideal to live up to, but they were simply taking the place of the old, discarded religion: "I giacobini esaltano la repubblica Romana finchè i più critici si accorgono che quell' esempio sta prendendo il posto della religione appena superata"⁴⁸; and the Romans had certainly not gone beyond the old religion. Nor, at this point, had they gone beyond their careless love of pleasure, of 'Bread and circuses'; the old accusation surfaced once more in this period. Semple is writing about the carnival in Livorno in 1806, but he could be writing about Rome: "As elsewhere, the subject of the French soldiers mounting guard does not disturb this revelry. And why should it? Are not the French the most polite people in the world?"⁴⁹

The Romans, then, were not Plutarchan heroes; but neither were the French the idealistic and generous bringers of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity'; they were an occupying force who represented a country at war and in need of resources. The 'idealism' was in conflict with the realities of the situation. The fiasco of the short-lived Republic is neatly summarized in this 'pasquinata' on the Tree of Liberty: "Albero senza radici, berretto senza testa, repubblica senza sussistenza".⁵⁰ On their return to Rome in 1808 the French had given up any idea of changing the carnival and, after their initial fiasco, contented themselves with a continuation of the return to normal which had taken place in the Neapolitan period. This chapter,

then, is to a large extent the story of a failure, showing the carnival's capacity to resist change and to revert back to normal. As always, the annual edicts are a gauge for measuring the reality of the situation, whether they concern the prohibition of the throwing of certain objects, or the ultimate penalties which could be inflicted on transgressors.

A sombre note here to illustrate the continuation of normal practice was the persistence of public executions during carnival. These occurred during the years of French occupation, but the most notable examples come from the opening years of the century. Silvagni referring to 1802, talks of bodies being left in the Piazza del Popolo, as a warning to people, and gives a particularly sensational example from 1805, where he refers to no less than eleven evil-doers being drawn and quartered.⁵¹ There is a detailed description of the practice of opening the festival with a public execution, in the diary of Elisa von der Recke: the executioner picks a number of helpers who wear an Arlecchino costume and mask, to prevent them being recognized; she describes the confession of the condemned, the crowd praying for his soul and collecting money for his family. And what a change of scene in the afternoon! All signs of death have been removed, and on the same spot the people are giving themselves up joyfully to the noisy pleasures of the carnival: "Ist es dasselbe Volke ...? ist es diesselbe Stelle?"⁵²

Turning to more pleasant topics and the scenes of the people's pleasure, it is interesting to note in the descriptions we have from this period of the masking and other carnival activities a certain emphasis on more aristocratic manifestations. Attempts at democratizing the festival seem to have met with only limited success - for example the use of plaster confetti, as opposed to real confetti

and flowers. And the 'scalino' of palazzo Ruspoli is still the main scene of the confetti-battles: "C'est surtout au trottoir du palais Ruspoli que se rendent les femmes les plus élégantes du grand monde, mais aussi plus généralement du 'mezzo ceto' (de la bourgeoisie) agréablement vêtues en Ciociara, ou enveloppées dans des domino de différentes couleurs."⁵³

Information on the horse-races is particularly scarce for this period. The race seems to have continued more or less as before (whereas the Siena 'Palio' had been prohibited by the French in 1805).⁵⁴ According to Silvagni, in fact, from 1799 onwards the race was virtually all that remained of the old carnival.⁵⁵ He is thinking here of the ban on masking and the disappearance of the fine carriages but, as we have seen, these were shortly to return. The actual organization of the race and the possession of the winning horses were once more in the hands of the nobility whose position had been threatened in the closing decades of the century. In 1800 all the races were won by the horses of Duke Cesarini; Skene informs us that in 1803 the privilege of giving the starting signal was the right of a particular family⁵⁶; we have seen his satisfaction in declaring that the winning horse in the race he witnessed was an old English hunter, belonging to the Prince of Santa Croce.

In this period we begin to find references to the grooms, or 'barbareschi', who controlled the horses - although this figure was obviously to be seen earlier, he was not named as such. After these years, increasingly, the starting point or 'Mossa', was chosen as the most interesting part of the race. A notable innovation was the removal of the row of carriages which lined each side of the Corso, and which had been the cause of so many accidents in the past. This occurred during the period of the first republic, in 1799, when Mons. Spinelli, the governor, issued an edict on the subject.⁵⁷

4. The Masks

Finally, a few words on the masking on the Corso, which had been resumed by 1803, and was showing some liveliness by the following year. By the time of Millin's description of 1812 things looked very much as usual. The masquerades of 1804 and 1805 had emphasized the popularity of the classical mask, something which particularly struck Mme. de Stael: "On trouve à Rome un genre de masques qui n'existe point ailleurs. Ce sont les masques pris d'après les figures des statues antiques, et qui de loin imite une parfaite beauté; souvent les femmes perdent beaucoup en les quittant."⁵⁸ She seems to consider these masks a permanent, or general, feature of the Roman carnival, and something which distinguished it from others, whereas they had not, in fact, been particularly popular in the preceding decades, the nobles preferring, as Goethe put it, to wear the same sort of mask as the people did. These masks were presumably of both sexes; Skene comments on the accuracy of these reproductions of the antique, which made it easy to guess which character was represented (he is describing a masked ball at the Opera House).⁵⁹ Classical figures, female figures, seem to be the most striking feature of the masking in this period.

From this point on, in fact, women can be seen taking an even greater part in the proceedings. The arrival of the French had constituted a further step forward in the liberation of the women of Rome, in relation to the carnival and to the theatre. Right from the start, in 1798, the figure of Liberty herself had appeared in the 'festino', and on the stage - a source of scandal for some Romans, not used to such nudity (or apparent nudity); and a classical style of female dress was the dominant note of fashion in the Jacobin and Napoleonic period, a style which was generously revealing of the

female form, if not quite to the extent found in Canova's famous statue of Paolina Bonaparte (could such a representation of the wife of one of the leading noblemen of Rome have been possible only a few years earlier?).

But the dominant female costume of this whole period was that of the peasant girl, or 'Ciociara', taking her name from the area south of Rome. Popular variants of this mask took their names from the Roman hill-towns, the 'Albanese', the 'Nettunese', etc. This mask was not a novelty of this period, since there are examples in the descriptions of eighteenth century visitors like Lalande, and even earlier ones from the preceding century. The suggestion is made by Millin that she represents an attempt at creating a more democratic spirit: "La mode de se masquer en 'Ciociara' a commencé au temps de la république de 1796." [?]⁶⁰ This costume could also serve for cross-dressing, however, as we see in Millin, "Une calèche étoit conduite par un vieux cocher en Ciociara, avec un barbet romain entre ses jambes; les valets étoient dedans avec de grandes livrées, et les maîtres, déguisés en Quaqueri, étoient derrière."⁶¹

The so-called 'democratic spirit' owed, no doubt, more to female vanity than to political passion. The female officer and the female Pulcinella had been quite attractive, but the costume of the 'Ciociara' was a peculiarly fetching one, and left the face quite uncovered, to be admired. This, rather than any desire to respect the levelling tendency of carnival, was presumably the reason why so many aristocratic and middle-class ladies appeared in peasant dress. "Vornehme Frauenzimmer kleiden sich nun gern als Trasteverinnen und Bauernmädchen, und doppelt reizender, in der letzten Tracht, scheint sie ihre verliebte Intrigen mehr, als jeder andre zu begünstigen."⁶²

This costume was popular both on the Corso and in the 'festino'.

In the latter, too, there are examples of other common female masks: "costumes grecs et albanais ... vénitiens ... gitanes" - seen, too, in Skene: "Grecian Shepherds and Shepherdesses in their pure ancient garb of Thessaly, for in general the extreme accuracy of dress displayed great knowledge of the antique."⁶³ Another female mask which was to be popular in the next period was that of the 'scopetta'; Skene observed it in 1803 though he does not refer to it by name (a similar mask was described by Goethe in 1788).⁶⁴

A more convincing example of the democratic spirit might be that of the valets inside the coaches, while their masters walked behind, in the passage quoted from Millin; but this is part of the universal reversals of carnival, rather than applying only to this short period.⁶⁵ Millin registered his astonishment at a masked ball on seeing, dressed up as Pulcinella, Roman princes he had met earlier as guests of Miollis.⁶⁶ At the other end of the scale the mask of the 'Conte' continued to be popular with the poor people, or 'Minenti'.⁶⁷

In turning to the consideration of other traditional carnival masks we note one or two commentators indicating the absence of some popular masks of the preceding period: "so viele, nichts bedeutende, vorher nie gesehen Masken, wie Juden, Deserteurs, Trasteverinnen und Bauerinnen nehmen die Stelle der Cuiello's, der Abbatazzi's, und der Weiblichen Policinellen und Bettlerinnen ein. Vergebens sah ich mich diesen Karneval nach einen Cuiello um, der die Zuhörer durch seine Rodomontaden belustigt hätte. Da war kein Abbatazzo, und nur sehr wenig Policinelle. Politische Ursachen und Argwohn haben die ersten verbannt ... allein ihre Satyren wurden beissend, wagten sich oft an Personen von Bedeutung."⁶⁸ This is one of the few references we find in any period to a specifically satirical mask; Millin does refer to certain 'vers satiriques', but does not relate them to a particular mask;⁶⁹ in the same year 'L'Hermite en Italie' declares: "Si quelque

aventure galante a occupé la chronique scandaleuse pendant l'année, on est sur de la voir retracer au carnaval, ou les pauvres maris sont encore trompés en effigie après l'avoir été en réalité."⁷⁰

The chronicler of the 'Italienische Miscellen' mentions another comic mask no longer to be seen in 1805, but because of his rudeness as well as ~~his~~ his satire; this is the 'Matto', mostly distinguished young men, he tells us, whose rudeness was directed especially at important people; this mask, banished from the Corso, was to be found in nearby piazzas.⁷¹ These masks will return in force in the following period, but commentators do not refer any examples of their satirical wit.

Other popular masks had suffered a temporary loss of approval in the earlier part of the period - towards the end they had, of course, recovered their position. These are the Commedia dell'Arte masks - Pulcinella, Arlecchino, etc., which had met with disfavour among the programmers of the 'fête révolutionnaire'. Bragaglia in his book on Pulcinella tells us that with the arrival of the French in Italy the 'opera buffa' (and therefore the comic masks?) were forbidden.⁷² On his arrival General Berthier published an edict allowing 'festini' and other carnival pleasures, but not masks, "avanzo di gentilismo e di barbarie"; another example of the 'Enlightened' ideas which the French were bringing to Rome and to its festivals.⁷³

The old masks were obviously very much back in popularity by the time of Millin's visit in 1812. In the first Neapolitan carnival in Rome, in 1800, a ball was arranged at the Aliberti theatre, but people were forbidden to appear in the costume of Arlecchino, Pulcinella, Pantalone, the Dottore, Brighella, etc.⁷⁴ Five years later, Clementi tells us: "Ormai del naufragio delle maschere dell'antica commedia dell'Arte non-erasi salvata che la maschera di Pulcinella."⁷⁵ In the

following year the chronicler of the 'Italienische Miscellen' informs us that costumes were for hire, and not only in specialist shops, quoting the example of an 'Ecce Homo' set beside an Arlecchino. He does note, as indicated earlier, that there were not many comic masks to be seen in the street - few Pulcinellas, and no Coviello or Abbataccio.⁷⁶ And with the return of the French Pulcinella's popularity increased, in the street and on the stage; Madelin reports a large number of comedies in 1809 which featured this mask.⁷⁷ Millin's account gives us the clearest picture we have of the range of carnival masks to be seen in Rome in the closing years of this period. Pulcinella was once more the clear favourite among the men, the 'Ciociara' held this position among the women. There was a variety of traditional carnival masks - Astrologers, Doctors, Lawyers, Quacqueri, grotesques, animal masks, etc. The Astrologer, or 'Mago', was still in evidence, in Millin and in 'L'Hermite en Italie': "Là, un sorcier se dispute avec une diseuse de bonne aventure a qui saura le mieux lire dans l'avenir, et annoncer aux badauds leur destinée."⁷⁸

A variant of this mask, indicating a certain influence of the prevailing Egyptian fashion in the Empire period, is mentioned by Skene: "Egyptian Mummies, Priests and Priestesses" (in a masked ball in the Opera House).⁷⁹ Such a mask had apparently known no period of disfavour in these years; in Skene's description there appears a list indicating the variety of masks to be seen in the street which included many of the old favourites - the quack doctor, the Quacquero, transvestites, etc.; and others, giants, two-headed masks, animal masks (bears, ape-masks) are to be found in Von der Recke's diary of the following year.⁸⁰ Among the masks in Skene's description are those representing birds and fish; Petit-Radel, in 1812 refers to faces transformed into "museaux, en becs d'oiseaux; les cornes des plus beaux cerfs ombragent les fronts d'un grand nombre."⁸¹ Animals

which appeared in reality on the Corso are cats - usually wrapped in swaddling clothes to represent infants (squalling infants whose cries were reproduced by the simple expedient of pulling the cat's tail).⁸² Another unlikely baby is presented by Skene: "beautiful nources suckling in their arms little old wizened hags."⁸³

One curious mask mentioned by Millin is that of the 'Birbante', "ou sbire de Naples, qu'on nomme 'Micheletti'. Les gens du dernier rang ont un grand goût pour ce travestissement. Il est le plus souvent adopté par les souteneurs de mauvais lieux, qui marchent accompagnés des malheureuses dont ils font le honteux trafic."⁸⁴ Despite its apparent popularity no other indications have been found of this mask. Skene laments the absence of topical masks: "... old hags, battered beaux, Turks, Jews, and quack Doctors, but not one Bonaparte or British sailor. I should like to have seen a meeting between two such characters."⁸⁵ He is perhaps thinking of masks to be seen in the contemporary Neapolitan carnival, where we find, in Lemaistre's account of the same year, a carriage representing a ship, full of English sailors; we also find reference to a masquerade of English sailors in 1806.⁸⁶ The absence of the British was felt generally in these years, if only as a source of income; we shall see how they flocked to Rome once the downfall of Napoleon was confirmed. Lo Vasco, describing the visit of De Moratin in 1796, talks of the craze for things English: "era moda gonfiarsi di punch, rimpinzarsi di birra, rovinarsi lo stomaco col thè (De Moratin even gives us the recipe for a perfect cup of tea), lasciarsi crescere le basette, tagliar la coda ai cavalli ..."⁸⁷ And one thing which does not disappear during the years of French occupation is the craze for English dances: 'ils dansent à l'anglaise, le ballet à la mode, car c'est, en dépit du blocus, ce qu'on ne peut prohiber chez ce patriciat déjà anglomane";

in fact the French officers must have joined in.⁸⁸

This last quotation refers to 1810, the year which marks the almost decisive return to normal of the carnival (the 'mocoli' were to be restored in the following year, and in 1812 there was a particularly brilliant carnival, for which there exist a number of descriptions from foreign visitors). Already the flow of visitors, which had been reduced to a trickle during most of this period, was becoming a steady stream; with the arrival of the Neapolitans in Rome in January 1814, and the evacuation of the French troops, it became a torrent: "À partir de 1811, les étrangers, sans affluer à Rome comme 'sous les prêtres', commencent à revenir. En 1813 Norvins comptera 15,000 étrangers à Rome en dehors des Français."⁸⁹ Madelin gives us a list of the titled visitors who were present in Rome for the carnival of 1811. The following year saw the arrival of Mme. Récamier, who for many years would attract distinguished visitors to her salon. And in this period there were no less than three ex-sovereigns in the city, Carlo Emanuele IV of Sardinia, Marie Louise de Bourbon of Parma, Charles IV of Spain.⁹⁰ Such regal and aristocratic presences heralded another splendid phase in the Roman carnival, in which the foreigner was to leave a strong imprint on the more fashionable manifestations of the festival, and show a considerably deeper interest in the festival of the people.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Foreigners. 2. The Corso: Confetti battles and Mocoli.
3. The Races. 4. The Masking. 5. The political situation.

1. Foreigners

This chapter will deal with the period 1815-1848, beginning with the Restoration and ending with the First War of Independence and the establishment of the Roman Republic. With the demise of the latter, thanks to the intervention of the French government, in 1849, Rome and its carnival entered a new phase of political tension. The carnival itself became strongly 'politicized', an instrument in the hands of the opposing parties, the liberals and the 'papalini'. For much of the present period it seems, on the evidence of the numerous available accounts of foreign visitors to the city, that the festival (after the reasonably relaxed atmosphere of the closing years of the Napoleonic period) was firmly back to normal. There is, however, a certain amount of information to suggest that, at least for the second half of this period, the impression of a lack of tension was a deceptive one. The Revolution and the years of French occupation had inevitably left their mark. Beneath the surface of apparent calm and good humour there was a tension and anxiety noted by more sensitive (or more progressively-minded) foreign observers.

The majority of visitors did not see, or chose not to see, the tell-tale signs of unrest. They had come to enjoy themselves, and were not too concerned with the political situation. There were some who took a genuine interest in the people and wished it, and the rest of Italy, freedom from oppressive government, and increased prosperity.

There were those who were charmed by the 'unspoiled' manners of the people, by the old-fashioned quality of the city and the absence of the commercial spirit and industrial progress, who did not castigate the Romans as degenerate descendants of the ancients - as had numerous eighteenth century observers - but admired and even loved the simplicity of their life, and took a keen interest in their customs and traditions. In some of these visitors we can almost hear the voice of such 'laudatores temporis acti' of the immediate post-Unification period as Henry James or Augustus Hare, lamenting the advent of the 'new barbarians' who were changing so drastically the face of Rome.

The government itself was aware that there could be no simple return to the situation prevailing before 1789. In the first few years after 1815 it was extremely nervous and the carnivals of these years were rather half-carnivals. The government knew that the kind of opportunities opened up in the years of French occupation and their removal with the restoration of Papal control would have left a great deal of disappointment, particularly among the young. The period of carnival could become the ideal occasion for the manifestation of subversive activity. As in 1790 the 'mocoli' evening was the most frequent victim of the government's anxiety; but masking was also forbidden initially - in part at least; rather than by outright prohibition the period was characterized by partial bans. In 1815, for example, there was a ban on masking for the first two days¹; Prince Chigi noted that carnival was to be suspended on 'giovedì grasso' - "come giorno nefasto", being the anniversary of the Treaty of Fontainebleau.²

More typical, perhaps, of this period was the threat of a reduction in the duration of the carnival, as happened in 1818: "il n'y avait qu'un jour de carnaval; cependant le pape permit les 8 jours accoutumés".³ Such last-minute reprieves were particularly noticeable

in the 1830s. Despite the nervousness of the authorities, however, the carnival seemed to thrive. There was an air of obvious relief among the people. War was over in Europe; till 1848 Italy would be at peace; the foreigners, especially the British, were back, and the lavish spending of these visitors had a beneficial effect on the economy. The trickle of foreign visitors to Rome in the preceding period had become a noticeable flow in the years immediately prior to 1815. From 1811, with the French firmly in control after the removal of the Pope, and with the re-institution of the 'mocoli' ceremony in that year (a sure sign of a more relaxed atmosphere) foreigners had begun to return in large numbers.

By now the stream had become a flood. The conclusion of hostilities and the Congress of Vienna, opening Europe once more to safe travel, heralded a boom. An indication of this was the appearance of proper tourist guides in the 1830s - with the first edition of John Murray's 'Handbook' in 1836; travel was becoming standardized and organized. With the return of peace the economic wealth of Britain which had given rise to the Grand Tour, was now available, on a much less lavish scale to ordinary middle-class Britons and other nationals. With the advent of the industrial revolution and modern methods of production, technological progress, railways, steamships, new roads, easier and quicker communications, together with the new sense of freedom, and the middle-class revolution, the groundwork was laid for the expansion of travel. By the 1840s the Thomas Cook travel tours had begun; Dickens describes a middle-class family 'doing' Rome on one such tour in 1846.⁴ Travel was becoming reduced to a formula by the new guide books, and there was an abundance of such books, and of travel literature in general. Consequently there is a greater amount of documentation for this than for any other period in the

history of the Roman carnival.

Foreigners were a considerable presence in Rome by this time, and there was a progressive increase in their numbers over the years, with the occasional exception - such as the death of the Pope in 1829, which seriously affected the economy, due to the cancellation of the carnival celebrations, or the cholera scares of the 1830s. Consalvi the Papal Secretary, recognized the importance of welcoming foreigners back to Rome, and assuring them that things were back to normal and that there was no need to fear any further disturbances. It was important not to make visitors aware of any underlying tension. He not only welcomed them; he accommodated them in various ways, returning to the policy of his predecessors who had accorded foreigners a large amount of freedom, provided they did not offend the religion of their hosts - after a period in which they had inevitably been regarded with some suspicion (witness Cardinal de Bernis' remarks on the surveillance of foreign residents and visitors to Rome in the 1790s).⁵ For the time being, at least, they were no longer seen as a possible source of subversive activity and propaganda.

Rome now afforded the visitor an even more impressive welcome than before, with Valadier's remodelling of the Piazza del Popolo and the Pincio, which gave the piazza its final form. And some extremely illustrious guests resided in Rome during this period. The revolutionary years had seen some august presences in the city, such as the royal French 'émigrés' in the phoney war years, or the ex-sovereigns present in 1811-1813. In this period there were, for example, visits from Ludwig of Bavaria in 1818 and Prince Heinrich of Prussia, the Grand Duke Alexander of Russia in 1839.⁶ And naturally the British aristocracy was much in evidence from the start - for 1816 Clementi reports "un diluvio di inglesi".⁷ The British tended to dominate. As in the old days, their presence did not simply constitute

a passing trade; many wealthy visitors tended to spend a period of several months in the city; some even became long-term residents. And they set up house in style, renting palaces for the season from the Roman aristocracy, who could not match their material wealth; it was not unusual for impoverished noblemen to rent their palaces - or, more often, a floor or a suite of apartments. And it was not just Lords who could afford to rent from the nobility. Witness Bramsen, on his arrival in Rome: "We engaged very good furnished rooms at the Palazzo di Fiano, for here the nobility think it no disgrace to let out a part of their palaces".⁸ The American sculptor, William Wetmore Story, rented the second floor of the Barberini palace paying, he tells us, two hundred and fifty dollars less than he was receiving as rent for his little house in Baltimore.⁹ The much lower cost of living in Rome meant a much more lavish existence for visitors.

British visitors found to their delight that they could feel quite at home. The temporarily resident British played a leading role in the social life of the city. David Wilkie, in 1826, commenting on the removal of restrictions after Holy Year, noted: "The English are here one great family: all ranks associate together and, being idle, are driven into the society of one another for amusement. Dinner parties are numerous and very pleasant".¹⁰ Their splendid receptions led to a recurrence of earlier complaints among visitors concerning the poor hospitality afforded by the Roman aristocracy - or, to be fairer, their different concept of 'entertaining', which did not usually extend to balls and large dinners. The main complaint concerned the Roman aristocrats' disinclination to invite foreigners. Countess Borkovska repeats what Goethe had said about the Roman aristocracy preferring to mix with the people on the Corso: "I nobili Romani sono contenti di prender parte al divertimento e non cercano altro ... Essi

non danno nei propri palazzi, nè balli, nè cene, limitandosi a recarsi la sera agli spettacoli teatrali e ai ridotti, e tutto finisce qui".¹¹ The one aristocratic family which consistently displayed splendid hospitality to foreigners in this period was the nouveau riche Torlonia, whose palace became the principal venue for foreign notables in Rome. David Wilkie: "Everything gave way to the grand masquerade at Torlonia's, where all the world was invited."¹²

There was one French salon of some renown in Rome in those early years - that of Mme de Récamier - of which we have some interesting descriptions in the journal of Delécluze for 1824 (like E. Quinet, Delécluze was one of her young favourites). But the overwhelming impression we have from travellers' accounts - and not just British ones - is that the carnival was experienced very much 'en famille' and that the carnival and theatrical season in Rome was almost a kind of London 'season', with its aristocratic hosts, and even its débutantes. Samuel Rogers, writing just before the start of this period, on the first day of the carnival of 1814, tells us: "After dinner at the Duke of Bedford's, the Dss waltzed and danced with castanets before Canova. Looked in at Ld Holland's, went to a splendid ball at the Marchioness of Mariscotti".¹³ Clementi mentions, among the British hosts in the carnival of 1821 Signora Drummond, the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Ellensborough and the Duchess of Hamilton¹⁴; and David Wilkie, in 1826, reports: "It is said that there are 170 English families now in Rome, with almost all of whom one gets acquainted. They make the evening parties here, like those of Kensington, a repetition of the same faces. Amidst all this, as there are many young ladies and many others with their daughters, and many young men of expectations and of fortune, you may believe the flirtations are without ceasing."¹⁵ In the following year Potocka went to a masked ball given by the Duchesse de Laval: "La société s'y est rendue en déguisements variés, dont les

âles Britanniques ont fait presque tous les frais".¹⁶ The British had a passion for the masked ball, which corresponded to their concept of masking.

At this time it seemed as if the British had taken over the Corso as well. According to Yates the carriages in the street were mainly English and - she adds - "the low class of natives"¹⁷; the local nobility seem to have largely abandoned the Corso, and the poor people of Rome were still making sacrifices to figure on the Corso in a carriage. The houses and balconies on the street were largely the domain of the British, or other foreigners; balconies and windows, as we have seen, could be rented separately from the actual apartment: "This day hired a window on the Corso for the five days to come of the carnival for which I am to pay four scudi and a half".¹⁸

Such was the presence of foreigners in the Roman carnival by now, and the extent of their contribution to the revenue of Rome, that Lady Morgan, already in 1818, could put forward the claim that carnival would be dead without their support.¹⁹ She was one of the first commentators to suggest that the carnival was dying, or, at least, losing its character. There is, however, sufficient information to suggest that the people were still taking an active part in their festival, competing (as we have seen) with the rich foreigners to appear in a coach on the Corso. As before, its main source of amusement was the two features of the carnival which tended to be less favoured by the foreigner - the races, and the masking. The people, in general, did not show any resentment towards the foreigners who were encroaching on their territory, and, according to the latter continued to be docile and good-natured, only allowing themselves a certain gentle mockery of the English, calling them 'Beefeaters!', for example, or 'Goddam!'.²⁰ The people generally seem to have preferred

the French and the German (though this claim tends to come from French or German observers). The young German writer and artist, Wilhelm Waiblinger, produced in his novel 'Britten in Rom', a satire on British arrogance and presumption abroad; in it we find the character Ironius expressing his opinion: "Der römische Karneval wäre ein armseliges Vergnügen ohne die Fremden und besonders ohne Ihre vortreffliche Nation. Die Römer sind arm und werfen höchstens einige Paule von Konfetti hinaus, der Engländer schüttet Körbe über die Menge her, lässt hageln und stürmen, sitzt wie ein Gott in seiner Karosse, die eine Hand in einer Wanne voll Zucker und die andere mit der Lorgnette am Auge! Ja sie sind eigentlich die Herren des Karnevals! Ihre Damen sind die ersten!".²¹

The rather heavy irony could, perhaps, be attributed to a certain envy of the big-spending British; but, in the case of Waiblinger, we have someone who is speaking from a profound love and respect for the Roman people; he is one of a number of foreign, especially German, artists who devoted themselves to acquiring some first-hand knowledge of the people and their customs (Karl Meyer is another example). Waiblinger took his direct interest to the extent of marrying a young Roman girl. Like Gogol, some years later, he admired the simple, 'unspoiled' quality of the people and hated the 'adulteration' of their festivals and customs by foreign contamination.

2. The Corso: Confetti Battles and Mocoli

After the initial uncertainty, this period marked a brilliant return to form of the carnival - a return already well under way in the course of the concluding years of the French period. The people still appeared in force on the Corso, and the foreigners were taking an increasing-role in the festivities; and, thanks to the sharp

increase in foreign presences there was a corresponding increase in descriptions of the carnival - in the large number of travel books, diaries, letters, etc. published in this period. There is an abundance of material, a lot of it rather repetitive, obviously. This period, then, provides the most complete image of the scenes on the Corso, and a number of details which have been lacking in earlier descriptions - providing, at times, some of the missing details, some missing pieces in the jig-saw puzzle. What is more, apart from written descriptions there is also a large amount of visual material in the form of paintings and prints. There was a boom, too, in the latter, such as was seen in the second half of the preceding century - in Canaletto, Piranesi, or in the success of Paul Sandby's prints of the Roman carnival from David Allan's drawings of the 1770s. Particularly popular in the present period were the prints of Bartolommeo Pinelli representing various aspects of the life of the people - including carnival.

Some of the missing parts of the jig-saw concern the preparations for carnival, the opening ceremony - and especially the "omaccio" of the Jews. Silvio Negro notes one aspect of the occasion which received little attention, although it seems central to the significance of the occasion - carnival as a time of indulgence in the pleasures of the table: "Non appena giunge il carnevale le botteghe dei pizzicaroli, dei venditori di cacio, di salsicce, di prosciutti ... assumono l'aspetto di tempietti nei quali in cento guise è venerata una preziosa salsiccia quale divinità della specie, quasi mitica idea dei salsamentari".²²

For some weeks before the opening of the festivities there was a brisk business in the shops selling or hiring masks and costumes. In the days immediately prior to the opening there was the sound of the hammering of carpenters building the stands in the Piazza del Popolo

and Piazza San Marco, for the spectators of the races.²³ Then there was the detail we have already seen in Goethe - the strewing of the Corso with 'pozzolana' sand, to give the horses a firm grip on the smooth surface (rather counter-productive if it rained, and the horses slipped on the mud created; or, at best, favouring some horses over others, since the sand was distributed rather unevenly over the street). There was the same excitement for many weeks before the start of the event; an excitement which week by week increased, as the event drew nearer; for weeks beforehand the talk was of nothing but the carnival. Then, with the arrival of that first day, there was the usual phenomenon of a low turn-out of masks, with the number increasing day by day as the carnival proceeded, reaching a climax on the last day.

In this period we find a large number of descriptions of the 'Omaccio', the ceremony by which the Jews formally made a plea for the privilege of continuing to stay in Rome, thanks to the bounty of the Holy Father and the Magistrates of Rome. The ceremony had been introduced as a kind of replacement for the race of the Jews in 1668; the Jewish community in that year had chosen an opportune moment, after the election of Clement IX, to petition the city magistrates for the abolition of the race. The authorities decided that the three hundred scudi which the Jewish community paid for the race and the costumes worn by the participants could be better spent.²⁴

Foreign commentators were, in general, shocked by this humiliating ceremony; this was a period of greater social consciousness, far removed from the days in which F. Mortoft could refer to the races of "Jews, Barbes and other unclean beasts".²⁵ The situation of the Jews had improved considerably under the French when, much to the disgust of the Romans, they had been freed from the

restrictions of the Ghetto. For them, too, the Restoration had marked a step back - from a new social and economic freedom to being forced to wear once more the yellow star, return to the Ghetto, and once more submit to the 'omaccio'.²⁶ Delecluze is one of the first visitors to leave us a brief, and rather mild, description of the ceremony - referred to as an old custom: "Vers trois heures, les juifs ont été faire leur acte de soumission au Capitole. Je n'y étais pas, mais quelqu'un qui a assisté à cette ancienne cérémonie m'a dit que le juif qui portait la parole avait complimenté le Sénat et le peuple Romain, selon l'usage, sur l'état florissant de la religion catholique. Le magistrat répond, et il paraît que tous les ans on adresse et on rend les mêmes discours, ce qui ôte beaucoup de l'odieux de cette cérémonie où l'on ne pose plus le pied sur la tête du juif comme il paraît que cela se pratiquait autrefois".²⁷

The scene on the Corso, once the official ceremony was over, was a lively one. The street was jammed with carriages, with maskers on foot; the crush of carriages was so tight that at times they had to be diverted into side-streets, to prevent their slow progress from being reduced to a standstill. Dickens' experience, in 1846, was typical: "Accordingly, we fell into the string of coaches, and for some time jogged on quietly enough; now crawling on a very slow walk; now trotting half a dozen yards; now backing fifty; and now stopping altogether; as the presence in front obliged us. If any impetuous carriage dashed out of the rank and clattered forward, with the wild idea of getting on faster, it was suddenly met, or overtaken, by a trooper on horseback, who, deaf as his own drawn sword to all remonstrances, immediately escorted it back to the very end of the row, and made it a dim speck in the remote perspective."²⁸

As in earlier periods, and even more now, foreigners threw themselves enthusiastically (and even violently, as we shall see) into

the confetti battles on the Corso. In the opening years of this period there was an attempt to refine these battles, and make them less rough. The use of 'confetti di gesso' had become standard over the years, perhaps accentuated by the attempts of the French to 'democratize' the carnival. A number of edicts appeared in these years attempting to outlaw plaster confetti and 'return' to the more pleasant and genteel custom of throwing flowers and real confetti.²⁹

Since such edicts were repeated in the late 1830s we may assume that their success was limited - although a number of commentators in the early 1840s do talk of an increase in gentility, as for example Checchetelli: "e mi piace che siasi generalizzato l'uso di gettare aranci e mazzolini di fiori".³⁰ As was usual, of course, with such edicts, observance was scarce. Strict observance would have seriously reduced the level of participation in the battles, and therefore the animation of the occasion. The poorer people could not have afforded to participate. But even those who could afford flowers and real confetti obviously did not hesitate to equip themselves with a supply of plaster confetti ammunition.

Hillard is obviously exaggerating - or quite simply mistaken - when he says that confetti (plaster) were never used by persons of good taste except in masculine encounters.³¹ A large part of the confetti battles in earlier periods had been, in fact, a tribute to the beauty of the Roman ladies (on which commentators had been in general agreement for many years. The return to popularity of flowers and real confetti could possibly be seen as an indication of certain antiquarian interest - a revival of older forms and customs (an echo, perhaps, of the world of chivalry); such nostalgic returns are not untypical of the period - as in the presence of knights in armour among the maskers on the Corso (though they were seen more frequently

in the masked ball).

The tributes to the ladies had now become more abundant and, unfortunately, more insistent and less gentle. "Dans ces combats souvent très vifs, il est de la galanterie Romaine de ne pas épargner le beau sexe; et j'ai vu dans leurs calèches, de belles dames en grande parure, décolletées et le visage découvert, recevoir avec une grâce toute stoïque la piquante impression de ces confetti. ... lancés par des mains trop amoureuses, véritables héroïnes du Tibre, pour qui la douleur devenait un plaisir".³² It was a great honour for a Roman lady to be singled out for attention in such 'battles'. Bramsen indicates this in 1815; a sign of distinction of the most favoured young woman was to be covered with plaster dust (not real confetti, be it noted) - the 'fairest of them all' was the 'whitest of them all'; and he adds, the same applied to the young men.³³ The women, too, exchanged flowers and confetti with each other: "Noémie recevait les petits présents de fleurs et de dragées que les femmes portent dans des corbeilles et échangent entre elles".³⁴

Centre of the confetti battles was the area of the Corso around Palazzo Ruspoli, and particularly on the 'scalino' of that palace;³⁵ Delécluze was one of a number of visitors to leave a description of it. He was also one of many who paid tribute to the beauty and grace of young English girls in Rome, who were now providing strong competition to the local beauties. He cites the example of the young Mrs Dodswell, who was making such an impression on foreigners and Romans alike: "Mme. Dodswell a été accablée sous les dragées à la place du Peuple, ainsi que Mme. Martinetti, toutes les belles Anglaises et Mme. Récamier" ... "Quand Mme. Dodswell a passé, je pense qu'il s'est jeté en l'air trois ou quatre cents cornets de bonbons. Cette jolie femme met toute la ville en belle humeur".³⁶

Masking on the Corso had never been favoured particularly by

foreigners; for them the centre of the public festival was the confetti battle - or, as some saw it the flower-battle. For a commentator like Stahr, writing in 1846, carnival was essentially a flower-festival, a spring festival. He pointed out that masks were no longer the main feature, as they seemed to be in Goethe's day: "Die Hauptsache aber sind die wirklichen Blumen, die Kinder des Frühlings der Natur ... Das römische K. ist ein grosses Blumen und Frühlings fest geworden, in welchem die Südländer auf die anmuthsvollste Weise das Erwachen der Natur, den Beginn der Primavera feiert."³⁷ Stahr, in fact, provides the most detailed description of this flower-festival, illustrating the variety that there was, even giving examples of the flowers and the different interpretations which could be made of each. His account brings out very well the display of the rebirth of Nature, of Spring, in Rome - like the show of flowers of more recent years on the Spanish steps. They came from the hill-towns around Rome, from the Campagna, even from the Colosseum, which had a rich collection of wild-flowers in this period (before restoration work put an end to such abundance). Hillard commented on the profusion available:

"For many days before the carnival begins, flowers are brought into Rome from the neighbouring country; and the stock in hand, to respond to the universal demand, seems boundless. They are so arranged as to meet the various capacities of purse or the higher or lower points of profusion; the scale of choice ranging from costly bouquets of the delicate and fragrant products of the conservatory to little bunches of flowers, the natural growth of the Campagna, of which large baskets may be bought for a few baiocchi ... The instinctive and universal taste of mankind selects flowers for the expression of its finest sympathies ...

In some instances, these carnival bouquets are crowned with a living bird whose legs and wings are imprisoned in flowing bonds, and whose drooping head wears a forlorn expression of surprise and terror, awakening a feeling not in unison with the mood of the hour."³⁸

The popularity of the 'giardiniera' mask for young men continued; Hillard reveals that their 'scaletti' could open up to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and required considerable strength and skill to manipulate, for the gift to reach its destination at a second or third-floor window.³⁹ The charming 'spontaneity' of such scenes was becoming somewhat commercialized, however, which also gives some idea of the increasingly dominant role played by the foreigners. Ermeler, in 1841, informs us of the sale of bouquets containing notes in different languages - making almost a kind of Valentine card: "Schon sind die Bänder gedrückt mit Devisen in vier Sprachen: Wenn mir Dein Auge strahlend lacht, Hony soit qui mal y pense, dann Jo te voglio bene assai, Remember me! ... von jeden Blumenstrauss kommt eine und steht darauf: fiori piu belli ... via Sistina, 51, piano terra ... ich wirfte das letzte Bouquet mit der Devise: Souvenir du carnaval de Rome 1841 woran ich 200 habe drücken lassen, einen Cardinal zu, der auf einen Balcon steht und es freundlich annimt".⁴⁰

As in the earlier periods, there is some indication of rules relating to confetti-throwing. The question inevitably arises as to whether or not such rules were simply the product of people's imagination, since there are relatively few signs of their observance. As Faraday states in his account of 1815: "None but the masks are allowed to throw, though this rule is transgressed from every window."⁴¹ One particular rule seems to have been observed quite often the one which stated that confetti or flowers should be thrown only at acquaintances. This had already been hinted at by certain

eighteenth century commentators, such as Pöllnitz: "but the best on't is, that either by the clothes, or their Equipages, everybody is known".⁴² One might almost be tempted to think that the rule itself was invented by the British. Witness Henry Crabb Robinson: "I was pelted from the balcony of a Palazzo, and looking up to discover my assailant, recognized Mrs. Finch, who beckoned me to join her".⁴³

Such scenes still represent the genteel carnival which was being promoted in these years; these charming tributes, however, were only a part (possibly the smallest part) of the participation of the British in these battles. There was another, less refined, side to their participation; a kind of school-boy rowdiness which turned the occasion into a 'Rag week'. In this practice, then, it was the very British who broke the rules, since no distinctions were made between strangers and acquaintances, but everyone was pelted indiscriminately. Some of the scenes described by foreigners seem to suggest a real need for those bans which controlled the carnival. John W. Armstrong: "This day hired a window in the Corso for the five days of the Carnival, for which I am to pay four scudis and a half ... the most remarkable thing I discovered were fifteen or twenty Englishmen who stationed themselves by the steps of the Ruspoli Palace exactly opposite to us and were disguised only by having noses, they pelted most mercilessly every person who went by, and were a great annoyance to the passengers and extremely offensive".⁴⁴

Almost as frequent as the testimony to the good nature and tolerance of the Romans, were the comments on the violence and roughness of the British, who passed the limits of fun, giving rise to ugly scenes on the Corso in which the forces of law and order had to intervene occasionally. Mme Récamier's account, though did express her surprise at the good nature of the Romans, and her conjectures as to

what would happen with a French crowd in similar circumstances.⁴⁵ Matthews stresses the fact that the Romans do not exaggerate in their throwing of confetti, despite the licence of carnival: "One can bear being pelted by the natives, for they throw these missiles lightly and playfully - but the English pelt with all the vice and the violence of schoolboys, and there was an eye nearly lost in the battle of the morning".⁴⁶ Beste, in 1824, talks of duels breaking out between foreigners who did not understand the joke.⁴⁷ (The British, even if they did not indulge in violent pelting of all and sundry, seem to have at least equipped themselves abundantly with ammunition, if Harris' procedure is a typical example: "We hired a balcony on the Corso to see the humour of the carnival. We had a large box full of confetti - c.1200 lbs. ... We threw and received quantities of bonbons and nosegays, but with the exception of those in the balconies and a few from the carriages, English and Americans, nobody pelted us").⁴⁸

The Romans let themselves go with a joyfulness - "a drunkenness that had nothing to do with drink"⁴⁹; one would almost say that there was no need for edicts and punishment to keep them in line, so docile did they seem. The normally sober people showed remarkable self-restraint in their abandon - waiting patiently for the start of carnival (in this respect, too, unlike so many foreigners) respecting the inviolability of the mask, generally ignored by foreigners (especially British), not taking any offence (a sin against the spirit of carnival), and taking advantage of their carnival licence to indulge in good-natured mockery and 'flyting' of anyone, irrespective of rank, sex or age: "Die tollsten Masken treiben sich auf und ab und masken sich ohne Unterschied mit Jedem zu schaffen; dafür kann man mit sie auch wieder necken; denn etwas als Beleidigung aufnehmen, ist in dieser Tag eben so verboten, wie in den Fasten das Fleisch".⁵⁰ Kephhalides noted the good humour even of the dragoons, who would wait

patiently for the crowd to let them pass. He illustrates, too, how jealous the Romans were of the inviolability of the mask, quoting the example of a coachman who had struck a masker and had to be rescued by the gendarmes from the fury of the crowd.⁵¹ An excellent indication of the licence, and the good nature with which it was accepted is the fact that while in earlier periods maskers had been forbidden to enter houses, this happened occasionally in this period, as may be seen in H.C. Andersen's diary for 1834, where the owner and his family laughed heartily at the noisy intrusion.⁵²

Compared with such good humour and gentleness the rowdiness of certain foreigners, notably British, stood out all the more starkly. The confetti, Galiffe tells us: "do not hurt anyone, unless they are purposely and violently thrown at the face, a species of brutal sport, of which, I am sorry to acknowledge I have seen some English travellers guilty".⁵³ Excess was also apparent in the amount and the hardness of materials used - and in the force with which they were projected. There seem to have been certain rules relating to the size and consistency of the confetti - but not, it seems, too rigidly enforced; witness the words of Millin in the preceding period: "Ces confetti ne sont pas toujours examinés par les agents de la police avec un soin assez scrupuleux, et il y en a de très gros; mais leur substance est légère".⁵⁴

The roughness of the British was particularly offensive to the Romans when it was directed against women, which they considered to be breaking an unwritten rule. (We find a similar indignation shown in MacFarlane's account of the Neapolitan carnival, when the victim was, not a lady, but King Ferdinand himself, the biggest consumer of confetti: "Some of the English who thronged Naples during such seasons occasionally carried the joke too far, pelting his majesty with all

their might, and making a downright horseplay of it").⁵⁵ This roughness could lead to conflict between the British and other nationals, with whom the Romans tended to side: "The people, annoyed at the manner in which the English showered confetti on the bare shoulders of the Roman women, took part with the French, and the carriage of the English was pursued with great severity, and obliged to take refuge in one of the side streets".⁵⁶ And Stahr, in 1846, had the pleasure of seeing a particularly obnoxious group of young English gentlemen receive their just deserts at the hands of a group of artists, mainly Germans. The carabinieri were deaf to the cries of the English, blind to the actions of the Germans, who had been outraged at seeing the Englishmen throwing hard plaster confetti at the ladies: "Die Karabinieri waren selbst zu gute Römer, um nicht der englischen Brutalität diese Züchtigung von Herzen zu gönnen".⁵⁷

The confetti could be propelled not just by hand but by a kind of peashooter. This is reported by Head: "The volleys of confetti as people pass along the Corso are increased, though peashooters, and all manner of projectile machines are strictly prohibited by the printed regulations".⁵⁸

All of this, apart from indignation, discomfort and offence, could also cause physical injury, as we have seen from earlier examples. Wire-gauze masks were now standard protective wear for the ladies; Head even refers to ones with the features of a face painted on them.⁵⁹

Clothes, of course, could be damaged, even ruined. In the seventeenth century carnival Bouchard's fine costume was soaked through with the water contained in the egg-shells thrown. People emerged from the confetti battles as white as millers with the plaster dust; lime had an even worse effect on clothes; and if it rained they were reduced to a pitiable state, as witness the experience of La

Rochère in the following period: "La pluie avait délayé le plâtre des confetti dont nous étions couverts, et elle ruisselait en raies blanchâtres et vertes de notre visage et de nos vêtements".⁶⁰ One very common and sensible precaution taken by many maskers was to choose the costume of Pulcinella, or the 'Matto', a long, loose shirt and baggy white pants of a cheap material (could this explain in part the popularity of such masks?), with which the damage was much less noticeable. Easton observed that the 'Pagliataccio' was the most popular mask of all.⁶¹ Sivry described an incongruously solemn figure (English!), dressed in white, and playing his own peculiar part in the proceedings: "Un Anglais, avec cet air sombre et patibulaire que je lui aurais pardonné volontiers s'il avait enterre son père le matin, jetait avec gravité des flots de dragées en l'air, de façon à les recevoir lui-meme dans le col de sa veste. Il s'était vêtu pour la circonstance d'un surtout de toile blanche, et avait passé en bandoulière un carnier rempli de petits bonbons."⁶²

Conversely, to wear black was to invite particular attention; in dark clothes or formal dress one would immediately become the object of a sustained attack; men dressed in top-hats were particular favourites. Among black-garbed figures there was the occasional priest or 'abate', who was shown no mercy.⁶³ Carriages, too, had to be protected; as in the eighteenth century, they were stripped down and the upholstery covered with white material; and one had to remember to lower the carriage windows, as Vane found out to her cost, when hers were smashed by the confetti in Naples on Shrove Tuesday, 1844: "Having driven there (the Corso) perfectly unconscious of what was going on, I had not taken the precaution of putting down the glasses of the carriage, and in one moment they were smashed by the sugar plums, to the delight of the people, who have seldom so great a treat,

or meet with anyone so little initiated to the rejoicing!".⁶⁴

Such innocents were obviously a godsend to the people, and a particular source of fun. Like those gentlemen who dressed formally in dark clothes, or those who stood by, taking no part in the proceedings, but simply observed as spectators: no mercy was shown to these transgressors of the spirit of carnival: Milford experienced this in 1815, finding the crowd throwing "... sugar plums at their neighbours, but especially at so quiet an observer as myself, who might happen to be contemplating, from some retired corner the ridiculous scene before him ... very annoying, and covers you all over with dust".⁶⁵ There was no such thing as neutrality - one would be pelted anyway; and if someone should display too openly his boredom, that could be particularly dangerous, as Sivry witnessed: "Un autre baillait ... un masque qui passait près de lui, aperçoit cet immense ouverture, et sans balancer, lui enfonce jusqu'au gosier la poignée de confetti qu'il s'apprêtait à lancer sur une voiture élégante, qui suivait celle de la reine Marie-Christine".⁶⁶

As we have seen earlier, women were playing an increasingly active role in the proceedings. This freedom was especially treasured by the women of the people, who led such a restricted existence during the rest of the year, under the watchful eyes of parents and brothers. Angela, the Roman wife of the artist Arnold Böcklin, recalling her first meeting with the young painter, indicates how determined young women were to make the most of the occasion ('Semel in anno licet insanire'): "Uns römischen Mädchen der damaligen Zeit wurde nicht viel Zerstreuung geboten. Ein solcher Ausflug galt als grosses Fest in unserem Backfischleben. Man hat uns streng, fast klösterisch erzogen, und wir wurden sowohl von unserem Beichvater als von Eltern und Verwandten ernsthaft von den bösen Männern gewarnt".⁶⁷

If it was considered bad form to pelt young women cruelly with

confetti, the young women in question seemed to have no scruples about doing as much to the men. Girls often ganged up on some unfortunate male, particularly if unmasked; this was a prime source of their amusement, but the gentleman was usually an acquaintance; Head gives us a vivid description of their forwardness: "Three or four young women in the dress of shepherdesses ... riotously elbowing their way through the crowd with all their strength, till they gather together in front of some unmasked young man of their acquaintances, screaming like seagulls, squalling in his ear, chattering, giggling, pulling him by the tails of his coat, twisting his collar, and even besetting him to a degree of persecution, while he, on the other hand, such is the pastoral simplicity that prevails, as far as regards ostensible indications, never presumes to retaliate by any undue familiarity".⁶⁸ Von Hase, however, points out that even the poorest girls expressed themselves with a certain nobility and propriety, and an elegant use of the language of passion.⁶⁹

Social distinctions fell; the confetti battles had a levelling effect, seen most strikingly in the participation of King Ferdinand in Naples. The poor people made considerable sacrifices to appear on the Corso in a hired coach; and it was not just the lower classes who made sacrifices, as may be seen in the remarks of Lady Morgan in 1818: "This season is the vintage for virtuosi and dealers in antiquarian pictures, who know how to take advantage of the necessity for a carriage during the week. A handsome disguise, a splendid dress, a ticket for the masked ball at the Teatro Aliberti, thus frequently diminish the treasures of a gallery, and of that little stock of virtue, which every one in Rome prides himself on possessing. The bust of a Greek sage often goes to ornament the bosom of a pretty woman, and the head of a Roman Empress is pitted against the coiffure of a

French milliner".⁷⁰

Prince and peasant, mistress and maid sat side by side on the 'scalino' of the Ruspoli palace on the Corso; a kind of social brotherhood prevailed, where one could feel the equal of a prince in his carriage; and Wreford commented in 1840: "Here I have seen a royal Duchess, not unknown in England, powdering and pelting, being powdered and pelted in her turn by the lowest canaglia of Rome."⁷¹

The 'Moccoli' evening was the other occasion for the display of the levelling effect of carnival. It was also one of the moments most favoured by foreign visitors, who had difficulty in containing their impatience as the hour approached. Tributes abound in this period to what Dickens refers to as this 'most bewitching' sight (and it is Dickens who gives perhaps the liveliest description of the evening).⁷²

The custom had fallen into disuse for some time during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period; banned in 1790, they were re-introduced in 1811. By 1821, according to Berry, the occasion had still not recovered the splendour of the late eighteenth century. Berry, a guest on the balcony of the Duchess of Devonshire on the Corso, refers to the words of Canova on this subject: "Canova said that before the arrival of the French at Rome and all that had followed there were three times more 'moccoli' than there have been since, and that it really was a sight to see at that time".⁷³ What particularly struck Ermeler was the cry, repeated by thousands of voices - "Senza moccoli! Senza moccoli!"; a sound that remained in his memory.⁷⁴ For Hebbel it was the solemn finality of the moment when all the tapers were extinguished which left an unforgettable impression: "ich weiss nicht, ob etwas mächtiger an des Ende aller Dinge erinnern könnte. Das wäre der römische Carnival!".⁷⁵

There are for this period some quite detailed descriptions of the phenomenon, particularly in relation to the number and elaboration of

the 'moccoli'; each participant carried at least one lighted taper, but many had more than one; some held huge clusters, some wore pyramids of light (a kind of chandelier) on their head. The advance of science will bring a modification; Zörnstein, in 1869, speaks of a myriad of small gas burners appearing on balconies and windows in the shape of pyramids, suns, stars.⁷⁶

One new feature, indicated by a number of commentators, concerned the protocol of the occasion. Masks were not obligatory, nor was participation in the confetti battles, even if such neutrality could occasionally be punished. However, in the case of the 'moccoli' evening, such neutrality was actively discouraged; according to Santo-Domingo carriages without 'moccoli' were not allowed to proceed⁷⁷; there were cries of 'Vergogna, senza moccolo!', 'Morte a chi non porta moccoli!' Mercey ventured on to the Corso on the last evening without one, but got himself out of any difficulty, he tells us, by adopting the simple device of walking through the crowd, the little finger of one hand sticking up between the index and middle finger of the other to simulate a 'moccolo'.⁷⁸

The occasion presented its dangers; it was after dark, of course, and the Corso was once more packed with carriages, between the wheels of which those on foot had to pick their way, amid the general noise and confusion. Galiffe, like so many others, finding this the most amusing part of the carnival, adds that "only it becomes at the last dangerous for the people on foot because the carriages no longer keep their place in the file, and as you neither see nor hear them, on account of the increasing darkness and of the noise around you, it is almost impossible to avoid accidents". Galiffe himself was nearly knocked down by a carriage; he had already been buffeted several times by carriage poles on the Corso, during the day.⁷⁹ Delecluze, in

1824, witnessed the overturning of a coach on the Corso, and expressed amazement that more accidents did not occur; no order was observed, he tells us, but things had improved recently since coaches, up to the period of the French occupation, used to remain parked on both sides of the Corso, during races and 'Moccoli' evening.⁸⁰ As we might expect, there were occasional fires, but Zörnstein, writing in 1869, adds that they merely increased the fun.⁸¹

One further detail of the occasion not referred to by commentators in earlier periods, is a sound emitted by the crowd: "But as long as this play lasts, a sort of humming is heard, which is meant to imitate the prayers muttered by the monks and priests at a real burial".⁸² The absence of any representation of the death and burial of Carnival has been discussed in introducing the novelty of the ceremony of the 'Moccoli' in the eighteenth century. In this period there are references to the ceremony, though not detailed ones unfortunately. A dirge for the dying Carnival had been reported by some visitors in the eighteenth century; Laourens, in 1815, has another example of the shouts heard: "Il faut enterrer le carnaval!", "Moccoli ou la mort!".⁸³ There were those who did not refer to any recognizable words, but spoke simply of a lugubrious roar, or more often a kind of humming (as in Galiffe), compared by Viollet-le-Duc to the sound of a shell placed against one's ear, and gradually increasing - a somewhat sinister sound, he felt.⁸⁴

"Mocolo ou la mort!" is closer to the threatening cry reported by Goethe in his description of the 1788 carnival. But, according to Stahr, the references to death were rather rarer by this time: "Die rohe Verwünschung des zu Goethe's Zeiten üblichen 'sia ammazzato chi non porta mocolo!' ('es werde ermordet, wer kein Lichtchen trägt!) ist nun gut wie ganz verschwunden, und hat dem zierlichen ' 'o che vergogna, senza mocolo!' ('o welche Schmach, ohne Mocolo!) plätze

gemacht".⁸⁵ References to a burial ceremony tended to be rather rare. Yates does refer to the lights being extinguished and the Carnival being borne in funeral procession through the Corso⁸⁶, and there is a brief reference in Martin's account of 1826: "Last night at eleven o'clock, the death of Carnival was announced by moving a cart covered with lights through the streets".⁸⁷

Matthews noted a custom no longer in use (in 1818): the carrying of a dead Arlecchino in procession, on the death of Carnival.⁸⁸ Just a few years later, in 1824, V.M. Conti's 'Sepoltura del Carnevale' contains the lines: "Col Quacquero portava la barella/Arlecchino, Pagliaccio e Pulcinella".⁸⁹ The existence of such scenes, which feature not simply a procession, but a kind of 'commedia a carro', including Carnival/Commedia dell'Arte masks (sometimes, as in Martin's account even taking the place of the protagonist) is testified by a number of observers in this period. Lacour-Delâtre is an example: "Ecco un carro pieno di dottori, di speziali e di notari. In mezzo a loro sta disteso un moribondo. È Don Carnevale. Due o tre medici gli tastano il polso; altrettanti speziali preparano unguenti cataplasmi e lavativi ... 'Povero Carnevale! non c'è più rimedio! è giunta l'ultima ora! Addio! Si spara il cannone e Don Carnevale esala l'ultimo sospiro".⁹⁰

3. The Races

In this period the horse-races continued, for the most part unchanged; the name still remained 'la corsa dei barberi', but the adverse comments on the quality of the horses continued undiminished. On the whole, information relating to the preparations for the race is very much as it was in Goethe's description. Simond (1818) mentions the horses being exercised in the week before the carnival: "Pendant

la semaine qui précède les courses, les chevaux sont, chaque jour, conduits le long du cours, pour les y accoutumer, et on leur donne l'avoine à son extrémité ou la course doit finir".⁹¹

The sequence of warning shots which signal the race is indicated by Mayne: the first to warn that carriages should clear the street, exiting by the nearest street on the right; a repetition of this signal to complete the process, after which a detachment of dragoons careered along the street from Piazza del Popolo to Piazza San Marco, while pedestrians ranged themselves on either side. At the third signal the horses were led on, with a sound of trumpets, by the 'barbareschi'.⁹²

The more formal part of the occasion was completed with the procession of the winning horse through the streets, but now with somewhat diminished pomp and circumstances, as Head's description seems to suggest: "So soon as the race is over, and the number of the winning horse declared, it is led in triumph through the principal streets at the head of a procession, consisting of the owner, a drummer drumming all the way, ten or twelve rank and file of infantry, two or three carabinieri and as many boys and idle people of all descriptions as think proper to follow. And all this despite the fact that people take no great interest in the outcome, and very little is talked about it!".⁹³

Matthews found the race a pretty tame business, and he, like so many others, compared it unfavourably with English horse-races: "All the rivalry is at the start .. the reverse of an English horse-race. There the start is nothing and the contest is reserved for the goal".⁹⁴ The start, or 'Mossa', was by now established as the most interesting moment in the race. This moment was favoured greatly by artists in this period; the contest between man and beast appealed to

their visual sense and imagination. The estimate of the number of grooms required to hold one horse varied greatly. Mayne puts it at three men, two holding the head, one the tail; according to Faraday, in the same year (1815), six or eight men were not enough to hold one horse - and the cries uttered by the crowd were enough to frighten any English horse.⁹⁵ The contest was a dangerous one, and 'barbareschi' were often killed at the 'Mossa' by blows from the horses' hooves.

There are a number of fairly authentic-looking prints and paintings of the 'Mossa'. Charles Vernet, for example, gives a good example from 1820, and Thomas' illustrations from 1818 are invaluable records. But the finest works produced on this subject are the ones which take us furthest away from the reality of the occasion. These are by the young Géricault, fruit of his brief stay in 1817-18, and therefore contemporary with the works of Thomas and Vernet. But whereas they give us a fairly realistic account, genre paintings (and, as such, very useful iconographical material) in Géricault the scene becomes transfigured. The 'Mossa' becomes the starting point for a series of paintings which become increasingly idealized images of the struggle between man and beast; the 'barbareschi' become heroic nude youths, the horses the magnificent beasts we see in other Géricault paintings; the scene in the Piazza del Popolo gives way to a grand, antique setting, the Roman spectators disappear. These paintings were to form the basis for a large monumental canvas, like 'The Raft of the Medusa'; a work which was, however, never completed.

Comments on the quality of the actual horses entered for the race differed sharply, of course, from the magnificent animals we see in Géricault's paintings. Milford thought them nothing but "Half a dozen miserable animals, hardly deserving the name of horses".⁹⁶ It seems to have been difficult to get good-quality horses for the race. The days when prize horses were so lovingly trained by the Rospigliosi,

the Chigi, etc. were long past. There was often a very low level of entry; it is true that the number of entries did vary even earlier, according to the year or the day of the carnival (there would, one imagines, be a considerable difference between the number appearing on the opening day and on the closing one). But the evidence points to a very real deterioration in quality. The dealers who now provided the horses had lost interest in the event, and did not consider it worth their while. The material advantages were virtually non-existent. Extra inducements had to be introduced to attract breeders; Clementi, speaking of the races of 1817, tells us that: "ai soliti palii si è aggiunto un premio in denaro di 30 scudi".⁹⁷

These prizes, inadequate as they were, indicated an attempt by the authorities to induce the participation of the breeders, in the face of a general lack of enthusiasm. This period was characterized in this sector as elsewhere by occasional attempts of the government to give a spurious air of spontaneity to the proceedings, in times of anxiety and uncertainty, as in the carnival of 1821, when the Austrian troops were at the gates of Rome (on their way to suppress the Neapolitan revolution). Clementi: "che l'allegria carnevalesca non fosse poi totalmente spontanea, se ne ha una prova che il Governo - interessato a far sì che il carnevale riuscisse splendidissimo dovette far vive premure a vari mercanti di campagna, proprietari di cavalli, perchè prendessero parte alle corse e malgrado ciò non poteva adunare che pochi cavalli e cattivi".⁹⁸

One of the explanations for the small number of entries in the races was the fact that one horse occasionally won all the races. Faraday informs us that the horses usually belonged to one man - obviously leaving no room for any contest.⁹⁹ And the presence of one champion horse in a particular year could lead to a very small number

of entries, if other breeders considered it pointless to present their own. "Il barbero di un tal Pelagallo fa miracoli, tanto che nel giovedì grasso e lasciato solo, ritirandosi tutti gli altri cavalli". And in the following year Pelagallo entered the same horse, arousing the same enthusiasm among the crowd, and the same heavy betting. The other dealers demanded that this horse be excluded from the race, threatening otherwise to withdraw their own horses.¹⁰⁰

The horse which sometimes won all the prizes in a particular year could well be a British one. These seem, in fact, to have dominated the proceedings in the years immediately after 1815. Williams tells us that an English horse belonging to the Duke of Bracciano won all the prizes;¹⁰¹ and in 1818 a "little spirited English horse, never meant, however, for a racer won almost all the prizes or 'palii'".¹⁰² Some attempts were made in this period to improve the quality of the horses, but obviously to little effect. Valéry looked back on the great days when the aristocracy dominated these races, and tells us that Prince Borghese was trying to revive the quality of his horses, by means of Arab stallions imported from Germany.¹⁰³ Despite the poor quality of the horses the Romans followed the races with a passion and a vehemence which was inexplicable to the foreigner.

After the first shot for the clearing of the Corso the cavalry came onto the scene to clear the course; which took about a quarter of an hour. Tension was at fever pitch as the crowd waited for the horses to be led on; a tension occasionally broken by such 'amusing' episodes as a dog being thrown on to the street and fleeing terrified at the hoots, whistles and roars of laughter which greeted its appearance. The excitement of the horses was stimulated in the ways already mentioned - and in some new ones recorded in this period: kettles tied to their tail; a live coal between the shoulders - also spiked metal balls and flapping silver paper).¹⁰⁴

In the period of anxious expectation before the start of carnival among the necessary preparations made by the authorities was the posting of the regulations relating to the maintenance of safety during the races. Horses were often maimed or killed for the reasons already indicated - the narrowness of the Corso, even after the removal of the two rows of parked coaches, the arrogance of Ambassadors in still parading their privilege after the signal had sounded for the start of the race. But most of the accidents were caused by the over-excited condition of the people. Fanny Mendelssohn, in 1840, witnessed a scene when five horses were late at the start and ran into the crowd: "teilten die tolle Menge, die immer augenblicklich wieder zusammenströmt, und werfen viele nieder: zwei sind an den Wunden gestorben, die Zahl der Verwundeten wird verschieden, von vier bis zwölf personen angeben".¹⁰⁵

There were comments on the callousness of the Romans in the event of such accidents. What do a few deaths matter, asks Lacour-Delatre sarcastically, if the people enjoy themselves¹⁰⁶; and Helfferich, in the next period, witnessed an accident where a French soldier rushed forward to help the victim, while the Romans stood around watching: "Dieser Volk hat kein Herz, sondern ein Mollusken in Busen".¹⁰⁷ Voices towards the end of this period began to be raised, too, against the cruelty to the animals; a fatal accident in 1848 provoked demands for the abolition of the race.¹⁰⁸ Martin had pointed out, in 1820, that the attitude of Romans to horses was very different from that of the English, citing the example of an accident caused by a cardinal's coach driving furiously along the Corso, in which a child was killed; the enraged crowd took its revenge by killing the cardinal's horse.¹⁰⁹

4. The Masking

Now it is time to look at the masking. Masks were still banned on occasion or, more usually, restricted since the Papal government proceeded carefully, and did not wish to antagonize the people too directly. In 1815 there was a ban on masks only for the first two days. The ban on clerical masks still applied, as did that on the appearance of clergy on the Corso. They were still to be seen at windows and balconies. For the rest of the population of Rome the enthusiasm for masking still seemed considerable, as was to be seen in the feverish atmosphere of anticipation in the weeks before the opening of carnival - the shops in the area of Ripetta and the Teatro di Marcello which sold masks did a brisk trade.¹¹⁰ The masking was still largely the province of the Romans themselves. There were those who could not even afford to make the sacrifices necessary to hire a costume for the occasion and who had to improvise some cheap and simple mask.¹¹¹

Reports vary on the proportion of people who appeared masked on the Corso; once more a distinction may be made between the opening days and the closing days of the festival, when the number of masks increased considerably. Much of the information we have on the masks of this period contains the same details seen earlier; the same masks retain their popularity, and recur again and again with only slight variations, and in roughly the same proportions as before.

Clementi tells us that in 1821 classical masks had lost their popularity: "Sono banditi gli esseri astrologici e mitologici; già si vedeva l'Olimpo sul Corso, certi dei e certi eroi --- Scomparvero anche dal Corso i satiri, i centauri, i tritoni".¹¹² Such masks had still been very popular in the years immediately after 1815, and are seen in Borkowska (1817) and Simond (1818).¹¹³ There were also comic

classical masks; in Checchetelli we find cowardly Hercules shrinking fearfully from the showers of bonbons thrown from balconies and windows.¹¹⁴

A new feature might be noted in a certain antiquarian flavour of some of the masks and scenes; by this is meant not just the continuing evidence of classical figures among the masks, but what has the air of a nostalgic harking back to earlier scenes on the Corso, such as the before-mentioned masquerade put on by the group of Roman nobles, inspired by Canova's splendid 'Le Nozze di Psiche' of 1805; or is it not possible that it goes further back in time to the days of the Baroque carnival when the Roman aristocracy appeared in its full splendour in the 'Carri di Trionfo'? There is a sense of people looking back to the roots of carnival imagery. Could the popularity of animal masks and grotesques be seen as a conscious resurrection of older carnival forms, and an attempt to capture some of the old, primitive spirit of the occasion?

The proliferation of these masks, in fact, was particularly noticeable in this period. The monkey seemed to be a particular favourite.¹¹⁵ The bear, not particularly noticeable in the eighteenth century, was now quite common. Rogers, in 1814, refers simply to a performing bear with its master, but the mask of the bear appeared frequently elsewhere.¹¹⁶ The cat was also very popular, not as a mask but in reality; they were still treated cruelly to obtain a laugh, as we see in Head's description of a kind of 'cat-organ', whose 'music' was produced by pulling its tail.¹¹⁷

Showing a similar return to the roots of carnival imagery are the masks which display the exaggerated, the monstrous, the gigantic; these were combined in the mask seen by Martin in 1820: "A huge boot was seen marching along up the Corso"¹¹⁸, and in the account of

Laourens in "nains à tête de géants, coiffés d'énormes perruques qui d'ordinaire sont des attrapes. Dans leurs cent bouches elles cachent des jets d'eau de senteurs, ou puante, pour inonder les badauds qu'on salue pour rire".¹¹⁹

And Devils were still to be seen in abundance; a curious example is given by Martin: "This day a hideous mask appeared representing the Devil; he had great horns, was dressed in scarlet, a long flowing garment, and marched along with head erect and dignified step, the people exclaiming as he passed, "Ecco il Cardinale!".¹²⁰

There is perhaps a greater emphasis on transvestism in this period, mainly among men. The appearance of women in male disguise was rather less than in the preceding century, with the increasing popularity of the peasant-girl mask, or 'Ciociara'. Stein saw countless numbers of men dressed as women: "Sie tragen häufig kleine Wickelkinder, an der Brust, fangen mit jeder Mann Händel an, indem sie behaupten er den Vater des Kindes, oder necken die Mädchen, indem sie ihnen die Geschichte des Geburt desselben erzählen wollen."¹²¹ Another typical example is given by Valentini - the 'mammone'; "Giovinotti vestiti da vecchiacce, con bambole finte o vere".¹²² A predominant part continued to be taken by coachmen in this sphere. Rogers is probably experiencing a case of mistaken identity when he talks of some coaches with women drivers.¹²³ F. Cooper was somewhat discomfited to find that the young beauty who had caught his attention was "a great lubberly boy!".¹²⁴ And Trant was most put out by her experience, in 1826: "As I was returning from the Marqueza de Frontera's, I met a tall, well-dressed woman, as I thought, with her veil thrown back, who fixed her large eyes upon me and smiled. I felt rather indignant at the familiarity of this female grenadier, and still more so when the servant told me it was a man".¹²⁵

Women seemed now to prefer the pretty peasant girl costume to

male disguises, though occasional officers, Pulcinellas etc. were to be seen and in this period a favourite one was the 'pagliaccetta'. To the popular mask of the 'ciociara' should be added "diseuses de bonne aventure marchandes de fleurs et d'oranges ... gentilles villageoises qui vont au marché"¹²⁶, and a mask which, if not new, was particularly in evidence in this period, that of the Jewish girl. This mask raises the question of the degree of freedom which girls could allow themselves on the occasion. We remember Angela Böcklin's words on the extremely restricted life led by Roman girls during the rest of the year. Easton tells us that the costume of the Jewish girl was so popular because it gave girls the freedom to accost whoever they liked¹²⁷, without any breach of decorum; this idea is found in the same year in Thomas' account. He describes them going round with a needle and thread with which they sewed bits of ribbon on the clothes of men, sometimes with the aim of a rendez-vous at the masked ball in the evening.¹²⁸

A similar boldness could be found in the mask of the 'scopetta', which (if not actually called by name) had existed already in Goethe's day. The actions of this mask could be seen occasionally (in a rather rougher form, perhaps?) among males; there is an example of this in the 'Giornale Letterario' of 1841: "mozzi di stalla, che con una spattola in mano, anzichè pulire pavimenti, spazzolano il viso e la spalle di molti che incontrano per via".¹²⁹

Descriptions of the 'Ebreia' might seem to indicate a freedom which had degenerated into licence (reminiscent of that ascribed to the eighteenth century Venetian carnival). But foreign observers were almost unanimous in their agreement that the Roman girls did not indulge in sexual intrigue; Valentini, among Italian writers, is adamant on this point¹³⁰, and Von Hase asserts that there was nothing

vulgar in their behaviour or their language - not even among the poorest girls: "la ragazza può appartenere ai ceti più bassi; ma il suo modo di esprimersi non manca mai di nobiltà, ed era ogni volta il linguaggio della passione, sempre infuocato, spesso elegante".¹³¹ The good taste and decorum of the girls of any class was apparent, too, in the masked ball, and is explained by Head as a result of the easy mingling of the classes which was to be found in Rome: "the assemblage is necessarily of a general description, and the greater portion of maid servants of the city join their mistresses in the diversion. The entertainments, however, notwithstanding the extraordinary mixture of the company, are conducted with the most scrupulous attention to good order and decorum. Such is the effect of the continued habit of social intercourse presented among the Roman population!".¹³²

In the sphere of the local mask, of which the 'ciociara' is the most striking example, and of social reversals, the 'Conte', or 'Contaccio' enjoyed a continuing popularity. It was much favoured by the common people of Rome: "Quella maschera la costumano i nostri minenti, quei del basso popolo").¹³³ For Andersen, in his novel "The Improviser": "Erano dei poveri operai, promossi dal carnevale al rango dei più ricchi fra i nobili". Andersen also describes the curious costume adorned with fruit and vegetables: "Sui vestiti di tutti i giorni avevano infilato un ruvido camicione sul quale erano state cucite bucce di limone al posto dei bottoni; avevano inoltre cespi di insalata verde sulle spalle e sopra le scarpe, una parrucca di finocchi e degli enormi occhialoni ritagliati nella scorza di arancia".¹³⁴

The Conte sometimes appeared walking on stilts, as he is seen in the poem of V.M. Conti, 'Il Carnevale Anacreontico': "Ve' il Conte, che sui trampani / Larga si fa la strada: / Tutto è cencioso, e lurido, / E grida a ognuno: Bada, / che passa il Conte. Il detto suo è

satirico, / E pien di pepe e di sale".¹³⁵ As noted elsewhere, the satire was generic rather than personal, as Lacour-Delâtre seems to suggest: "Un poeta fanatico va recitando i suoi versi di crocchio in crocchio; ora l'elogio delle corna, ora quello delle pulci, ora quello delle campane e dei sonagli".¹³⁶ Like Andersen's protagonist, Antonio, they are improvisors (often very accomplished ones) and were to be found not only among the ranks of the Poets. The Romans delighted in extemporising verses, and echoes of the typical language of the 'Stornello' are to be found in some commentators, like the writer of an article in the "Giornale Letterario" of 1841: "poeti che s'arrestano dinanzi a qualche infantil giovinetta e entusiasmando le dicono: giglio non nato, amore degli uomini, delizia del cielo: improvvisatori che s'arrestano dinanzi ad una folla di gente e levano contando strofe canzoni ed anacreontiche."¹³⁷

Another popular local mask, which received more attention in this period, was the 'giardiniera', perhaps the most charming of all the male masks. Kephhalides found it strange that Goethe did not mention this mask in his description (although we may assume that it is implied in the reference to the 'scaletto', the long, wooden, extending 'scissors' which the young men manipulated with such dexterity and strength as they handed up bouquets and other tokens to the ladies they admired).¹³⁸ Friedländer's description of this mask adds a detail which does not appear in others - that the 'giardinieri' having sent up messages etc. to the ladies, were repaid with pastry, fruit, confetti fastened in return to the 'scaletto'.¹³⁹ The 'giardiniera', like the 'ciociara', was greatly in demand by the artists' colony in Rome to serve as model. The costumes of the Roman hill-towns were to be seen in the gathering place of prospective artists' models - in this period - on the Spanish Steps.¹⁴⁰

One of the types to be seen on this spot, waiting patiently for the attention of a passing artist, was the 'bandit'; and this figure, equally popular with Romans and foreigners, was also to be found among the masks on the Corso. The Romans probably had a certain admiration for the outlaw, and foreigners found him as romantic as he was frightening. He was, of course, still a very real presence on the roads south of Rome, though encountered more frequently in the imagination than in the actual experience of foreign travellers. Examples of the real thing have already been seen parading arrogantly in the Corso in the seventeenth century carnival. Stahr noticed quite a number of make-believe ones in 1846:

"An Römischen Raubern und Banditenhauptleuten in der so äusserst malerisch, weltbekannten Tracht fehlt es auch nicht. Aber alle wirklichen waffen sind auf's Strengste verboten, und es sieht man sie dann mit holzernen Stiletten und Pistolen in den Seidenen Scharpen, die lange Flintholz in Arm, mit der sie Blumenstrausse auf ihre Schlachtopfer abschiessen durch die Strasse ziehen (the carrying of weapons of any kind was severely punished by the 'bandi') ... Mein guter Freund Signor Nicola Giacinti, der Modellunterhändler und Kostümverleiher von via San Claudio bot mir zu dem Künstlerball im Karneval ein vollständiges Räuberhauptmannskostüm an, dessen sämtliche Hauptbestandtheile, wie er empfehlend versicherte, einem vor noch nicht gar zu langer zeit besiegt und gehängten Brigantenhauptlinge zugehört hatten."¹⁴¹

All of these costumes formed part of the charm which Rome exerted over the foreign visitor; they were quaint, picturesque, old-fashioned; they corresponded to a kind of nostalgia in the foreigner, who came very often from a more materially 'advanced' country, and

they also contributed an important part of what was soon to become known as 'Roma sparita'.

The archetypal carnival masks were, as we might expect, still very much in evidence; the Astrologer, for example, now generally known as the 'Mago', and described by Valentini in his invaluable book on the Commedia dell'Arte and Carnival masks: "Questa sola Maschera sen va passo lento e posato e non s'impiccia delle altrui pazzie - Spesse volte si ferma, e con un cannocchiale ridicolo fa finta di consultare gli astri ... Le Maschere buffe lo temono, lo evitano; altri lo consultano, lo burlano, gli tirano la barba ecc. Esso predica ad una la vincita d'un terno al lotto, all' altro una sciagura imminente, a questa uno sposino garbato, a quello una sposa infedele e simili".¹⁴²

The Doctor was a necessary presence in the scenes of the death and burial of Carnival which were described by a number of commentators in this period. (And with the medical man was usually present the Lawyer, as well as the comic masks, Arlecchino, Pulcinella etc.). Such scenes were probably similar to those featured in earlier periods, played out on foot, or on carts, for example, or the type of comic sketch which caricatures the process of birth and death (in which the Doctor played a leading role). To those already mentioned could be added those referred by Laourens: "Dans la caricature des médecins c'est un volumineux gourmand, constipé, dont les garçons apothiquaires assiègent les culottes, ou madame Angot en travail d'enfant".¹⁴³ The female figure was, of course, a man 'en travesti. Little groups would form in the street or in the piazzas, where the doctor would examine a patient and deal with his complaint; one of the funniest scenes witnessed by Stein centred on a sick man in a bed with a mountain of pillows (the man, apparently sitting in the bed, was

actually walking around in it); by him stood three 'doctors' holding a medical consultation in high, shrill voices.¹⁴⁴

The doctors' interest was often taken up by pretty young women to whom they eagerly offered their professional advice. In 'Il Pirata', 1841, the article-writer describes them stopping under windows or in front of ladies seated on chairs on the pavements, taking their pulse, declaring them sick, making out a prescription and handing it to their apothecary companion, who conveys to the lady, on the enormous 'canna da clistero' he is carrying, the medicine which turns out to be a bouquet of flowers or a bon-bon.¹⁴⁵ A similar scene is reported by Fanny Mendelssohn: "... Vor einem Balkon still, auf dem einige Damen standen, über deren Gesundheitszustand sie konsultierten; sie waren einstimmig der Meinung, dass ein Lavement nötig sei, richteten die Spritze in die Höhe und - ein grosser Blumenstrauss flog heraus."¹⁴⁶

These latter examples obviously feature the Charlatan, a figure who enjoyed a renewed vogue in this period. He is found in David Wilkie's account of 1826 - and, moreover, not impersonated by a native Roman, but by a certain Captain Weltden who descended on the Corso "dressed as a charlatan, with a box suspended in front, with bottles, gallipots, pigments, washes, perfumes, liqueurs, eau de Cologne, and, as a coup de réserve, a great Bologna sausage, concealed in his pocket".¹⁴⁷ Once again, the object of attention was often a woman to whom were offered restoratives of beauty or of youth; there is even in Checchetelli's play a 'Speziale' offering "un decotto per accomodare il cervello alle donne".¹⁴⁸ The most famous Charlatan of these years, the one which left the greatest impression on the people of Rome, was that impersonated by the poet G.G. Belli, in 1828.¹⁴⁹ W.W. Story, writing in the 1850 reports that this once popular character had almost disappeared in recent years.¹⁵⁰

Like the Doctor, the Lawyer, too, had his part to play in the

little scenes on - or, more usually off - Corso. A typical one brings together the Doctor and the Lawyer; it may be quoted here, though it really belongs to the next period - N. Hawthorn's visit to Rome of 1858-59. It comes from the chapter in 'The Marble Faun', where the sculptor Kenyon wanders through the streets of Rome in the grip of carnival-fever, and is accosted by a gigantic female figure, at least seven feet high, who makes a ponderous assault on Kenyon's heart. Her suit meeting with no favour 'she' flies into a rage, pulls out a huge pistol and fires a cloud of lime-dust. At this point a number of comic masks, Harlequins etc. come up and investigate the case, like a coroner's jury. They approach a notary, who offers to make the last will and testament of the assassinated man; he is interrupted by a surgeon, brandishing a lancet three-feet long, who proposes to bleed the patient. All of this seems like a feverish dream in the mind of the unhappy Kenyon.¹⁵¹

A very commonly reported scene has two Lawyers challenging each other, each carrying an enormous in folio volume, disputing over a text of Justinian, coming to blows, insulting each other, throwing Latin quotations at each other. An example is to be found in Andersen's novel.¹⁵² Alternatively a Lawyer may assail anyone who is within reach; Checchetelli has one such scene, which gives an illustration of the verbal humour of the mask, so similar to that of the *Commedia dell'Arte*: "hai perduto la causa ... l'ultima risorsa; la manderò in Rota" (with which words he throws his book under the wheels of a passing cart).¹⁵³

A variant of the Lawyer in this period is the 'Abbate', or 'Abbataccio', whose image is found in Plate I of Valentini's book, and whom he describes with the following words: "uomini per lo più ordinari si vestono da Abbati, ma bizzarramente vanno contraffacendo

gli avvocati, i curiali, i pajetti e simili".¹⁵⁴

One mask which seems, if not new, at least much more common in this period, is the 'Pagliataccio'. For Easton it was the most popular of all, and much favoured by the female sex.¹⁵⁵ Kephhalides, too, tells us that it was the most popular mask, especially among women and children, and is surprised that Goethe does not mention it in his description; he also refers to little brooms carried by this mask, relating it to that of the 'Scopetta'.¹⁵⁶ The mask seems, however, to be a variant of the 'Matto', dressed all in white, in a long baggy shirt and trousers (one of those cheap costumes which were within the reach of anyone).

The 'Matti' themselves are those we have seen in earlier years, with their inflated pig's bladder in which dried peas rattled noisily, and which made such a loud and frightening noise when applied to someone's shoulders. These go around very often in groups in the descriptions and the prints, on foot or in carts.¹⁵⁷ Arlecchino appears frequently, alone or in a group, as we see in Andersen's novel: "gruppetti di arlecchini, con dei sonagli sulle spalle e sulle scarpe" (one example of the inevitable presence of bells in the carnival, with their powerful suggestion of joy and renewal).¹⁵⁸ He is generally the familiar playful, mischievous, prancing figure so familiar to us from the *Commedia dell'Arte* of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (to be seen in Valentini's account on the 'mocoli' evening, using his bellows to extinguish the tapers, but also to blow off the powder of wigs!).¹⁵⁹

Pulcinella was still a firm favourite with the people. Curiously enough he is not mentioned by Rogers in 1814, but he is well in evidence in Easton's description.¹⁶⁰ Like the mask of the 'Conte' it was particularly favoured by the 'Minenti'. For Valentini he has completely replaced Arlecchino "con la differenza che Pulcinella ha la

goffagine ed il materialismo del suo paese, e quelli il lepore e la prontezza del suo"¹⁶¹; there seems, however, to be little indication, elsewhere, of Arlecchino ever having been more popular than Pulcinella. Valentini also repeats the statement made earlier by Millin that no two Pulcinella are ever exactly alike, though it is difficult to make such fine distinctions with the information available, except to indicate some details of the mask; one already seen in Millin is that of the red hearts sewn on to the costume of some Pulcinellas.¹⁶²

Rather new in this period is the mention of the sound made by this character. He still speaks Neapolitan, never having lost his original language or accent, but now there are references to the high-pitched, squeaky voice that he assumes, produced by the kind of 'swazzle' used by puppeteers in the Punch and Judy show: "l'on entendait partout ce bruit confus et étrange que produisent les voix déguisées par le fausset sous le masque".¹⁶³

Other noises inseparable from the character were the bells already mentioned: "les lourds polichinelles s'y promenaient en faisant sonner des grelots comme ceux qu'on attache au cou des mules"¹⁶⁴; the horn which he carried, serving a variety of purposes - generally to increase the noise created by all the participants, to summon other Pulcinellas, to get the fun going on the opening day. It also reminds us of the sexual significance of the carnival (the horn as symbol of cuckoldry). Valentini shows us a complaisant cuckold: "e fuor di se stesso a veder un suo compulcinella, a cui cede subito la sua sposina: un giubilo reciproco ..."¹⁶⁵; more often he seems to point out more the cuckolding of others, as we have seen in Millin: "il la montre aux maris jaloux; il faut pardonner à sa grosse gaiete les gestes un peu libres, qu'il se permet avec les Dames, et les

paroles équivoques qu'il leur adresse".¹⁶⁶

The character had obviously not lost his rather crude and scurrilous humour which, if it was not lost in the general noise and confusion, did not cause too much offence. An example can be found in Conti's 'Il Carnevale Anacreontico': "Ve' un Pulcinella lepidò / che porta in un pitale / Bon macaroni ... Sebbene intorno al margine / Ci fe' già piú detata / a baffi color merdeo, / ma è tutto cioccolato".¹⁶⁷

There were countless Pulcinellas to be seen in the streets of both sexes - whole families, even: "famiglia di semplici pulcinelli, un nonno pulcinella coi figli, nipoti e pronipoti, sempre piú piccoli".¹⁶⁸ A print in the Galleria Nazionale delle Stampe shows a Pulcinella with a little Pulcinella in a bag on his back, with two in his arms (puppets), and babies in swaddling clothes. Valentini shows us a child Pulcinella in a pack-basket, with macaroni. This print figures the 'Re de' Pulcinelli on a donkey, with a dunce's cap and a crown, followed by a retinue of Pulcinelli playing on pipe, fiddle, horn, trumpet, tambourin, bell, castanet, guitar, drum.¹⁶⁹

Another touch to this character is the eternal, obsessive hunger of the 'zanni', seen in the constant references of commentators to the pots (or chamber-pots) of macaroni, devoured by the character, offered to all and sundry. Valentini gives us the example of a Pulcinella who seems to be dying on his feet, till he is succoured by another Pulcinella bearing a chamber-pot full of macaroni; at which a 'Capitano', hungry for macaroni, appears on the scene.¹⁷⁰ Wine can be another welcome restorative: "Un Pulcinella incontra un Dottore che gli raccomanda l'uso dell' acqua fresca, e gli cita Ippocrito e Galeno; il Pulcinella gli risponde brandendo un fiasco di Orvieto: 'Ecco la mia medicina!'.¹⁷¹

With so many foreigners in Rome in this period, it is not

surprising that they figured among the masks on the Corso. They themselves were to be seen, wearing their own national costumes, and the Romans enjoyed making fun of them, presenting a caricature of their manners and mannerisms. Despite Del Cerro's assurances that there were pronounced anti-foreign, and particularly anti-British, feelings in Rome, there are few indications in commentators of any ill-feeling in the mockery - only the habitual good humour of the occasion. People teased the foreigners, who were usually taken for British - although they were often addressed in French! "Beef-steak et pommes de terres" a phrase by which English are known all over the continent". They were also commonly referred to as 'Beefeaters' and 'Goddams'!.¹⁷²

We find coachmen aping the English and the French, although they still generally preferred Arlecchino or female costume. The type of the Englishman is reminiscent to some extent of the 'Quacquero' of the late eighteenth century: "durante il carnevale a Roma: non mancano maschere che rappresentano gli inglesi in costumi di viaggio barocchi, e che ne copiano a perfezione gli atteggiamenti e la lingua. Gli uomini grandi, buoni e ancor più coi capelli rossi, di aspetto severo, passano per inglesi, specialmente quando sono muti; poichè l'inglese è assai poco comunicativo e parla di rado l'italiano".¹⁷³ Scotsmen were to be seen, too in the Roman, as in the Neapolitan and Venetian carnivals; Uwins, in Naples refers to members of the nobility (in a masked ball?) dressed up in what they call 'costumi scozzesi' but which have 'no other resemblance to Highland dress than being chequered and ugly"!¹⁷⁴; and we have already seen an example from Rome in Checchetelli: "guerrieri scozzesi: tutta brava gente, cui facevan timore sino i confetti".¹⁷⁵

The German, like the Englishman, could be very solemn and

serious, but he still had the reputation of being a heavy drinker, as may be seen in the continuing popularity of the mask of the 'Cascherino', illustrated, for example, in a print in Valentini's book where one 'Cascherino' is as pleased at meeting a compatriot, as Pulcinella is in meeting another Pulcinella, and greets him in pidgin - Italian: "care amice star contente, trincke Wein allegramente".¹⁷⁶

As has already been indicated, it is not always clear if commentators are referring to masks on the street or at the masked ball. Most foreigners did not participate in the street-masking, and few took any interest in the people's role; therefore the masking in the streets had no sense or significance for them, and appeared simply a stupid, inane and pointless confusion - 'la gazzarra sul Corso' dismissed by earlier official commentators. They quickly became bored with the affair, after participating in the confetti-battles, and waiting for the concluding ceremony of the 'mocoli'. What they did enjoy (with some exceptions) was the indoor carnival, the 'festino' or the masked ball, the kind of carnival which, in earlier periods, the aristocracy had been able to enjoy in years when the public celebrations in the street had been cancelled for some reason.

The foreigners, the British in particular, showed little appreciation of the spirit of carnival. In most cases we may assume that they missed the humour of the masks - through simple lack of observation, through inability to distinguish anything specific in the noise and confusion, through lack of familiarity with the language (Italian or 'Romanesco'). They found no meaning, no structure in the 'gazzarra'; all they could see was a lot of people walking around, making a terrible noise, and acting in a very silly (and tedious) way. The affair which Dickens describes as "as dull and senseless as a London one"¹⁷⁷, was, in fact, a masked-ball in Rome; he found the carnival in the street a rather livelier affair (though particularly

in relation to the confetti-battles and the 'mocoli') but he stresses nevertheless a certain joyless atmosphere - such as one would find in England on a similar occasion! He did not, however, find the Roman carnival as deadly as a couple of others he had observed on the way to Rome - the one in Siena, for example: "There was what they called a Carnival in progress; but, as its secret lay in a score or two of melancholy people walking up and down the principal street in common toy-shop masks and being more melancholy, if possible, than the same sort of people in England, I say no more of it."¹⁷⁸

Among foreigners, particularly among the British, there was a very different concept of masking; for them this meant essentially the masked-ball - a kind of masking which had little to do with the spirit of the carnival, as celebrated in the public street. In most cases foreigners' complaints about the dullness and stupidity of the masking on the Corso were centred on the idea that the Romans were incapable of sustaining a character. For foreigners the character was, as Easton calls it, the very essence of the masquerade.¹⁷⁹ This word no longer referred to the elaborate processions of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, but was synonymous with the masked ball. Their view of the street masking, then, was influenced by their own experience and, like the German Wehrhan they tended to assume that: "The Italian carnival is a continuation and development of our masked ball".¹⁸⁰ A certain confusion persists insofar as it is not always clear when commentators are referring to the street carnival or to the masked ball - particularly since masks from the former appeared also in the latter.

On the Corso or in the masked-ball, at all events, the suggestion was that the contribution of the locals was negligible, and that masks of any interest generally belonged to foreigners. Not being aware of the characters interpreted by the people and, in many cases unfamiliar

with the language, foreigners were naturally unable to see any meaning or structure in the scenes they witnessed. Complaints occur from as early as the mid-eighteenth century, for example in Lalande's account of his visit in 1766 to a ball at the Coramboni palace: "si quelqu'un contrefaisait sa voix, on le prenait pour un Français, les Italiens étant peu dans cet-usage là".¹⁸¹

Almost sixty years later we find the same charge being repeated by Delécluze.¹⁸² And what was true of the French was even more so of the British; in 1818 Matthews complained: "I have seen little fun, and no humour - excepting a few English maskers. All that Corinne says of the skill and vivacity of the Italians in supporting characters of masquerades, I suspect to be greatly exaggerated".¹⁸³ Easton, in that same year, refers to an earlier period when masking used to be much more splendid, and classical masks were still to be seen in the streets (presumably referring to the years of the French Empire).¹⁸⁴ But it was not just the lack of such masks which was lamented, but of convincing comic masks - Delécluze: "Il n'y a plus de masques de caractère. Point de Polichinelle, d' Arlequin, de Cassandre. C'était là le fond. Ici toutes les femmes sont en habits de Frascati; c'est ce qui revient à l'habit de bergères chez nous. Tout cela est insignifiant".¹⁸⁵

The attention of foreign visitors tended to be focussed on the masked-ball (in a private house or a public theatre); as Skene puts it: "The daily amusements of the Carnival terminate in the grand masquerade at the Opera House which is fitted up for the purpose".¹⁸⁶

Private balls continued, of course, in aristocratic palaces and embassies. A leading role, for example, was taken in society entertainments by Lord and Lady Holland in the early years of the period, and by Prince Torlonia, favoured by foreign visitors. The kind of masks noted on these occasions give some indication of the taste of

the observers; a taste which had something in common with that of Renaissance and Baroque masquerades, delighting in cultural references and allegory. Martin gives an example from 1820, reported in a masked-ball at the French Ambassador's: "where I hear the character best supported was an antiquary. He had the Coliseum on his head, and his legs were Corinthian pillars. Being asked where he was going in that strange dress he answered. "To fish in the Tiber", alluding to the imposition of last year".¹⁸⁷ Clementi describes a curious charade put on in a little theatre in his palace by Count Appony, representing the words "De-lira': "Il primo esprime la parola De, cioè una scena di giuoco di dadi: il secondo la parola lira, una Saffo che suona la cetra e molti seguaci: il terzo esprime la parole intera ... il Delirio di Saul con David, che suona l'arpa".¹⁸⁸

Literary, artistic, historical masks were the most popular with the foreigners. A particular favourite in these years (on the Corso, too) was the couple of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.¹⁸⁹ The characters of Sir Walter Scott's novels, so popular and so widely translated in this period, were also to be found: "La sorcière de Walter Scott m'inspirait une sorte de terreur. Un jeune insulaire de six pieds six pouces avait adopté ce costume bizarre".¹⁹⁰ Then there were characters from the world of chivalry - a reflection of the vogue for the medieval. Clementi refers to a masquerade put on by the students of the French Academy in 1819, representing the Knights of the Round Table.¹⁹¹ Characters from Italian history and from the world of art were also to be seen, as in the example given by Clementi for 1823, at a private ball in the Borghese palace, with the great men of the court of Lorenzo de' Medici: "Poliziano, Il Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Leonardo da Vinci ... Poliziano presentava a S.E. il principe Borghese un elogio alla di lui splendidezza in diverse ottave".¹⁹²

Masks and masquerades could be inspired by paintings, as seen in the famous masquerade of Canova in 1805, based on the Raphael painting in the Farnesina. David Wilkie's brother gives us some examples from their visit of 1826: "David was in the fashion of William III, or rather as Lord Dundas and I in a Van Dyke dress, such as the Marquis of Montrose might wear ... the Twelve Hours following Aurora by a set of beautiful girls from Guido's picture of that subject. But the first of all was Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, by Rennie and Severn".¹⁹³

It must be said that the complaints about the lack of character masks did not come entirely from foreigners. One notable example from an Italian commentator is that of Valentini, for whom the Corso had become in recent years a procession of insipid 'domino'; he insists on the importance of suiting the mask to the actor, and on how interesting and lively it would be to see the various characters do their parts, or even combine in "qualche scena un po' preparata ... E se così ognuno farà, ognuno sia certo, anzi certissimo, che in pochi anni, vedrannosi festini fioriti, giocondi, dilettevoli, e si vedranno cessar quelle ragunanze d'imbaccucate, che paiono non esser quivi che per far gli spauracchi, o gridare, sussurare, sussultare, e fare e dire cose scipide e svenevoli, invece di far diletto, dialogizzare, sceneggiare, ballare, e far lezzi graziosi, e dir motti spiritosi".¹⁹⁴ Checchetelli, a few years later, also shows a certain nostalgia for the past in his little play; but whereas Valentini regrets the lack of character masks, Checchetelli's character Geltrude reflected nostalgically on the beautiful, elaborate masks, and the lovely female costumes which used to be worn, and which were so flattering: "E dove si vedono adesso nel Corso quei bei carri ... la nobiltà di Roma ... le Ore ... Amore ... le Grazie ... Apollo colle nove Muse ...?" She, too, scorns the 'domino': "che bellezza c'è in questo abito? Quando ero ragazza ch'allora sì che avevanvi di belle maschere! Era una gara

di vestire alla contadina, alla schiava, alla scozzese".¹⁹⁵

There was a sharp division of opinion among foreign observers concerning the ability of the Romans to sustain a character, or on the liveliness of scenes figuring masks on the Corso (or in the side-streets and squares); and the difference, one would suspect, lies in the degree of interest or curiosity regarding the people and its part in the proceedings. Certainly, there were a number of champions of the people and their masks to measure against their detractors (who preferred the masked ball). Dickens, for example, unfortunately did not show much interest in the people or the masking, which is particularly regrettable: for, with his eye for the grotesque and the bizarre, he might have given us a fascinating account of the whole carnival; his lively account of the 'mocoli' evening shows how well he could describe a scene to which he could respond whole-heartedly.

Armstrong found the great variety of droll masks on foot by far the most amusing part of the scene¹⁹⁶; and Andersen's character, Antonio, shows how much care and preparation could go into the presentation of a mask in the Corso: "presi a nolo un abito da avvocato, il travestimento più buffo secondo me. Quella notte quasi non dormii per pensare alla mia parte e studiare bene il mio personaggio".¹⁹⁷ And we remember the comments of earlier observers such as Spence, speaking of the Venetian carnival in 1732: "The pleasure of foreigners is to see them act out their parts, for it requires a good deal more practice than we generally have had to behave so properly as they do, and the Venetians are grown the most eminent of all nations for the noble art of mimicking!".¹⁹⁸

There was a growing interest in the people and their customs. Already in the Chevalier Millin, in 1812, there was a genuine and positive response to the whole event. Millin was a pioneer in the

field of the study of folk traditions which was expanding in the early years of the century. The growth of this interest was reflected in travel books, and we might say that Rome was 'discovered' in this period, particularly by German and French writers. An appreciation of the wit and imagination of the people was part of this interest; and at the same time the focus moved increasingly from the Corso to the side-streets and piazzas. It became clearer that the real carnival of the people was not to be found so much on the Corso as in these other venues where the people was 'en famille' (away from the main thoroughfare). Years earlier Mme De Stäel, in 'Corinne' had found a special interest in these off-Corso scenes: "C'est là qu'on peut juger de toute l'imagination du peuple. L'Italien est plein de charmes, même dans leur bouche".¹⁹⁹ Friedländer, in 1816, notes the coarser but often very witty and amusing jokes of the 'Trasteverini', and the delicacy and grace of their dancing of the 'tarantella' (a scene familiar from Pinelli's prints).²⁰⁰ Mayer, for the 1830s, gives a more expanded description of such scenes in Naples: "Nelle strade secondarie dove passano solo poche carrozze di ritorno, il popolo si diverte a suo modo. Gruppi di pescatori, travestiti da Turchi, ballano la tarantella, o improvvisano qualche scena comica. Un lazzarone avanza su un corricolo, e si dà a conoscere come ciarlatano, e come il ciarlatano del Molo, vanta la sua abilità e narra strani metodi di cura. Frattanto giungono da più parti i malati."²⁰¹ Here foreign presences tended to be much less noticeable, and the true spirit of the people could more easily be found. And the pleasures of the people, particularly the music and the dancing, were those which the Romans enjoyed on another favourite occasion - the 'Ottobrata': "In carnevale e più in ottobre, nelle domeniche e giovedì si ripetono balli e canti fino ad ora tarda."²⁰²

The wit and imagination of the people could be truly appreciated

only away from the din and confusion of the Corso where, as Goethe observed: "unless they arrived early, very few of the maskers can have come with the intention of creating a sensation or drawing particular notice to themselves".²⁰³ Mayer makes this same point about the Neapolitan carnival, contrasting the behaviour of Italians and Germans in their celebrations. Those of the latter were carefully organized and rehearsed, by duly-appointed associations, and had nothing spontaneous about them: "I pazzi italiani non si incappucciano, non si organizzano, non si preparano. Perché segni particolari? Tutti appartengono alla grande società'. Perché preparativi? Domini l'attimo improvvisiamo! Non si irride nessun personaggio, tutt'al più una circostanza. Non vogliono essere spiritosi, ma soltanto allegri e sfrenati ... Ciascuno agisce da solo. Poco gli importa se ha o no successo: è un pazzo tra i pazzi e questo basta".²⁰⁴

However, in contrast to this somewhat romanticized view, numerous commentators indicated that a certain amount of preparation and rehearsal probably took place. They describe crowds gathering around, attracted by the bravura of particular maskers, and applauding the performance - as with the frankly theatrical appearances of Salvator Rosa in 1639. De Musset talks of the critical attention paid by the by-standers: "Les curieux se rassemblent, se posent en juges ... et discernent immédiatement celui qui a le plus de verve, d'esprit et d'originalité".²⁰⁵ An extended example of such scenes can be found in Stahr, who describes the extraordinary ability of the people in mimicry, and who also gives us to understand that such scenes were often concerted and rehearse in advance: "Denn die poetischen Vorträge waren ohne Zweifel einstudiert und zum Theil von solche Länge, das Z.B, der eine der Redner fast ununterbrochen eine halbe Stund lang sprach". On the same page he describes a scene in an 'osteria', where

some maskers attracted the attention of the public, who formed a kind of antique chorus to the performance: "Hier, wie überall bei den sprechenden und dramatische agierenden Masken bemerkte ich zunächst eine erstaunliche Sicherheit des Gedächtnisses, welche unseren Schauspielern als Muster dienen könnte".²⁰⁶

5. The Political Situation

All of the preceding descriptions give the impression of a light-hearted, carefree affair, which, of course, was true. The descriptions differ in some notable respects from the carnival of the preceding period, and differ in detail from the pre-revolutionary carnival. But with the return of the Pope and his government to Rome, things seemed to have come back to normal. Comparing the eighteenth and nineteenth century carnivals we have a phenomenon which, if we ignore questions of detail and the increasing role of foreigners in the proceedings, seems unchanged. This is the impression presented by the majority of visitors in this period; any underlying tension went unnoticed by them. The changes which had taken place between 1789 and 1815 could not, however, be erased at a stroke. With 1815 came the return of a world of feudal privilege, a repressive government (a government of priests), suspicious and fearful, and a stagnant economy. Some very important changes had been introduced by the French; unpopular as they might have been with the people of the city they had, nevertheless, benefitted some; 'er tempo de li Franzesi' had not been as negative as it seemed to many. How were those who had benefitted from the changes going to adapt to the return of the 'ancien regime', with its renewed restrictions?

There was, and there had always been, a small minority of visitors who were simply bored with the carnival and rejected it out

of hand. There were those who spoke enthusiastically of the 'bewitching madness' of the occasion and praised the good humour and tolerance of the people. But there was also a small number who did see a darker side to the event. Berlioz is an extreme example of this in his scathing rejection - let us not be deceived by the lively 'Roman Carnival' overture (written later for the opera 'Benvenuto Cellini'); in a brief and partly inaccurate account of 1832 we find his considerations: "The attraction they found in the 'delights' of the Carnival particularly incensed me. I could not conceive (I still cannot) what pleasure anyone could take in the festivities connected with what are appropriately called in Rome, as in Paris, the fat days, 'i giorni grassi'. Bloated days, greasy with mire and sweat and grinning painted faces, gross with brutalities and foul-mouthed abuse, drunken informers, whores, half-wits gaping and guffawing, broken-down horses, the reek of the streets, the boredom and degradation of humanity. In Rome where they preserved the great traditions of the ancient world, a human victim is sacrificed during this festival ... In these days some poor devil, under sentence of death, was kept for the purpose and fattened so as to be a worthy offering to the sacred people of Rome."²⁰⁷

Berlioz's state of mind at the time was not a happy one. He could not adapt to life at the Académie Française (where he was a Prix de Rome winner), and his love-life was in a turmoil; this was the moment just prior to his flight from Rome with the intention of returning to Paris and murdering his faithless fiancée! What is of interest is the scorn directed against the people. Other commentators, less choleric and less disturbed, stressed the despotic power which governed the people even in their amusements; one such is Galiffe: "On the whole the Roman carnival is a very melancholy festivity ... to be apprized by cannons, horse-guards and soldiers with fixed bayonets that you

must be merry for a few hours, at the expiration of which the same brutal means are employed to put a sudden stop to your amusement, is almost worse than the uninterrupted indulgence of ennui, without any interference on the part of government with the manner in which you choose to yawn it away".²⁰⁸

Most travellers responded to the timeless quality of Rome - the charm, the old-fashioned life-style, the almost rustic quality of the city, still so close to its surrounding countryside. They found (for a brief moment?) quaint and charming things which they might never have put up with at home. They were, for the most part, a conservative (even reactionary) brigade, such as Gogol, who deplored the commercial spirit triumphant elsewhere in Europe and welcomed its absence in Rome; or those who praised the slow pace of life in the city, the 'dolce far niente'.

Rather smaller in number were the travellers who looked forward to change, social, economic and political. It might be argued that there had been plenty of these in the eighteenth century, judging by the frequency of comments on the scandalously inefficient, stagnant, unenterprising and superstitious government, and on the need for reform - for a more dynamic attitude among the people, for a more vigorous and enterprising government, for expansion in commerce and industry, the rise of a prosperous and forward-looking middle-class. Such criticism, however, was not very constructive but the expression rather of an attitude of supercilious disdain. Instead of reform, of course, had come revolution, and with it drastic changes which caused resentment and resistance amongst the majority of Romans, to some extent because of the manner in which they were imposed. The French had recognized some of the areas which most urgently needed reform, as is seen in the work of Miollis in economy and agriculture, though such

changes as these had benefitted too often a minority (for example the rising agricultural middle-class). The ordinary people of Rome had derived many advantages from the paternalistic government of the Pope - the social-charity state so vilified by foreign commentators, but which had played such an essential role, given the absence of a solid economic structure.

After 1815, despite the abrupt return of the old government, the climate had obviously changed greatly, and this was reflected in the carnival as in other areas. On the surface the tolerance and good-nature of the people seemed unchanged. Von Hase, in 1830, found no evidence of disorder, of ill-feeling among the people (although he did go on to refer to several murders occurring during the carnival).²⁰⁹ Even the police, some said, were good-humoured in the performance of their duties (though one or two dissenting voices were heard on this point). It also seemed that the climate of tolerance towards foreigners which had prevailed in the eighteenth century had also returned, after the interruption of the years of the 'phoney war' and the French occupation. This, too, was an erroneous impression, as was to be proved in the year following Von Hase's visit. An interesting comparison may be made between two accounts of the carnival of 1831; they belong to the composer, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, and the young artist Erwin Speckter.

The accounts differ so widely that we might be tempted to think they can hardly refer to the same occasion; but rather than any difference of opinion on particular points, what strikes us are the things which are left out by Mendelssohn. The composer, writing to his sister Fanny, gives a lively account. He was quite definitely in a holiday mood, telling her that he had laid aside his work temporarily, and was giving himself up to the pleasures of the carnival. He concentrates on two features not normally associated with the

carnival, but belonging to other important dates in the calendar of Roman feasts - the illumination of the Cupola of St Peter's and the 'Girandola' on Castel Sant Angelo.²¹⁰

The only sour note introduced in the composer's account is his reference to the ceremony of the 'omaccio' of the Jews. Mendelssohn, the baptised Jew, simply expresses the opinion that the whole affair was a bore, but adds: "Ich ging verdriesslich herunter, und meinte der Carnaval finge schlecht an".²¹¹ Compare this rather mild statement with the fierce denunciation of Ermeler, ten years later: "Noch blutet mein Herz, wenn ich daran denken, und dies geschieht in einer Stadt, wo das Oberhaupt der Katholischen Herrscher ist!".²¹² Speckter, too, refers to the illumination and the 'Girandola', but he also indicates what was happening in Italy at this time, and almost at the very gates of Rome. In a kind of waking dream he saw in the illumination of the Cupola the wealth of the Papacy and the glory of the Catholic Church - but, opposite it, the 'Girandola' on Sant Angelo seemed to burst the bonds of its prisoners, and chains and walls collapsed, as Good and Evil were released.²¹³

A few words should be said here on the background to the carnival of this year. Immediately after the death of Pius VIII, on 30 December

1830, a Carbonari plot in which Napoleon's brothers were involved had been foiled. From the moment of his election, Gregory XVI had a difficult situation to face. In the wake of the events of July 1830 in Paris, rebellion was in the air. On 3 February 1831, following his election, Bologna rose up and the pro-legate Clarelli had to grant an elected assembly, and very quickly most of the Papal States was in rebellion, and a large proportion of the Papal troops had crossed over to the rebels. When on 17 February a civic guard was formed against the rebels, it found support only in Rome and the Agro Romano.²¹⁴

During the carnival period, then, the revolt had spread almost to Rome itself; fears centred on the reaction of the population, and the startling fact is that they were focussed particularly on the 'rioni' of Monti and Trastevere, the two which had always shown themselves to be most fierce in their allegiance to the Pope, but were also fierce traditional enemies. A rapturous welcome had been given to the Pope, on his return to Rome in 1814, by the Trasteverini (a turbulent, but conservative people). In the event, the fears were unfounded and both 'rioni' showed their loyalty; but the mere fact that such fears could exist is extremely significant.²¹⁵

Speckter's account gives a sense of the tension in Rome during this carnival, not a trace of which is to be found in Mendelssohn's account. The first note is on the Friday, where he reports his fear of being arrested by patrolling gendarmes; foreigners were under suspicion, and had been urged to leave Rome; the situation was reminiscent of the years immediately after 1789, when the French students in Rome had come under suspicion (quite rightly in some cases, because there were government agents among them). Speckter reports that there were many houses searched and arrests made, and armed patrols of Trasteverini in the streets at night; there was also a number of deaths during the period of carnival.²¹⁶

The authorities received word of a revolt due to break out on 'giovedì grasso'. Chigi notes in his diary for 15 February: "Qualche notizia avuta, che si potesse tentare questa sera da malintenzionati di fare l'illuminazione dei moccoli, dicendo che i venditori di cera avevano deposto di aver venduto una quantità straordinaria, ha sparso dell' allarme".²¹⁷ The hope of the conspirators was that perhaps disaffected members of the Papal troops would join the insurgents.²¹⁸ The uprising proved to be quite abortive, causing only a slight disturbance and one accidental death when the doorman of the Piombino

palace was hit by a stray bullet during an exchange of shots. After all the tension and expectation the affair concluded with a comic-opera revolution, treated with much irony by Speckter: "Da war die Geschichte der Revolution und des Carnavals hier, oder vielleicht die grosse Epoche des Bartabschneidung in Rom".²¹⁹

While Speckter gives the most detailed account of the event there are other indications of the atmosphere of tension in Rome, like the rather sinister masquerade witnessed by D'Estourmel: "Peu avant j'avais témoigné une mascarade assez singulière. Une douzaine d'hommes avec des couronnes de lauriers, et revêtues de la robe des anciens Romains, allaient et venaient en silence, dans un grand char à banc, sans se mêler aux autres masques".²²⁰

According to Clementi the attempted uprising was organized by non-Romans, and the people had little or no part in it. On the contrary, he tells us they were furious at the threatened disruption of their festival.²²¹ The majority of the people of Rome, certainly, seem to have had very little to do with the uprising, or indeed to have shown little interest in it. The Romans, it seemed, were still the lazy, pleasure-loving creatures castigated in past ages by foreign visitors. Comments on the docility and exemplary obedience of the people continued to appear. But at the same time there were reports on the repression and brutality to which they were subject, and the grim deterrents to excessive licence and disorder on view. Public executions, which had been notably absent in the latter part of the eighteenth century, had been re-introduced during the French period, and there were references to examples in the years after 1815. In 1816 Friedländer reported: "On the morning of the first day of carnival a few criminals, commonly highwaymen, are hung in the Piazza del Popolo to warn people not to be too extravagant in their joy. When they are

dead the sbirri (police officers) fall upon their bodies with the greatest eagerness, cut off their arms and legs, mount on horseback with them, and ride as fast as they can to the spot where the robbery was committed, where they fix them up on high poles. But it is not uncommon to be plundered in the Roman state close by these trophies of Themis".²²²

The government was obviously extremely nervous in this period, and reacted by imposing a number of restrictions on carnival; it sensed a potentially revolutionary situation in Rome and did not want to present too obvious an occasion for personal, social or political unrest as was afforded by carnival. Rome, like the rest of Italy, had entered a period of conspiracy, and therefore of repression. After 1831 vast amounts of money were spent to augment the police force, and spies were to be met everywhere under the Pontificate of Gregory XVI. But was there really any need for such precautions? Was there really a potentially revolutionary situation in Rome? The comments quoted earlier, and the account of the events of 1831, seem to justify the widely-held view that the Romans had a disinclination to change. The liberals obviously took advantage of the confusion of carnival to mount demonstrations, even to attempt insurrection; but such attempts aroused the displeasure of the people.

We should remember its anger on other occasions when the carnival was interrupted - for example, on the death of a Pope. On such an occasion, 'pasquinate' tended to circulate vilifying the poor departed pontiff; the death of Leo XII during the carnival of 1829 was a famous case in point. Even while he lay dying, putting the carnival in jeopardy, venomous satires circulated; and when he did die the epigrams on his physician were abundant. In a year in which carnival was not permitted the figure of the carnival 'Dottore', killer rather than curer, seemed to be taken over by poor Dr Todini. Silvagni quotes

the most famous of these, the work, it appears, of Francesco Spada (the close friend of Belli): "Al chirurgo s'appone / la morte di Leone; / Roma però sostiene / Ch'egli ha operato bene".²²³ And other famous lines, quoted by many on this occasion, were addressed ^{to} the Pope himself: "Tre dispetti ci festi / o padre santo / Accettare il Papato, / vivere tanto, / Morir di carnevale per esser pianto". This is quoted by Waiblinger in a letter to his parents.²²⁴

Belli, in a number of sonnets, chronicled the discontent of the people at the partial bans which were imposed on carnival during the years of anxiety after 1831. The most noteworthy of these occasions came in 1837, the year of the cholera epidemic in southern and central Italy. Naturally there were fears of the infection reaching Rome, and the government proposed the abolition of carnival, alarmed at the prospect of contagion presented by such a vast gathering of people, many of whom would be from outside Rome, and possibly from infected areas. But, according to Clementi the cholera was simply a pretext, and the contagion feared was a political one. The authorities, in fact, relented at the last minute, and allowed carnival - but without the 'mocoli'! (once again, this was the obvious casualty).²²⁵

The people responded in a way which had not been seen since their support of the Pope's ban on the carnival of 1809 - they boycotted the event. What had been an act of defiance against the French usurpers was now directed against the Papal government itself. The people gathered on the evening, determined that no one should light a taper; the liberals were, of course, fully in support of this spontaneous (?) move, and certainly helped organize it. The young architect Viollet-le-Duc was present at this occasion and left a sardonic description of it. Carnival, he tells us, had been banned, except for the horse-races; but this was not enough to satisfy the people, and troops were

brought into the city to deal with any unrest. The Pope had relented finally and allowed the 'mocoli', to please the people. Viollet-le-Duc went to see the show: "Mais pas du tout, le bon peuple Romain, vexé de ce qu'on avait supprimé son carnaval sans cause apparente, fit le fier. La nuit venant, chaque petite bougie qui osait se montrer, était huée, éteinte ... avec le cri d'usage sans mocolletti!" "Personne n'osait plus montrer une lumière a sa fenêtre".²²⁶

The government made attempts to encourage the carnival, to make it appear as if everything was normal. Some of the more observant commentators speak of a rather forced quality in the rejoicing, a certain lack of spontaneity. Some noted the presence of large numbers of spies, informers and Papal guards on the Corso. The time has come now to take another look at the designation of 'Popolo Pulcinella' which had been given so easily to the Romans. Their behaviour in the carnival was seen as a reflection of their character - a lazy, spendthrift people, incapable of taking life seriously; disinclined to work, and for whom life was a constant holiday; and, primarily, politically passive and subject. As the years passed, the awareness of the government's role in preventing any growth of social or political awareness in the people was expressed more frequently. Gorani had written in the revolutionary period: "Comme leurs ancêtres ils aiment la dépense, le faste et sur tout les spectacles. On leur donne des spectacles, ils sont contents, et ne sont pas difficiles sur le choix ... C'est ainsi que les prêtres éternisent l'enfance de leurs malheureux sujets et les empêchent d'acquérir des lumières dont ils craignent l'effet!".²²⁷

And Lady Morgan had observed shortly after the Restoration, in 1818 : "The Church caters for the frailties of her children, and gives licence for errors, destined to confirm her power, and to pay these peace-offerings of contrition into her treasury".²²⁸ We have here,

but without the note of appreciation, Lassel's 'safety-valve' theory; the people are treated like children; the government, through political expediency and cynicism, keeps them amused by feasts, holidays and religious processions. And, as we have seen, the people did benefit directly from the paternalistic government of the Pope, holding a privileged position in the Church states; the economic distress which periodically afflicted the rest of the state was usually softened in the city and attempts made to avoid any unrest amongst the occasionally turbulent population.

Another index, for some observers, of the childishness of the people concerned the indulgence shown by the authorities towards satire - for Lady Morgan this was another proof of the cynicism of the government, which gave people the possibility of giving vent to their displeasure and frustration in words, thereby exempting them from any need to have recourse to deeds. The Romans, of course, had always had the reputation of being 'satiric rogues', of sharpening their wits on important people or unpopular measures. From the sixteenth century the statue of Pasquino had been the traditional medium for such displays: "Nei tempi del dispotismo pontificio, Roma per protestare contre le ingiustizie, non ebbe che Pasquino!".²²⁹ But 'pasquinate' are a literary phenomenon, and it has been pointed out that the majority of them were probably the work of minor clergy - educated, literate people. If Pasquino was the voice of the educated, politically aware Roman, the voice of the people, and not just in carnival, was Pulcinella. The mask, in the absence of a free press in Rome, served as a kind of 'talking newspaper'. Part of the licence of carnival was the possibility of speaking out, for a brief period. Lalande had pointed out in 1766 that Pulcinella and the marionette-theatres were given the chance to indulge in satire during the carnival.²³⁰

An occasional voice was raised among the foreigners in defence of the people - Waiblinger, for example, or Gogol, one of the few observers who saw in the people a certain pride and traces of the ancient Romans: "Enfin ce peuple est pénétré du sentiment de sa propre dignité; on ne l'appelle point la populace, le vulgaire, mais bien il popolo; on retrouve en lui certains traits, qui remonte aux anciens Quirites et que n'a point défiguré le contact avec les étrangers, ces corrupteurs des nations inactives, dont l'afflux engendre, le long des routes et dans les hotelleries, une classe méprisante d'individus que le voyageur confond trop souvent avec les vrais gens du peuple".²³¹ Such positive evaluations tended to go to the opposite extreme of those which saw in the Romans the degenerate descendants of the ancients. Reading Gogol is rather like looking at the prints of Pinelli, which show tall, muscular, great-hearted figures, not far removed from the idealized ones we find in Géricault's equestrian paintings based, remotely, on the reality of the 'Mossa dei barberi'.

But Rome was changing in this period, and especially after 1831. Compare with the growing political awareness shown in these years the picture presented by Berry in 1821 of the masks on the Corso coming to look on idly at the Austrian troops bivouacking at the gates of Rome on their way to quell the revolution in Naples.²³²

Examples of the negative evaluations of the people were still seen among foreign observers and in the sonnets of Belli. But Belli, perhaps, marks the end of an era for Rome; he himself showed awareness of imminent change in his desire to record a picture of the Roman people (his 'monumento de la plebe'). For Belli, as for Pasquino, satire was a necessity, the chance to give vent to frustration and resentment; but at the same time it was a way of evading action, of having to cope with the political situation, and work towards change. With the era of Belli's great series of sonnets Silvagni sees the end

of a phase and the beginning of a new one; the end of satire and the beginning of political action.²³³ The Carbonari were now making headway in Rome; the liberal opposition was as yet small but it was growing stronger with the increasing awareness of the government's weakness and vacillation.

From the early years of the Restoration, the more moderate members of the government were aware that they did not have the support of many of the young. In the words of Consalvi, quoted by Leflon: "I giovani non hanno conosciuto il regime pontificio e se ne fanno una pessima idea ... La maggioranza della popolazione non la pensa come noi, e non ci ama affatto".²³⁴

The 1830s and 1840s saw the occurrence of sporadic unrest promoted by the liberals, and an absence of strong firm action on the part of the government, oscillating between savage severity and indulgence; and it saw the people venting their spleen on the liberals, because of the disruption they caused, and on the government for its repressive measures.

The mood of the people in 1831 was not in favour of the proposed uprising; but shortly afterwards there were indications of the revolutionary spirit spreading steadily. A convincing example of this is to be found in the diaries of men who were not partisans of revolution, such as Prince Chigi.²³⁵

By 1848 the mood of the city seemed to have undergone a noticeable change. Foreign commentators expressed their amazement at the scenes of joy on the Corso on the announcement of the opening of the First War of Independence. Clementi is not convinced that this show of joy was completely spontaneous and sincere, although, shortly afterwards, in recording the response to Pius IX's promise of a constitution, while carnival was in progress, he notes further scenes

of enthusiasm: there was, he writes, quoting contemporary accounts: "una pioggia di poesie e stornelli stampati in senso liberale surrogati ai fiori 'legati da nastri tricolore'. Le donne Romane 'sfoggiavano la pompa dei tre colori' ... 'Alcuni invece di mazzolini di fiori gittano ai giovani cartucce belle e accomodate con capsule'". He also refers to a sheet printed by the 'Circolo Popolare' inviting the population to abstain from the ceremony of the 'moccoletti', as a gesture of solidarity with the Lombard patriots.²³⁶

The words of a foreign commentator present at the occasion, the Russian Herzen and his reflections on the people's reaction are worth quoting: "Ces hommes qui rient une fois par an au carnaval, ont souffert pendant des siècles et enfin ont dit avec calme: 'Assez!'". Herzen and his companions had arrived in time to see the end of the carnival. He decided that Rome was becoming a republican city. Pius IX had just granted a constitution - inadequate, incomplete and, according to Herzen, received rather coldly: "Troppo tardi, santo padre, troppo tardi!". He describes the carnival as lack-lustre, the people's mind was on other things; sad news from Lombardy was circulating, and there was no 'mocoli' ceremony.²³⁷

It was not just passive support and encouragement which the Romans offered their brothers in Lombardy and Piedmont. Clementi speaks of several battalions of volunteers, and Gregorovius reports that about 5000 Romans had left to take part in the war, and that a considerable amount of patriotic gifts had been sent off.²³⁸

1848 marked a watershed in the history of Rome and in its carnival. The old Rome, it is recognized now by many, was on the point of disappearing. Some had already felt the need to leave a record of it before it disappeared altogether (witness Belli's 'monumento', and the collection of prints by Pinelli). It was expressed by Leland, and in these years the American sculptor W.W. Story was collecting the

material for his 'Roba di Roma', to help preserve an image of the Rome he had known and loved. Now, it was felt, was the time to retrieve a picture of the old Rome, in a period which still retained many of the customs and usages, even the way of dress, of the past which had survived the Revolution.²³⁹

Among these old usages, of course, was carnival itself. From the beginning of the period voices had already been heard asserting that carnival was not what it used to be. MacFarlane speaks of a general and gradual decline in Italy of the spirit of the carnival.²⁴⁰ Lady Morgan described it as: "the wreck of one of those popular institutions which can flourish only in barbarous times, and in the days of rude and profound ignorance", adding that it was under the French that it really fell into disuse.²⁴¹ Its decline was reported by keen observers like MacFarlane, enlightened observers like Lady Morgan, and by the people themselves, if the words of the Prince's old servant in Gogol's 'Rome' are to be given any general relevance: "'Eh!' répondit le bonhomme, le Carnaval d'aujourd' hui n'est qu'un divertissement d'enfant. De mon temps ... tout le monde était dehors. 'O quanta allegria!' Et maintenant ce n'est plus un carnaval, eh!'. Le majordome haussa les épaules, dit encore une fois, 'Eh!, haussa de nouveau les épaules et conclut: 'È una porcheria!'.²⁴²

The foreigner had gradually taken on considerable importance in the festival. 'How could the carnival survive without the big-spending British?' had asked Waiblinger in 'Britten in Rom'.²⁴³ He was speaking ironically, but Delecluze, a few years earlier, was quite serious and thought that the foreign presence was radically changing the nature of the festival.²⁴⁴ The carnival described by Goethe in 1788 would be no longer recognized by the observer in the present-day scene on the Corso, and he would be very disappointed in comparing the two; by 1848

things had changed notably. In the next few decades the 'forestiere' became increasingly a participant, even a promoter and organizer of the festival. Bergsöe, referring to the carnival of 1860 in his novel 'From Piazza del Popolo', found it boring, miserable - like all carnivals since 1846; a 'carnevale di forestieri'.²⁴⁵

The meaning the carnival had for the foreigner, particularly the German, was something rather different from the carnival of the Romans. The latter was the kind that Stahr could still observe in 1846, and which he contrasted with what the word conjures up for his compatriots: "Nun denken wir freilich bei dem worte karnaval sogleich und soerst an vorberathende Comités, Festpräsidenten, Fest-Ordiner, Sitzungen, Verathungen, Programme, einstudierte Reden, vorbereitete Aufzüge, sein zugespitzte Satiren und Aufspielungen, und an tausend andere langweilige, deutsche Schwerfälligkeiten und Pedanterien. Nichts aber von alle dem ist hier zu finden, nichts was wir unter diesen Namen in der Vorstellung haben, ist mit dem Charakter des römischen Karneval irgendwie zu vergleichen."²⁴⁶

Stahr's description of the German carnival offers a kind of foresight of how the Roman carnival will appear in its final stage, after 1870. Foreign students and artists in Rome would take on an active role. The institution of the feast of Cervara gives us some idea of what lay ahead, as for some foreign visitors it became a rival attraction to the carnival.²⁴⁷ But first we must look at a short period between 1849 and 1870, when the fortunes of the carnival were inseparable from the political situation in Rome, and the political manipulation of carnival was to reach an unprecedented level.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER FIVE

1. The situation after 1849. 2. Reaction and resistance. 3.

The carnival is changing. ✦ The carnival continues.

1. The situation after 1849

The present chapter deals, once again, with a very clearly defined phase of the Roman carnival, beginning with the start of the Year of Revolutions in 1848, and ending with the fall of Papal power in 1870 and the incorporation of the city, as capital, into the new Italian kingdom. 1848 saw the flight of Pius IX to Gaeta, on 24 November, and the start of the short-lived Roman Republic, which was to end in July 1849 when General Oudinot's troops marched into Rome, after a thirty-day siege. Inevitably, the political situation of the city cast its shadow over the carnival celebrations of this period. Carnival, in fact, became a political instrument in the struggle between the two opposing factions, the 'papalini' and the liberals, and was even more carefully controlled by the authorities. The nervousness of the government, clearly seen in the preceding decade, increased considerably, as did uncertainty about the support of the people. The hatred of the 'papalini' towards the liberals, or 'Ggiacubbini', given such eloquent expression in the sonnets of G.G. Belli, seemed to have diminished considerably by the start of this period. Clementi notes the amazement of the foreigners in the city in 1848 at the fervour with which the events of February were welcomed by the people.¹

Herzen was present at the carnival of this year and reported the enthusiastic reception of the news of the deposition of Louis Philippe

given at a masked ball in the Tor di Nona theatre: "Est-ce un rêve, suis-je bien éveillé? De jour en jour les événements se multiplient, deviennent plus énergiques et plus importantes ... Décidément, Rome devient une ville Républicaine. Et Pie IX pendant ce temps, promulguait une constitution maigre et incomplète. 'Troppo tardi, Santo Padre, troppo tardi.' Elle fut reçue froidement."² Herzen was a champion of the Revolution. The same could not be said of Prince Chigi, who nevertheless testified to the euphoria of the occasion, describing the scene on the Corso with cockades displayed and tricolour flags on windows and balconies.³

Doubts had been expressed as to whether carnival would be held that year, given the political situation in Italy and Europe and the anxiety which the government felt regarding the possible reactions of the people; the liberals, meanwhile, felt it improper to celebrate the carnival while blood was being spilled for the Italian cause. Hillard speaks of the mood in the city during carnival, with the news of the situation in Lombardy/ Venetia: "In consequence of these transactions and by way of sympathy with those who had fallen the people, at the suggestion of their political leaders, gave up the usual concluding amusement of the Moccoletti." The author castigates the Romans for the continuation of the festivities, after the news of the February Revolution in Paris: "To a thoughtful spirit, aware of the pregnant significance of this outbreak; and not least of all the Romans themselves, the frisking and capering of the crowds on the Corso seemed like the dancing of monkeys on a powder-magazine."⁴

The confetti-battles (or the flower-battles) continued, with the bouquets put to rather novel use on this occasion. The love-tokens were still thrown by the ladies to their beaux - but they now contained a patriotic message, an exhortation to the young men to join the Italian patriots and do their bit for the freedom and independence

of Italy, and those thrown to the ladies contained similar patriotic sentiments: "Il giornale 'La Speranza' rilevava con piacere 'il patrio pensiero sorto in alcuni e la bella proposta di gettare nel Carnevale invece dei soliti confetti, tanti libriccini e foglietti di stampa contenenti nobili idee e generosi insegnamenti. ... Figurarsi l'entusiasmo! Sul Corso non v'è mazzolino di fiori che si lanci a gentildonna che non le parli della Patria Italia. È una continua pioggia di 'poesie e stornelli stampati in senso liberale surrogati ai fiori 'legati da nastri tricolori. Le donne romane sfoggiano la pompa dei tre colori' ... 'Alcune invece di mazzolini di fiori gittono ai giovani cartucce belle e accomodate con capsule.'"5

Such manifestations of patriotism seem to indicate more the enthusiasm of the middle-classes than the people; and other commentators have stressed the fact that very few of the people participated in this revolutionary fervour. But something had changed, nevertheless, in the political climate of Rome; the resistance of the short-lived Roman Republic was to show this shortly; though when Pius IX returned to Rome he was received with some enthusiasm. The Pope's flight from the city in November had been, however, from his subjects; he was not, like Pius VII in 1810, deposed and exiled by a foreign power. The situation presented itself of a Pope being restored to his throne by this same foreign power. Pius IX's 'honeymoon' with the Roman people which had begun in 1846, at his election, was now over; the so-called 'reformist' Pope had been forced to reveal his true colours. Ghisalberti indicates the people's disenchantment with the Pope: "Quando, nel marzo del 1851, N.W. Senior si sforzerà di farsi in Roma un 'idea della situazione dopo la restaurazione del '49, il console inglese Freeborn gli confermerà con rude franchezza, quello che non era solo un punto di vista individuale del nostro la Tour du

Pin, ma il convincimento delle persone meglio informate, delle più sincere, delle più oneste, forse: 'Vi posso assicurare che tre ore dopo che i Francesi ci avessero lasciato, ci sarebbe una sanguinosa rivoluzione'."6 With the return of the Pope it became clear that the government was living on borrowed time and that, once the French garrison was withdrawn, there would be nothing to prevent the fall of the city.

The Pope had relied for too long on the uncritical loyalty of the people - a people who had been manipulated over the centuries, privileged in comparison with other subjects of the Papal states, given into occasionally when it became rebellious (as happened at times with the Trasteverini), maintained in ignorance of the outside world and its ideas. When this world and these ideas began to infiltrate Rome, the Pope might well feel uneasy regarding the people's loyalty. Ghisalberti quotes an interesting view of the people by Renan to point out the dangerous game which the Pope had been playing, and warn him that the support of the people was unstable and that a programme of diseducation could easily rebound on the government. He pointed out in a letter to Daremberg written on 14 April 1850, two days after the welcome given to the Pope on his return to Rome: "Si vous voulez des brutes qui se jettent à genoux devant vous et vous crient de leur commander des massacres, il ne faut pas trouver mauvais que le lendemain ils vous insultent et vous couvrent de leurs huées'."7

The events of 1848-49 left their mark on the carnival. The clerical party was aware that, no matter how much it might strive to convince itself and the people that the old, carefree gaiety could be resumed, something had irrevocably changed. Right-wing commentators like Lafond, in 1853, repeated the old references to the innocent gaiety of the occasion (so different from the coarse amusements of the

London or Paris crowds) and the good behaviour of the people, without any force being needed to control them; but even Lafond had to voice the change: "Le carnaval de Rome avait naguère encore une réputation méritée; la dernière révolution l'a gâtée, comme beaucoup de choses plus sérieuses. En 1849, ce fut le carnaval de la démagogie; quel mardi-gras! mais le mercredi des cendres est venu. Le carnaval romain est encore le seul carnaval du monde."⁸

At the end of this period in 1869, Zörnstein stressed the importance of the change, a change not for the better, which had occurred with the revolution of 1848, the flight of the Pope, and the proclamation of the Republic: "... das alte Gerüste ist noch dasselbe, die äusseren Formen sind beibehalten, der Geist ist ein anderer geworden und die Veränderung ist keine verbesserung. Aber einen viel grösseren Einfluss auf den Römischen Carnaval hatte das verhängnisvolle Jahr 1848!"⁹

The carnivals of the two successive years, 1849 and 1850, may be compared to gauge the differences between the attitude of the Papal government and of the liberals. With the return of the *status quo* in 1850 came the usual series of measures to prevent any possible disorders, expressed in the 'bandi' relating to the horse-races, the masking, the throwing of confetti, etc.: "e, con editto del 22 dicembre 1849 si vietavano nei teatri le clamorose e non convenienti disapprovazioni."¹⁰

During the carnival of 1849, on 9 February, the end of Papal temporal rule was proclaimed and the Roman Republic instituted the following day. The Prefect of Rome, Mariani issued a manifesto on the carnival celebrations:

"Romani, chiamato a tutelare la vostra sicurezza col nome di Prefetto per la prima volta, nome che non s'intese tra i vostri

Magistrati dopochè sul calar del Medio Evo fu distrutto quasi ogni idea del vostro Municipio, io non feci a voi parola della mia carica, perchè ben conosceva il vostro buon senso, perch'era convinto che l'Inclito Popolo Romano, che avea dato prove di tanta saggezza, di purità d'intenzioni, di pubblica tranquillità a confusione di tutte le trame degli inimici d'Italia - non avea bisogno di essere eccitato al mantenimento della pubblica quiete, di cui è stato modello, e immagine viva di civiltà ... Ma col ritornare l'annuale ricorrenza del Carnevale, unico avanzo dei nostri divertimenti popolari - dopochè per conseguenza della nostra patita servitù scomparvero le nostre feste del Colosseo, del Circo Agonale e di Testaccio del Medio Evo ... La restaurazione del vostro Municipio, primo elemento di ogni pubblica libertà, e base di ogni politica istituzione ... Il portar le armi nascoste sono il segno di un animo corrotto o proclive a corrompersi, e un mettersi in pericolo di perder onore, e vita ... Romani; ricordate che il Carnevale di Roma è stato sempre riguardato come il più brillante d'Italia, e che il non averlo fu sempre ristagno alla circolazione del denaro, e fu mancanza di pane a molte famiglie che vivono nell'industria del Carnevale. Questo nome e questo interesse che sapeste conservare attraverso molti secoli di oscurantismo e di bigottismo, come unico avanzo delle allegrezze romane, sappiatelo conservare ed accrescere col mantenimento della pubblica tranquillità, col rispettare esattamente gli ordini del Governo e i suoi Ufficiali, con quel divertirsi nei limiti della decenza e dell'onestà che deve essere sempre il segno di un popolo civile e libero, che sospiri il ritorno delle virtù cittadine, le quali sole possono farci ridivenire una Nazione!"¹¹

The standard 'bandi' of 1850 and the proclamation of the previous year convey the impression of two very different concepts of the

carnival. The latter recalls almost the time when the carnival still performed a civic function, when it was an expression of the pride and power of the Roman people, when participation in the carnival as champions of the 'rioni' was considered a signal honour by the young men of Rome. The tone is rather similar to the proclamation of the earlier Roman Republic of 1799, with its insistence on the people's festival. The proclamation of 1799 and the one of fifty years later both rejected the idea of carnival and other popular festivals as simply occasions for the release of tension, as a kind of 'safety-valve' granted periodically by the authorities - 'la gazzarra sul Corso'.

The 'bandi' of 1850, so familiar in their wording, indicate once more the kind of manipulation of the people practised by the authorities over the years, with their purely proscriptive measures. The traditional carnival would continue for a number of years, the 'solita gazzarra sul Corso' - promoted by the authorities, opposed by the liberals of the 'Comitato Nazionale'; but it would continue in a diminished and maimed form due, on the one hand, to the fear and cautiousness of the government, afraid to concede too much to the people, and, on the other hand, to the attempts at boycott on the part of the liberals. The accounts of the carnival of this period present a truncated festival, a pallid reflection of the carnival of the preceding decades. And it was, primarily, a 'politicized' carnival; like the government itself, it was under siege; but, unlike the government, it was being attacked on two fronts. Rome was divided into two camps: "La cronaca del Carnevale degli ultimi anni del Governo Pontificio è caratterizzato da una continua lotta di partiti."¹² On the one hand it is described as an 'istituzione di polizia'; on the other, as the occasion for a series of demonstrations and abortive

insurrections.¹³

A few words should be said first of the 'istituzione della polizia'. After 1849 there was, as we might expect, a period of strong reaction and repression. Police and troops were much in evidence in the streets; other outward signs of a repressive government were to be seen still in the form of the 'cavalletto'; less visible indications are given by Roncalli's diary of 1851: "Si fanno molte perquisizioni domiciliari e si mandano via forestieri e statisti a cui carico possono esservi anche lontani sospetti politici o che non siano provveduti di regolari carte di permanenza.. A molti individui i quali dai piccoli paesi si volevano recare a Roma per passare il Carnevale come di costume, in quest'anno fu vietato di muoversi."¹⁴

The bans tended to be partial ones; for 1850 masks were not allowed, nor in 1851. The 'mocoli' evening of 1852 passed without incident we are told, "essendosi vietato l'use delle canne, dei bastoni ed altri istrumenti".¹⁵ Some of the bans have a lighter, more ludicrous side as, for example, on the use of the Italian colours on the streets, on stage, in public and private masked balls. In Salvini's 'Memorie' we find the interesting instruction that it is not allowed for an actress dressed in green and white to approach another dressed in red!¹⁶

The government felt it had to tread carefully, being afraid of unrest or sedition on the part of the liberals, and at the same time afraid of banning carnival outright and arousing the discontent of the people, demonstrated by the virulent reactions on the occasions when the carnival was banned, as on the death of the Pope in 1829. There were signs, however, that people were not responding so spontaneously as before to the attractions of the carnival - perhaps in response to the exhortations, or the threats, of the 'Comitato Nazionale'. And so carnival became an 'istituzione della polizia' in the sense that it

was promoted by the authorities, who prompted and persuaded people to participate in its pleasures: "La polizia volle che Roma, durante il carnevale del 1850 si divertisse; pagò maschere, mandò birri, cacciaepri, spie e scaccini a passeggiare in maschera pel Corso; ma Pasquino la rimbeccò col seguente sonetto:

'Che bella forza! a furia de cutrini
Fa riduno de sdraja e de vassalli,
Metteje stracci addosso e strascinalli
Su e giù per Corso come burattini.
Ma se po d'è peggio? St'assassini
C'è scurticheno e vonno che se balli
Re' piacè alli Didoni; buggiarali
N'accidente a campà de quelli fini.
E mette 'no sproloquio sur giornale
Alla pretina; ma, per Dio! er Romano
Da un ber pezzetto nun se porta male.
D'è che se faccia giorno un tantinello
Da potesse mettecce un po' la mano,
Je famo allora un carnevale bello!"¹⁷

The amusements tended, then, to have a rather artificial air and to be lacking a certain freshness.¹⁸ There is a kind of comic opera grotesqueness about these details of police intervention which should not, however, disguise the unpleasant reality of the constant presence of spies on the Corso and elsewhere. Prince Chigi and Roncalli, neither of whom was a sympathizer with the liberals, commented on the government paying spies to go on to the Corso; Roncalli talks of spies attempting to trick people into betraying liberal feelings¹⁹ and Dicey, in 1860, of men disguised as peasant-women, supposed to have been hired for the show by the government.²⁰

The liberals, meanwhile, were intent on doing all they could to boycott the carnival and prevent, if they could not persuade, people from participating in the event - to counter the impression which the government was anxious to promote that the Roman people had welcomed back the old regime in all its forms. The 'Comitato Nazionale' wanted to show to the world that things were not back to normal, and that people were not happy with the situation.

2. Reaction and resistance

The first in the series of appeals to the people of Rome - and to anyone who wanted to take part in the delights of the carnival - had come in 1848, asking them to abstain from the 'moccoletti' ceremony.²¹ This, from 1790 onwards, had been the main victim of bans, or partial bans, providing as it did the ideal occasion for subversive gatherings. A new departure in 1837 had been the boycotting of the ceremony by the people, outraged and irritated by the government's chopping and changing; it at first banned and then, at the last minute, granted the 'moccoletti'. With these two precedents in mind, perhaps, right from the start of the post-Republican period, this evening was picked out as the focus of attention. In 1850, Clementi tells us, quoting from the diary of Prince Massimo, there was a massive protest on the part of the liberals against the 'moccoletti', with the result that the occasion was only a partial success.²²

The plans of the liberals went beyond the boycotting of the 'moccoletti' ceremony, however. They appealed to the people to abstain entirely from the pleasures of the carnival - as a show of respect for the martyrs of the Republic and as a way of celebrating the first anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic. The dead of 1849 should be honoured by a silent procession; they exhorted their fellow-

citizens to forsake the Corso and proceed to the Janiculum on the opening day of the carnival.²³ With the exhortations came the threats; pamphlets and posters were circulated threatening with death anyone who took part in the carnival. Jews, sellers of old clothes for the maskers, sellers of flowers, confetti, hangings for the balconies and windows on the Corso were threatened with the dagger of Rossi if they went about their business; the stands erected in the Piazza del Popolo were set on fire.²⁴

Helfferich was present at this carnival and describes how, on the last night, at the ball in the German Artists' Circle the Italians did not dare appear for fear of being entered into the Mazzinians' black book: "Es war gerade den 9 Februer, an welchem Tage voriges Jahr die Republik proklamiert worden war, weshalb ein Trauerzug, durch den Corso veranstaltet werden solte." Helfferich goes on to describe the scene as becoming gradually more animated.²⁵ This tended to be the pattern, as we have seen, of carnival revelry, with a fairly quiet start, building up over the period to a climax on the last evening. La Rochère, also present at this carnival, has some rather scornful words for the 'success' of the exhortations of the 'Comitato Nazionale':

"Ce carnaval, si gai, si animé, avait cependant commencé d'une manière bien triste; car les démocrates, qui veulent à toute force faire porter le deuil de la république à des gens qui ne la regrettent nullement, avait fait de si terribles menaces à tous ceux qui prendraient part aux amusements ordinaires en pareille circonstance, que la population n'osait point s'y livrer; les courses de chevaux libres n'eurent donc le mercredi que des Français pour spectateurs; mais, dès le jeudi gras, les Romains, entraînés par l'exemple et rassurés par la présence de leurs libérateurs, accoururent de toutes parts au Corso."²⁶

La Rochère was right in suggesting that the adherence of the people to the appeals of the 'Comitato' was not always genuinely spontaneous. The intimidation did ensure that the opening days of the carnival were rather quiet. Helfferich confirms this; there were, he says, few nobles on the streets, the middle classes did not appear at all; there were hardly half a dozen coaches, no masks (forbidden, of course), few costumes, few carpets appeared at windows; chairs were much cheaper to rent than before. He goes on to say that those who appeared on the streets were for the most part the lower orders and foreigners, the latter appearing to be the ones who were really enjoying the experience, especially the English. "Wer sich allein den Spass nicht verderben liess, des waren wie immer die Söhne und Töchter Albions. O! diese schlanken und blonden Gestalten, mit dem stolzen Lächeln und der kühnen entschlossenheit der Meerbeherrscherin um Mund und Augen."²⁷

Wey gives us some indication of the hardship and resentment which intimidation caused those most directly involved with the carnival - those who depended on it for their living, or at least to supplement their income, and those who looked forward most eagerly to the occasion; the people who had very few opportunities during the year to have fun; and especially the country people - "tellement épris des joies séculaires du carnaval, que l'engagement de conduire aux fêtes de la grande ville une nouvelle mariée est stipulé dans le contrat."²⁸

The reactionary situation existing in this period provoked not just the peaceful and silent demonstrations repeated each year by the 'Comitato Nazionale' but also some violent reactions. The French presence in Rome was deeply resented, and the relative calm which had existed during the French occupation of the Napoleonic period was no longer to be observed. The French garrison found itself in an

embarrassing situation; most of the troops, it appears, disapproved of the behaviour of the Papal gendarmes, and many of them sympathized with the liberal cause. Many of the French people also did not approve of the garrison in Rome; the government itself was split on this issue, and the demonstrations of protest in Rome were noted in the French parliament.²⁹

The soldiers had, however, to perform their thankless task and in the course of it they had to suffer at the hands of the people. In 1798-99 the people of Rome had pleaded with the Pope for a dispensation to kill the French but, in fact, the latter had suffered little from aggressive behaviour on the part of the crowd. Now that they were seen as supporters, protectors of the regime, rather than the enemies of the Pope and of the Catholic religion, they were attacked and a number of deaths were reported during these years. Helfferich gives an example of this from 1850.³⁰ Not all of these deaths were politically motivated; a certain amount of 'fraternizing' was done by the Roman ladies, as happens in any garrison town. Clementi informs us that in the carnival of 1851 bouquets of flowers were thrown at the French - but with stones inside them and other bouquets were thrown, containing the names of ladies guilty of having had relations with the enemy.³¹ The death reported by Helfferich was, he points out, the result of jealousy.

The event which caused the greatest stir in this year's carnival, however, was the attempted assassination of the young Giuseppe Bonaparte, Prince of Canino. Here again, there is the testimony of Helfferich and La Rochère (in fact the latter gives an eye-witness account). From the start the young Guelphs in Rome had defied the threats of the liberals, and had taken part in the festivities. The Prince was riding with his sister along the Corso on a coach when the incident occurred. La Rochère gives the following account: "... un

homme bien vêtu lança dans la calèche un magnifique bouquet de camélias, et se perdit dans la foule. Le Prince se baissa aussitôt pour ramasser le bouquet. Mais au moment qu'il le présentait à sa soeur, une détonation subite, suivie d'un cri déchirant, retentit dans les airs; la jeune fille pâlit et perdit connaissance, et son frère, grièvement blessé, inonda les fleurs de son sang."³²

The injuries, it turned out, were not too serious; but the incident, naturally, caused a great stir. Such violent attempts on prominent figures were not perpetrated during the carnivals of the succeeding years (but French soldiers were still murdered occasionally). Assassination attempts were, however, planned; one, in the following year, involved the killing of a number of important figures on the Corso - including the French general Geneau and Cardinal Antonelli. The plot was discovered by the authorities, and in the house of a certain Luigi Jacopini was found a supply of fifteen glass bombs coated with plaster, which were intended to be thrown on the Corso on 'giovedì grasso'; the sound of the explosions would be the signal for the killings.³³ Such an atmosphere cast a shadow over the proceedings in the following years, the pleasures of the carnival being largely restricted to the theatres. Fear kept many from appearing on the Corso; then, in 1856 came another cholera epidemic.

The political tension in Italy during these years was not propitious to public celebrations; the government was still afraid to ban the carnival outright; in fact, with the presence in Rome of important visitors, there was a brief return to something approaching the old gaiety in the closing years of the decade. In 1857, for the first time after 1849, the Governor made his traditional appearance in the opening ceremony of the carnival.³⁴ When this carnival passed off relatively peacefully the government felt encouraged to remove more

restrictions in the carnival of 1858, when the use of the mask was allowed once again - for three days³⁵; and in 1859 masking was allowed for the whole eight days. Haeckel indicates the greater freedom and lightheartedness of this year: "Der Karneval ist diesmal hier so überaus glänzend, wie er überhaupt nur je gewesen ist. Zum erstenmal seit vielen Jahren ist wieder das allgemeine Maskentragen und mehrere andere Freiheiten von dem französischen stadtkommandanten General Guyon erlaubt (vielleicht in der Erwartung, dass so Skandal entstehen und dadurch das Militär Gelegenheit finden würde, sich noch weiter festzusetzen)."³⁶

1859, in fact, marks the high-point of this period for the carnival. Among the distinguished visitors present was the eighteen year old Prince of Wales, travelling under the name of Baron Renfrew.³⁷ The young man enjoyed the occasion to the full as was testified by Hawthorne.³⁸

After the relaxations of these few years came the thunderbolt of the Second War of Independence. Gregorovius tells us of the joy with which the news was welcomed on the Corso.³⁹ In this radically changed situation how was the carnival of 1860 to be handled? Masks were once more outlawed, and the public celebrations limited to a few days; the French general arranged a strong military presence on the Corso to ensure public order. The result of all this was that the people deserted the Corso in large measure: "Sembra che la popolazione siasi indispettita di tanto apparecchio militare e generalmente, astiene di andare al Corso."⁴⁰ The liberals for their part issued a programme: on the days in which carnival was not allowed, people should walk along the Corso; when it was allowed, they should promenade outside Porta Pia in silence.⁴¹ Despite the ban on gatherings outside the prescribed place and time, these silent processions were continued. Roncalli, once more, gives us some idea of their success referring to

four hundred coaches and eight thousand people at Porta Pia on the second day of the carnival; and on the Saturday, he adds, there were even two coaches belonging to cardinals!⁴²

The government did not attempt to break up these demonstrations; it limited itself to issuing a grim warning to the assembled people in the form of the presence of the official executioner Mastro Titta. There was no trouble at this incident, but Roncalli does indicate the silent anger of the people, and even quotes the letter which Mastro Titta wrote to explain his presence, which was not, of course, his own initiative; he had gone unwillingly, having been summoned to appear in the name of the Pope.⁴³

Dacey provides one of the fullest account of the carnival of this year. The usual time had passed, he says, and still the 'bandi di carnevale' had not been posted; the government was in a state of indecision as to whether it should allow the carnival or not, and decided finally to allow a kind of half-carnival. The opening was a dismal affair; the government was determined that there should be a show of normality on the Corso and hired coaches for the occasion; many balconies on the Corso remained untaken; instead of the usual hangings from the balconies were to be seen 'For let' signs. The 'mocoli' were allowed, however, but only on the Corso (lights were forbidden anywhere beyond its limits); in the event, people boycotted the occasion once again. Dacey emphasised the significance of this carnival: "the dullest and dimmest of carnivals ... the carnival without mirth, or sun or gaiety ... the 'Carnevale Senza Mocoli'"; but, with all that, the image of things to come: "It has been my lot, however, to witness such a carnival as has not been seen at Rome before, as is not likely to be seen again. In the decay of creeds and the decline of dynasties there appear from time to time signs which,

like the writing on the wall, proclaim the coming change, and amongst these signs our part-carnival is, if I err not, no unimportant one."⁴⁴ Dicey's account suggests a fairly massive support of the liberal programme on this occasion.

There were still occasional comments on the people's basic lack of enthusiasm or interest in politics, and its lack of pride or spirit, as in D'Ideville, for example: "Tout son dévouement à la cause italienne se borne a des réunions, promenades silencieuses au Forum, à des manifestations inoffensives."⁴⁵ Ghisalberti, however, notes a decisive change in the people during this period, considering the arrival of the French troops as the key moment which led to the adherence of a fair number to the liberal cause.⁴⁶ After 1849, he says, it was not just outsiders who supported the aims of the republic, but the most active section of the population.⁴⁷

It is difficult to gauge the extent of public support for the liberal cause. Apart from the silent processions outside Porta Pia or at the Forum the most common occasion for a public display of patriotic fervour was in the theatre - particularly at the opera. According to Clementi the highlight of the carnival of 1849 had been the performance of 'La battaglia di Legnano'; and similar enthusiastic scenes were to be witnessed in the following years.⁴⁸

Helfferich, in 1850, suggests that the support for the liberals among the people was not inconsiderable: "Man sagt freilich, die Mazzinisten hätten nur einen geringen Bruchtheil des Volkes hinter sich; aber wie, wenn die päpstliche Regierung, so wie sie von den drei Cardinälen verstanden und geübt wird, nicht einmal auf einen solchen Bruchtheil sich verlassen könnte und die grosse Masse des Volkes lediglich dem Zufalle der Agitation preisgegeben wäre?"⁴⁹

Support for the Pope had been rather unstable; the people were fickle, but their political awareness must have grown during this

period. The testimony of Roncalli carries a certain amount of weight, coming as it does from a police official (Vice-Presidente di Rione); note his entry in his diary for 19 January 1850: "Questa mattina fu trovata sopra una colonnetta a Colonna Traiano, una mitra, sotto alla quale era scritta: 'Accidenti al papa, accidenti ai Cardinali!'"⁵⁰ Some years later, in 1864, he mentions that in the 'rioni' of Trastevere and Monti, traditionally associated with staunch support of the Pope, there were 'liberali ben risoluti', and refers to a number of arrests in that year.⁵¹ The small group of trouble-makers the 'partito degli esaltati', 'i faziosi', had grown. Already before this date there were indications, as in the number of volunteers who left Rome to join in the First War of Independence; and not just middle-class volunteers; Gregorovius testifies to the support among the people for the 'Italiani', and refers to c.5000, and a whole regiment composed of Roman people.⁵²

Dacey says that up to 1860 the Corso used to be guarded by Papal troops, but not now; another startling change to record: "Last spring, however, when the war broke out, these bold dragoons grew alarmed of their police duties, and began to ride across the frontier without leave or licence, to fight on behalf of Italy. The whole regiment, in fact, was found to be so disaffected that it was disbanded without delay, and at present there are only some score or so left, who ride close behind the Pope when he goes out "unattended", as his partisans profess. So the dragoons having disappeared, the duty of keeping order is given to the French soldiers."⁵³ These French soldiers, as we have seen, were often not too happy about their task; there is evidence of them joining in occasionally in patriotic demonstrations.⁵⁴

The carnival of 1860 had gone off with the greatest tranquillity. The liberals were now content, it seems, with peaceful demonstrations;

the violence and assassination attempts of the 1850s were not repeated. For the carnival of 1861 the 'Comitato Nazionale' urged moderation and calm, and the avoidance of any actions which could provoke the authorities or their supporters. Roncalli reports the rejoicing on the Corso when the news of the fall of Gaeta reached Rome on 13 February 1861: "Circa un' ora di notte s' innalzarono grida di 'viva Vittorio Emanuele, viva Cialdini, viva Napoleone. Quindi in varii punti si accesero fuochi di bengala a tre colori. E tutto questo con il massimo ordine e dignità."⁵⁵ These qualities, unfortunately, characterized the mood of the carnival throughout this decade. The government and the Papal party busily attempted to promote the festival, to convince Romans and the outside world that things had not changed, and that Rome was still content to live under Papal rule. But by now Rome was a beleaguered city; still the 'Caput Mundi', the centre of Christianity, but no longer the capital of a large Italian state; it was a small enclave in the new Kingdom of Italy. The liberals, on the other hand, had a renewed sense of confidence, and knew that they had simply to bide their time. They were no longer alone, but were surrounded by friends and supporters, the whole of the new kingdom, in whose name they could launch their annual appeals to the people of Rome to abstain from the pleasures of carnival. Violence and conspiracy no longer played a part in their programme.

But neither was there a great deal of gaiety and spontaneity to the occasion. As before, the liberals issued their annual invitation to the people to abstain from carnival pleasures. Gregorovius comments on the dullness of these years, starting with 1860 itself, between the abstention of a fair proportion of the population, and the artificial gaiety promoted by the authorities.⁵⁶ Witness the verses quoted by Roncalli on the carnival of 1863: "Zuavi, burattini, / Briganti, papalini / Tante smanie, tanti impegni / e neppure tanti legni."⁵⁷

Gregorovius' diary comments briefly on the carnival of the preceding year: "Brutto carnevale. Nient'altro che militari e poliziotti ... Il carnevale ha diviso Roma in due fazioni."⁵⁸

Tension increased towards the end of this decade. In 1867 Rome took on the appearance of a battlefield: "Il Ministro delle armi, generale Zoppi, per garantire la pubblica tranquillità aveva fatto piazzare due mezze batterie in Piazza del Popolo e in Piazza Colonna e invece di tenere le truppe sparpagliate per il Corso, le aveva concentrate nelle piazze vicine."⁵⁹ Garibaldi's invasion of the Papal states in October of that year, stopped short at Mentana thanks to French intervention, heightened the anxiety and raised fears for the carnival of 1868. As Zörnstein writes in 1869, looking back on the events of the previous year: "Der vorjährige Carneval war still und unbelebt gewesen, die Garibaldi-Invasion vom November 1867, der Tag von Mentana, die vielen diesem verunglückten Putsche gefolgt Verhaftungen hatten die Regierung ängstlicher, die Bevölkerung noch zurückhaltender gemacht und zugleich viele Fremde abgehalten, nach Rom zu Kommen."⁶⁰

In the following year the liberals were lying low, and a splendid carnival was anticipated. These expectations were in a sense not disappointed; Rome was full of foreigners, and rents were high. But the carnival was now only a shadow of itself, and would have been a fiasco but for the eager participation of these foreigners. The latter were able for the most part to ignore the tension and to enjoy the fun. The invitations to abstain issued by the 'Comitato Nazionale' had been directed at everyone, Romans and foreigners alike. The latter continued, nevertheless, to enjoy the carnival, despite possible harassment by the government (we have seen that in the preceding decade foreign visitors had fallen under suspicion, and some had been

expelled)⁶¹, or threats from the 'Comitato Nazionale'. Some did, certainly, choose the prudent course of action and left the city; Roncalli informs that in 1864 following the invitations of the 'Comitato Romano', but also in the face of robbery and assassination, some chose to leave.⁶²

3. The carnival is changing

However, a large number of accounts from these years indicate a still fairly carefree occasion. At most, there are references to the presence of French soldiers on the Corso, and to some resentment on the part of the people. There were now large numbers of Americans in Rome, democrats generally sympathetic to the Italian cause; but even they tended to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the fun. Foreigners seemed to be taking over more and more; Hawthorne in 1858, looking at the balconies on the Corso, saw very few Roman ladies, but lots of British and Americans.⁶³ Zörnstein's description, too, refers to this situation: "An vielen dieser Balkone und Fenster sind grosse Miethzettel aufgehängt, mit Inschriften in allen Sprachen, wie: Loggia d'affittarsi. - Windows and boxes for the days of the Carnival to let here. - Ici on loue des fenetres et des balcons - u.s.w., nur deutsche Inschriften habe ich vergeblich gesucht - Diese Balkone und Fenster werden nun von den Fremden für die Tage des Carnevals gemiethet und je nach der Lage und der Höhe des Stockwerks mit 25, 40, 60, 100 und 200 Francs - auch wohl höher bezahlt."⁶⁴

In this decade the figures to be seen, and the voices to be heard on the Corso tended more often than not to be English, according to some commentators. Zörnstein talks once more of the true performers on the street being usually English, who hire coaches for the occasion and parade up and down the Corso, bombarding coaches, windows and

balconies.⁶⁵ Other coaches were seldom seen, such as those of the Roman aristocracy which used to put in such a splendid appearance. And Dicey, in 1860 tells us that "if it was not for our own Anglo-Saxon countrymen, there would be no carnival at all"; he also points out that the only voices to be heard on the 'mocoli' evening were English ones.⁶⁶ Zörnstein, in 1869 claims that every language may be heard on the Corso - except Italian. A 'carnevale di forestieri' indeed!⁶⁷

The authorities, in their attempt to keep the carnival going as if nothing had changed, or was changing, had succeeded, it seems, in retaining the majority of foreign visitors to the city during the period, despite threats, exhortations, cholera, etc. - and had succeeded, even, in making them the mainstay of the festival (as they had seemed already to some earlier commentators). The people had lost some of their enthusiasm for the carnival, it would appear. Justi talks of the Romans taking less and less part in the festivities, even going so far as to say that compared with the carnival of Florence, Venice, or Genoa even, the Roman carnival is pathetic.⁶⁸ Greenwood, writing in 1853, comments: "Few of the Romans of the better class will join in it, from indignation at the restrictions put upon some of its innocent freedoms, and the curtailment of its immemorial amusements - the forbidding of close masks in the streets, and the suppression of masked balls at the theatre. The festivities are now principally conducted by foreigners and the common people, and much more roughly and furiously it is said, than formerly."⁶⁹

Greenwood's comments bring us back to the central feature of the carnival; the part played in it by the people - and by the people is meant the whole people, of all classes. It now becomes clear that there was an increasing break-up of the social cohesiveness of the occasion - that easy mingling of the classes which had been such a

wonder to many, especially Anglo-Saxon, observers, and the universal good-will, tolerance and good-humour which so impressed the foreigners. We should observe, though, that there are still occasional tributes to the people's good humour in these years.⁷⁰ A trend has begun in this period which will be accentuated in the years after 1870; the increasing desertion of the Corso, of the public carnival, by the aristocracy and the middle classes, and a corresponding increase in the rowdiness and roughness of the occasion. The middle-classes were turning by now to the more genteel amusements of the masked ball, or 'veglione' and leaving the scene clear for the rabble. Or had the carnival really become a rowdier affair? Had the middle-classes perhaps simply become too remote from the original spirit of the carnival? That sense of community seemed to be lost now, which had earlier united townspeople and peasants, the cultivated and the ignorant, the high and the low, in a general sense of intoxication. Had a kind of Victorian propriety descended over the occasion in this period? Had the wild and chaotic licence of the pagan 'Io Saturnalia' become for a large part of the population the refined and pallid canvas of Alma Tadema?

Greenwood's reference to the forbidding of close masks in the street (in the early 1850s), and the relative absence of masks noted by Zörnstein in 1869 are of considerable importance in chronicling the decline of the carnival.⁷¹ Without masks there is no carnival. The loss of identity, the moment of intoxicating 'otherness', cannot be achieved by simply throwing oneself into the free-for-all of the confetti-battles, or of the 'moccoli' ceremony; it involves, at its deepest level, the assumption of a different identity, the conjunction with the grotesque, the bestial, the non-natural. It can no longer have the sacral, Dionysiac loss of identity of the masker in ancient,

primitive ritual; or the sense of identification 'assumed' by the primitive hunter with the animal he intended to hunt; but neither is it the simple disguise of the 'bautta' of the Venetian carnival, with its perfunctory concealment of identity for the purposes of sexual intrigue; nor the threatening 'incognito' feared by the authorities, which covers crime and subversion. The mask had still clearly established links with the traditional iconography and symbolism of carnival, and the familiar figures and scenes were still to be witnessed in the streets and squares.

4. The carnival continues

The commentators quoted would lead us to believe that such masks were no longer greatly in evidence. They were certainly of no great interest to the foreigners who thronged the city, nor had they much meaning for them. But we can turn to other commentators, and even to some of the ones already mentioned, to find that the mask had not been abandoned by the Romans. Two visitors of the 1850s are particularly important for the scenes which they reproduce. They are the Frenchman Paul de Musset, who had a strong interest in carnival and popular theatre, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who has left us one of the most detailed descriptions of carnival in the late 1850s (he was present in both 1858 and 1859). Their comments contrast strikingly with the description of Zörnstein in 1869:

"Auch die witzigen und komischen Masken, die noch Goethe so belustigt haben, sind verschwunden; was ich an Masken hie und da auf der Strasse zeigt, ist von jämmerlichen Art. Halbwüchsige Strassenjungen, in alte, zerrissene Pierrots oder Pulcinella-Masken gesteckt, die ihnen viel zu gross sind, schlottern melancholisch durch das Gedränge und sind vermuthlich zu dieser Frohnarbeit von den

Hotelbesitzern, Zimmervermietern, Maskenverleihern und all den anderen Leuten in Rom, die von den Fremden leben, gedungen worden, die sie jämmerlich genug verrichten."⁷²

The poor masks seen by Zörnstein as serving the commercial aims of those who live off the carnival represent for O'Donovan the sacrifices made by the poor people of Rome, the 'Mimenti', who save up all year for the occasion.⁷³ Others comment on the wit of the people, quoting the remarks of Mme de Staël on the subject.⁷⁴ De Musset was an especial admirer of the people's wit, and found a number of examples of it. He praises the ability of those who play the 'Dottore', the 'Avvocato', or the particular favourite, the 'Contaccio', who is so completely absorbed in the part he is playing: "Que l'on observe ou non, il joue son personnage ... il s'amuse pour son compte".⁷⁵

Hawthorne's account is particularly interesting for its presentation of scenes which are very close in spirit and in detail to those observed by Goethe seventy years earlier (such as the one already indicated in the preceding chapter, from the novel 'The Marble Faun').⁷⁶ Apart from such scenes which show the true spirit of carnival and suggest its continuing links with older ritual, there is in Hawthorne a notable emphasis on the grotesque and the gigantic. One such example is found in his account of the carnival of 1858: "Two fantastic figures, with enormous heads, set round with frizzy hair, came and grinned into our carriage, and J. tore a handful of hair (which proved to be sea-weed) from one of their heads, rather to the discomposure of the owner, who muttered his indignation in Italian ,..." Another indication is found in 'The Marble Faun': "Fantastic figures with bulbous heads the circumference of a bushel grinned enormously in his face ... A little, long-tailed, horned fiend sidled

up to him and suddenly blew at him through a tube, enveloping our poor friend in a whole harvest of winged seeds. A biped with an ass's snout, brayed close to his ear ... Clowns and parti-coloured harlequins; orang-utans; bear-headed, bull-headed, and dog-headed individuals; faces that would have been human, but for their enormous noses; one terrific creature with a visage right in the centre of his breast; and all other imaginable kinds of monstrosity and exaggeration."⁷⁷ Bizet, in this same year, shows us that basic carnival exaggerations are still found in the masked-ball as well as in the street; he tells us ^{he} appeared disguised as a large baby.⁷⁸

Bizet testifies also, on the same page, to the continuing popularity in these years of the costume of the 'Ciociara' or peasant-girl; the women most admired, he tells us, were those dressed 'a la romaine'.⁷⁹ Haeckel, in the following year, was left rather unimpressed with the whole scene on the Corso, except for the sight of these pretty costumes: "Das einzige, was mich dabei interessiert hat, sind teils die schönen, phantastischen Nationaltrachten aus der Campagna und dem Gebirg, die man dabei in Menge sieht, teils die schönen Gesichter, die in ebenfalls nicht geringer Anzahl sich sehen lassen. Doch gehören diesselben, wenigstens beim weiblichen Geschlecht, zur grösseren Hälfte den Engländern an, die überhaupt jetzt durch ihr grosses Karnevals kontingent und ihre reichen Mittel die eingeborenen Römer fast zu verdrängen anfangen."⁸⁰ Lafond, in 1853, points out, however, that in many cases these lovely costumes were actually on real peasants from the Roman Campagna, wearing their every day clothes.⁸¹

The Romans still retained their passion for the races; an index of this is the continuing recurrence of injuries and even deaths in this very dangerous sport. W.W. Story tells us that there is almost no

carnival without its victims. This, unfortunately, was the most notable feature of this event. Dunbar reports two people killed in 1846.⁸² As before, the indifference of the crowd was noted by foreign observers. Dicey saw a groom felled in 1860, while the crowd looked on unconcerned.⁸³ The horses themselves were, of course, still regular victims, especially when passions ran high among the spectators - or, indeed, among the 'barbareschi'! Clementi tells us that the carnival of 1861 passed almost without incident: "Unico incidente di questo carnevale furono due coltellate date da alcuni barbareschi ad un cavallo, che in parecchi giorni aveva sempre vinto il palio."⁸⁴ Even if horses were not attacked they could still be injured by accidents; Greenwood was revolted by the injuries they sustained.⁸⁵ It was not just Anglo-Saxon, or foreign, observers who were appalled by the treatment of the animals in the race. An ominous sign of the future was the campaign begun by the liberal press for the abolition of the race. This can be noted from as early as 1848, after an accident in which one man was killed and one badly injured: "La stampa liberale domanda che questi perigliosi divertimenti cedano avanti alla civiltà dei tempi."⁸⁶ Busk, in 1868, gives a probable explanation for the continuance of injuries and deaths in the years after 1870, and which will very shortly lead to the banning of the race: "For some reason the file of soldiers who used to keep the line of the race has been omitted from the programme this year."⁸⁷

The carnival of 1859 ushered in a new feature of the 'mocoli' evening: "Ma una grande novità era riservata al popolo di Roma allo spettacolo dei mocoli. Ad un tratto mille fiammelle brillarono sui fanali del Corso. La Società del Gas per la prima volta aveva applicato i tortiglioni a girando che chiamarono sul Corso una folla enorme."⁸⁸ The carnival of 1869 was marked by another novelty, when at a certain point all the street-lamps on the Corso were switched off

and their place taken by "Pyramiden, Source, Sterne und andere Apparate, aus kleinen Gasflammen gebildet, getreten, die Tageshelle "über den ganzen Corso verbreiten".⁸⁹

The main actors in the confetti-battles were the foreigners, British and American in particular, drawing from their countrymen, even, complaints about their roughness. Hawthorne, in 'The Marble Faun' gives the example of the Senator's procession being rudely interrupted when a double handful of powdered lime "flung by an impious New Englander" hit his coachman full in the face, "and hurt his dignity amazingly".⁹⁰ Hawthorne, in his 'Notebooks' indicates that it seems to be a point of courtesy not to throw lime at ladies, or non-combattants, or quiet by-standers - a point of courtesy largely ignored by English and Americans!⁹¹ And this courtesy, by the time of Zörnstein's visit was ignored by all and sundry, he suggests, saying that few women were to be seen in the street; those few who were seen, hurrying home to their rented window, were greeted with cries of jubilation by the crowd, and bombarded with plaster confetti.⁹² Women now, it seems, were firmly relegated to the window or balcony which had been their place in earlier periods. And some illustrious personages could still be seen on these balconies, quite willing to engage in combat with lesser mortals, as Ambros discovered in 1866: "Erst später erfuhr ich, das ich den hitzigen Kampf mit Ihren Majestät der Konigin von Neapel bestanden!"⁹³

For the most part, though, we do get the impression of a rowdy, even at times ill-natured affair. Murray writes somewhat irritably about the scarce pleasure of being pelted with lime and complains about his hat being crushed, and his coat being burned through by the lime.⁹⁴ Others refer to being pelted with dirty vegetables which could, probably did, indicate cabbages etc., but might also relate to

the increasingly common habit of re-cycling flowers which had already been thrown and were now in a rather bedraggled condition. Zörnstein informs us that few bouquets of flowers actually reached their destination, since, missing the target, they were immediately pounced on when they hit the ground, and sold for a few coins by boys lying in wait.⁹⁵ Witness the case of the painter Arnold Böcklin, described in his wife's memoirs (already quoted).⁹⁶ Attacks were still merciless on those poor unfortunates who ventured on to the Corso wearing dark, formal clothes and top hats.

The combination of political interference and increasing roughness in behaviour on the Corso seem to justify the laments of the Jeremiahs of this period on the death, or at least the mortal illness, of the carnival. Those voices which we had heard raised in the preceding period had become all the more insistent, and credible. Lafond saw the carnival, from his conservative view point, as radically changed since the revolution of 1848, and changed for the worse; but, despite this, he still saw it as the best of carnivals.⁹⁷

The most enthusiastic supporters of change in Rome were, of course, the young people, particularly the students - Roman, Italian, but also foreign. When change occurred it would be these young people who played a leading role in the shaping of the carnival of a 'free Rome'. We have noted, in the preceding period, the rise of the 'festa di Cervara', the foreign students' carnival, as a kind of rival to the Roman carnival. Elliott's description of her visit to Cervara and her delight in its fun, which she compares very unfavourably the with travesty of mirth on the Corso, gives us a kind of preview of things to come when the foreign student community, and in particular the German-dominated 'Circolo Artistico', will play a leading role in the carnival celebrations. What she describes rather resembles, apart from the youthful good-humour and boisterousness, a masked-ball with those

'character masks', whose absence we have seen commented by a number of observers: "There was a mock solemnity about the whole scene that reminded one of *tableaux vivants* out of Cervantes; it was the heroic age of knight-errantry admirably travestied and run mad."⁹⁸

Another sign for the immediate future was the revolutionary fervour of many of these students, native and foreign. It was the foreign students who were generally singled out for surveillance by the police at times of unrest. W.W. Story notes that the artists' festival of May, after the revolutionary days of 1848-49, was suspended for two or three years.⁹⁹ And, as Consalvi had been aware, from the early days of the Restoration, the young people of Rome were disaffected. There was certainly a Papal party among the students at the university, and the two opposing factions used to come into conflict occasionally in carnival. Roncalli writes of one such encounter in 1861, an exchange of insults between those displaying the Cross of Savoy and those bearing the Cross of St Peter's.¹⁰⁰

From this same year De Cesare quotes a student song indicating solidarity with the liberal cause, observing the request to abstain from the festivities, and containing what seems, in retrospect, to be an implied threat for the future:

"Pochi saremo, ma saremo di molti;
quando Roma i suoi lacci avrà disciolti;
quando sarà d'Italia Capitale
saremo di molti, e faremo carnevale!"¹⁰¹

The threat was directed against the government - a promise of what Rome would be like when the old regime was removed. And one thing which they would have in hand was the carnival itself. How would they celebrate it?

CHAPTER SIX

CHAPTER SIX

1. 'Libero carnevale in libera Roma'. 2. The promoting and organizing of carnival. 3. Rome has changed. 4. The end of the horse-race.

Individual accounts may contradict the general impression but the message which comes across in this period, from native observers and the more sensitive and reflective of foreign visitors, is that the carnival was in a state of decline - if not yet dead, at least moribund. There is much less material to draw on from travel literature, despite the continuing abundance of books on Italy in these years. Foreigners were clearly no longer finding the Roman carnival the indispensable item in their visit which it had been for their predecessors. They were perhaps inclined to agree with the comment of an earlier visitor, Edwards, who dismissed it as a kind of Bartholomew fair: "I did not see it; my visit was at the wrong time of the year, a fact I see no reason to regret."¹ The reference to Bartholomew Fair was not a flattering one - it being a rather plebeian event, not worthy of a gentleman's attention; such an attitude, of course, indicates a mind already closed to any possible exploration of the significance of the occasion. The fact that Edwards was not there to witness carnival could indicate a deliberate choice on his part not to include it in his itinerary. This would seem to have been the attitude taken by many subsequent visitors. The charm of the carnival had faded for many; this period, it was felt, might be more suitably passed either attending carnival in some other Italian city, or indulging in some other activity.

Consequently rather more use will be made in this chapter of native and secondary sources than of foreigners' reports. This does

not alter the fact that foreigners still played a large, even dominant, part in the occasion; there was quite simply little to retain the writers' interest. What description we have of the phenomenon is virtually a repetition of earlier accounts; curiously few showed much awareness of the considerable innovations which were introduced in these years, of the polemics regarding the very nature of the carnival, and its place in the new Rome, or of the controversy over the famous horse-races. Carnival simply died out as other institutions do, over a number of years; the result, on the part of the people, of a fundamental lack of will to keep it alive, indicating its scarce relevance for contemporary Romans, despite the attempts at resuscitation made by committees and artists' associations. If, however, we had to single out one event as the immediate cause of its demise, it would be the loss of the central feature of the horse-race; with its disappearance, much of the life went out of the carnival.

The decline and death of the carnival was the result of a number of concurrent and converging factors in these years. We have noticed already a loss of the buoyancy, the excitement and careless abandon of the occasion, a diminution of the spirit of the carnival - of that unqualified participation of all the people in the eight days of licence, that interruption of the often rather grim routine which was the life of the common people. This general participation is the 'sine qua non' for the survival of a genuine carnival, in which there can be no spectators (even if not everyone acts out a part in the ritual spectacle). This general participation was what had been lacking for a number of years. The whole period between 1848 and 1870 had dealt a severe blow to the carnival; the 'politicizing' of the festival, the splitting of Rome into two factions, had made it virtually impossible for carnival to be presented freely; these years had seen a succession

of truncated, mutilated carnivals. Threats and restrictions on either side had kept large numbers off the streets.

The student demonstration of 1861 had contained a veiled threat for the future, when Rome would be no longer subject to the Pope - "quando sar  d'Italia Capitale / saremo di molti, e faremo carnevale!"² This threat was in a sense realized with the first carnival of the new Rome, ten years later in 1871; it proved that the political animus behind the carnival was still alive. The liberals had triumphed, and they wished to parade this triumph. The first carnival of 'Roma Capitale' was an anti-clerical one - or rather its most notable feature was an anti-clerical masquerade, 'La crociata cattolica del 1871'.³ For the first time, in this 'Crociata' (figuring the crusaders of Tasso's 'Gerusalemme Liberata') were to be seen on the Corso masks representing cardinals and prelates (expressly forbidden in earlier 'bandi').

Gregorovius refers to this in his diary for 1871: "Il carnevale di questa volta   stato molto animato, hanno dileggiato il partito clericale colle maschere. Rappresentavano i nuovi templari posti su degli asini, la croce e la spada furono portate in giro. La polizia interdisse la processione. Ma ogni giorno porta nuove caricature: Antonelli, Meradi, i gesuiti, Kanzler, persino il papa. Hanno fatto la caricatura di Napoleone col rappresentarlo crocefisso; l'imperatore Guglielmo gli infigge una lancia nel petto."⁴ Noteworthy, too, is the form of this manifestation - a historical masquerade; once more this was to become a feature of the carnival, after many years absence from the Corso. The satirical note, too, would continue in succeeding years; another feature which would not have been possible under the old regime. Now, government policies could be freely criticised in carnival; 1872 provided a different satirical target: "Il gioved  grasso fu ricco di maschere allegoriche storiche e satiriche,

alludenti alle tasse sul macinato, sulle gabelle e sulle ricchezze mobili."5

Carnival, then, was still 'politicized', and now highly organized. Rome was still split into two camps, which attacked each other freely in the press and did so, among other occasions, during the carnival. The liberals, the 'Italians', were anxious to show their control, their triumph; the clericals were anxious to show how badly things were going under the new regime; and among these things figured, naturally, the carnival. What was the support of the Pope in this period? There was, we assume, a fair number of devout Catholics who obeyed his instructions to have nothing to do with the new regime. Information here is, however, scarce. Where we do have some indication of a response to the Pope is among the 'black aristocracy' and the clerical party; the former called off their boycott of the carnival in 1879.⁶

The abstention of a section of the aristocracy might have had some negative effect in removing some of the lustre of the occasion. But, as we have seen, the participation of the aristocracy had declined somewhat in the preceding decades. There was now a new aristocracy, however, whose presence possibly more than compensated for the absence of some of the leading families. Queen Margherita herself made a habit of viewing the festivities from a balcony on the Corso; and, of course, the new aristocracy gathered around her. A glimpse of this is given by D'Annunzio in one of his 'cronache' - a brief description of the carnival of 1885, which appeared in 'La Tribuna'; a description which reflects both his fascination with fashionable society, in his comments on the ladies' dress, and his nationalistic fervour: "Un 'aura eroica di amor patrio aleggiava ... lacrime di entusiasmo sgorgavano dagli occhi di tutti i consiglieri

comunali."⁷

According to the Vatican's mouthpiece, the 'Osservatore Romano', in this same year, the Committee organizing the carnival had done a poor job. "Decisamente, quest'anno il Comitato non ne ha indovinato uno, e ha provato una volta di più l'inutilità della sua istituzione."⁸ The clerical party took every occasion to criticize the liberals' running of the carnival. There presumably were things to criticize in these years; carnival had fallen into a decline. Nevertheless, most of these criticisms sprang from the need to seize any pretext for embarrassing the government and the town council. The 'Osservatore Romano' would reiterate that the carnival was only a shadow of its former self, and recall the good old days under the Pope. The liberals, on the other hand, found themselves in the position, after having boycotted the carnival for so many years, of actively promoting it. Their approach, in the preceding period, had perhaps been motivated, in some cases, by a certain distaste for a phenomenon which was so closely identified with Papal Rome, a shameful reminder of the subservient position of the Roman people, of their acquiescence with an autocratic regime which accorded them a few days of licence - and by then a rather limited licence, before they bent their heads once more under the yoke. Ademollo, writing in the 1880s, puts forward this idea: "Mentre il Risorgimento promuoveva una socialità eroica e degna, la gazzarra carnevalesca sembrava ed era sopravvivenza di un' epoca che pareva (e non era) indegna."⁹

Such ideas had been expressed in the period of the French occupation of Rome, in the programme for the carnival of 1799, with its proposal of a 'fête républicaine' and the exhortations to the people to prove themselves worthy of their great ancestors, and to make the occasion a source of pride. They bring to mind, too, the words of the Prefect of Police, Mariani, in the carnival of 1849 on

the "ritornare l'annuale ricorrenza del Carnevale, unico avanzo dei nostri divertimenti popolari - dopochè per conseguenza della nostra patita servitù scomparvero le nostre feste del Colosseo, del Circo Agonale e di Testaccio del Medio Evo."¹⁰

The words of Mariani perhaps already give us some hint of the post-1870 carnival, with its echoes of the 'cortei' of Agone and Testaccio, the 'carri' of the different 'rioni', the elaborate pageants of those years in which the carnival had been a great civic festival, and the people had had a formal role to play. The patriotic motivation of these years returned now, as we have seen for 1885; four years earlier there had been 'Il carro del risorgimento', put on, however, by the students of the French Academy.¹¹

But possibly the main aim of the city council was to persuade the Romans that things were, not just back to normal after the interim period of 1848-1870, but were better than ever; that the carnival had recovered its old, carefree nature, that people were participating in it whole-heartedly; with the big difference that it was now not just a 'sop' thrown to the people by a repressive and cynical regime, to make it forget momentarily its state of servitude, but the people themselves exulting in their freedom and independence. The new authorities were anxious to show that Rome welcomed the new situation of a 'Libero carnevale in Libera Roma'. However, it must be not simply the 'gazzarra sul Corso', but something more structured and meaningful, on a greater and more impressive scale.

2. The promoting and organizing of carnival

Apart from the patriotic motive, another factor shaping the carnival of these years was probably the influence of other cities outside Italy. In these closing decades of the century we have the

perfecting of the typical twentieth century 'big city' carnival - in Italy, Turin, for example; outside Italy Nice and New Orleans. These are occasions, which put the emphasis on spectacle and colour, with large elaborate floats, music and dancing, are a reflection of late nineteenth century urban life; which have lost their contact with the ancient agrarian rites which gave rise to the festival, very far removed from the small-town Italian carnivals of today, which still retain a strong dramatic and ritual quality, such as was to be seen in the Roman carnival in earlier periods, given its close links with the surrounding countryside. The big city carnivals which had the greatest influence on the Roman festival were probably the German ones like Cologne or Munich, resurrected in the early part of the century, with some of the characteristics which were to be seen in the Rome of this period.¹² This similarity is not surprising if we consider the important role which foreign students, particularly German, would play in the Roman carnival - the 'Circolo Artistico' was dominated by German artists.¹³

What the two promoting forces of the carnival, the municipal authorities and the artistic community, had in common is what might be called a certain antiquarian interest. There was a deliberate harking back to earlier periods of the carnival, a return to the roots, as the liberals saw it, back to a time when the carnival held a place of honour in the civic calendar, and had a civic function to unfold; to the days of the games of Agone and Testaccio, which had virtually ended with the assertion of Papal control in the second half of the sixteenth century. The striking novelty of the carnival of 1871 lay in the anti-clerical masquerade - a novelty because of its satirical force (something not possible in earlier carnivals), and in the fact that it was a masquerade (something which had not been seen on the

Corso for many years). Over the succeeding decades of its life the historical, artistic or political masquerade would form a central feature of the carnival. The individual masking continued, as did the confetti and flower battles, the 'mocoli' ceremony and, for a time, the races. But there seemed to be, on the part of the authorities, a determined effort to remove the impression left in some recent visitors that the scene on the Corso, and elsewhere, had become a 'dirty, draggled affair'.¹⁴

What we witness in this period is a conscious effort to resurrect the carnival and breathe a new life into something which had lost a great deal of its spontaneity, and perhaps even its reasons for existing. The absence of spontaneity on the part of many of the people has been noted, as well as the fact that many (irrespective of political pressures, perhaps) had already forsaken the Corso as too rowdy and dangerous. Such people had to be encouraged back on to the street, and the street carnival had to be reduced to some kind of order. The promotion of the carnival was both political and cultural. The carnival survived for some time, thanks to the efforts of various committees and those of artists and students in the city. On the one hand there was a committee presided over by the mayor of Rome, on the other the 'Associazione Internazionale' of via Margutta organized large masquerades.¹⁵ Stahr, writing in 1846, could speak of the things which distinguished the carnival of Rome from the ones he was familiar with in Germany. The word 'carnival' for us, he says, implies committees, programmes, organization; not the spontaneous participation he sees in Rome: "vorberathende Comites, Festpresident, Festordinar, Sitzungen, Verathungen, Programme, einstudierte Reden, vorbereitete Anzüge, sein zugespitzte Satiren und Aufspielungen, und an tausend andere langweilige, deutsche Schwerfälligkeiten und Pedanterien. Nichts aber von allen dem ist hier zu finden, nichts was

wir unter diesen Namen in der Vorstellung haben, ist mit dem Charakter des römischen Karneval irgendwie zu 'vergleichen'."16

This was precisely what was happening in Rome; planning committees, inducements to participation such as prizes for the best masquerade, as in 1880, or cheap train tickets to Rome.¹⁷ The newsvendors cried out the coming attractions: "Il programma del carnevale! Ecco la lista dei premi del comitato, il veglione all' Alambra, la cavalcata degli artisti ... Ecco li nomi de' barberi che correranno oggi!"¹⁸ A feature of carnival in this period was the custom of processions and masquerades at night: "Alle ore 8, arrivo in Piazza del Popolo della passeggiata colle lanterne. Premi alle migliori lanterne e trasparenti umoristici che avranno preso parte alla passeggiata. Premi alle migliori mascherate sui carri con lanterne."¹⁹

There was possibly some difference of opinion between the organizers and the people as to which mask represented Rome. Pulcinella was obviously still a prime favourite, appearing in his familiar guise in the streets. The Swedish artist Rydberg encountered him in 1874 among the traditional masks - two Pulcinellas disputing as to which had the largest nose, turned to him for his decision on the matter.²⁰ Del Balzo, in 1880, saw many of them in their white costume (such good protection against the plaster confetti).²¹ But Pulcinella was still the typical Neapolitan mask, even though he had been adopted by the Romans for so many years now. Which mask would represent Rome, however, when (as happened in 1876 for example) there was a get-together of the masks representing the various Italian cities?: "Nell'ultimo giorno fu annunciato l'arrivo alla Stazione di Termini di Meneghino, con la Checca e il Dottor Ballanzon. Rugantino, circondato da Stentarello, da Gianduaia e da Pulcinella, si recava ad incontrarlo

per portargli un fraterno saluto."²² The Rugantino on this occasion was the Roman dialect poet L. Zanazzo.²³

The mask, however, which normally represented Rome officially in these years was that of Pasquino, the leading figure on the Committee for Carnival. What these two official masks, Rugantino and Pasquino, had in common was the fact that they were literary figures, and that they had not before appeared as carnival masks. Pasquino, of course, represents the spirit of Roman wit and satire. Pasquino first appeared as the carnival figure in 1873: "Veramente brillante fu il Carnevale del 1873. Per iniziativa di un gruppo di commercianti si era costituito apposito Comitato di Carnevale, che prendeva il nome di Pasquino I ... E per verità Pasquino faceva sul Corso un ingresso trionfale, preceduto, fra suoni e canti da una compagnia di cavalieri del tempo di Luigi XVI, recando al suo seguito un carro con un uovo enorme, che apertosi in Piazza Colonna, dava alla luce il Carnevale."²⁴

Del Balzo felt it worth pointing out that Pulcinella was almost more popular than Pasquino: "molti pulcinelli, una maschera che ha fatto fortuna in Roma, ed è ora quasi più popolare di Pasquino, ciò che dispiace a non pochi uomini politici che ne temono la concorrenza."²⁵ Apart from the suggestion that Pulcinella had just recently become popular, Del Balzo's words seem to reflect the reality of the situation. Pulcinella was still the dominant mask in the eyes of the people. Officially Pasquino opened and closed the carnival, even taking the place sometimes assigned to Pulcinella in the final ceremony: "Pasquino comparve piu volte sul Corso con i suoi cavalieri insieme al frutto delle sue viscere, finchè nella sera dell' ultimo giorno, fra fuochi artificiali e luci di bengala in Piazza del Popolo ne raccoglieva l'ultimo anelito e nel dargli l'estremo saluto, mentre laceravasi il petto per l'atroce dolore, partoriva dalle sue ferite un

vispo bambino in fascie. Che fra gli spasimi dell morte proclamava suo successore per l'anno prossimo, affidandolo ad una balia, onde potesse crescere rubicondo e vivace."²⁶

The death of Carnival had by now become an essential feature of the festival and was mentioned by most observers. Like the races or the 'mocoli' evening, it now had an official status in the programme, whereas earlier it had been given only occasional mention, usually in the accounts of foreign writers. It was now a much more elaborate affair and a much grander one. Clementi gives a brief description of the ceremony for 1880, following on his reference to some of the 'carri' to be seen that year: "Nè meno caratteristica fu la ritirata delle lanterne e la Cremazione del Carnevale. Era aperto da un bizzarro carro funebre, nel quale Carnevale, assistito da medici e da infermieri esalava gli ultimi respiri. Quale agonia tormentosa! Ogni cordiale era oramai inutile; inutili le innumerevoli medicine che gli prodigavano i medici, i salassi e cose simili. Il gruppo delle lanterne presentava uno spettacolo bizzarro, una vera festa di luci e di colori, con allegorie satiriche e originali. Il corteo giungeva a Piazza del Popolo, illuminata a luce di bengala, fin dall'alto del Pincio, quando Carnevale era già morto. La sua anima, estratta dal corpo, era deposta nella navicella di un globo aerostatico e inviata al cielo."²⁷

Murray's Handbook of 1894 informs us that the last evening ends when "an allegorical colossal group representing old father carnival is carried in procession to Piazza del Popolo, and burned on a bonfire amidst a great display of rockets, Roman candles and Bengal lights."²⁸ One of the last reports on the carnival, in 'The Roman World', 1912, announces that the cremation of carnival "will be on Tuesday evening at the Adriano, and the Ball will be the climax of the season."²⁹ This

comfortable middle-class occasion seems far removed from the ritual of earlier times.

It is difficult, however, to compare the two since the old ritual scene had been passed over with little comment or description in the course of the centuries. The death and cremation of Carnival is a scene for which we have only scattered references in earlier periods; a scene for which there are only incomplete descriptions. The elaboration of the ceremony seen in this period has all the appearance of a re-construction, the old ritual re-created, but updated with such details as the transparencies or the aerostatic globe. The ceremony can be related very clearly to the kind of carnival scenes glimpsed earlier. Clementi's reference to the 1879 ceremony ends with the interesting comment: "Si voleva rievocare con questo spettacolo una festa già fatta al tempo di Urbano VIII."³⁰

There was in these years a conscious attempt to resurrect old forms, of which the death of carnival was only one. Nostalgia had by now become a dominant note in the carnival, which had been caught up in the revival of interest in folk culture. This is witnessed by the number of studies which appeared in these years on the phenomenon of the Italian carnival. Commentators were aware of the ending of a whole historical phase, the imminent disappearance of centuries-old forms and customs which were succumbing to the process of material change taking place so rapidly in this period. These early historians of the carnival were often men who had memories of a still lively festival they had known in their youth, and whose decline they had witnessed over the years. There was a growing awareness, too, of the part which historical circumstances played in shaping attitudes and customs. Attempts were made to re-construct features of the carnival which had disappeared in earlier periods of its history. On the part of the committee organizing the carnival there was a greater familiarity with

its history. The whole process had a rather antiquarian air about it, tending to become, perhaps, more a celebration of the past than the enjoyment of the present. Already, in 1869, Zörnstein had lamented the carnival which had been and was no more: "Das alles gehört jetzt auch zu den Dingen, die gewesen sind. Auch der römische carneval hat sich überlebt und was man jetzt noch sieht, sind künstlich Bewegungen, hervorgerufen durch galvanische Reizungen und allerhand Stimulantien."³¹

The obvious historical reference seems to be to the formal, allegorical processions of the games of Agone and Testaccio, as seen in the brief description given in the 'Osservatore Romano' of 1885: "La mascherata Romana era composta così; aprivano la marcia i trombetti ieri, poi 14 cavalieri con 'gonfaloni' dei rioni. Seguivano i pompieri in costume caratteristico. Veniva in seguito il primo carro formato da un 'oca gigantesca ... gran carro di rugantino ... rugantino e la moglie circondati da popolani nei costumi dei castelli romani, sedevano sopra ruderi di un antico portico tutto messo a festa ..."³² But the form probably owed a lot, also, to the memory of the elaborate 'carri' of the aristocratic carnival of the seventeenth century (or later examples, like those of Canova in 1805 and 1806). But whereas artists of the stature of Bernini in the Baroque period and Canova in the neo-classical one provided the 'carri' and the theatrical decor, there were no such artists in this period. The stultifying 'correctness' of the reconstructions of the past which we find in so many of the 'academy' painters of the time, was reproduced in the carnival 'carri' and floats. The historical research resulted in historical tableaux vivants to set alongside the two-dimensional paintings of these years, or the photographs, so carefully posed, their details so thoroughly worked out. Or, we might say, the artistic level is that of the scenery and costumes of the 'dramma storico',

which we see in photographs of stage-productions or in the early silent films on historical subjects; witness the photograph of the 'Ultima Mascherata del Circolo Artistico'.³³ Three years earlier there had even been a masquerade representing the monuments of ancient Rome: "Anche il corteo dei carri ... cessò nel 1896 con quello organizzato dal Circolo Artistico rappresentante i principali monumenti Romani."³⁴

With the intervention of foreign artists and students in the presentation of the masquerades there was a more systematic continuation of a practice which had featured occasionally in the earlier history of the carnival. A notable example had been the Chinese one put on by the students of the Académie Française in 1735, or the artists' Cossack masquerade of 1824.³⁵ The foreigner, once more, was playing an essential part in the survival of the carnival - a fact which the 'Osservatore Romano' was not slow to seize on in its polemic against the carnival committees: "I forestieri, fedeli alle vecchie tradizioni e pieni il capo di racconti d'altri tempi, si piantano ansiosi sui balconi ... Quando torneranno in patria, diranno che hanno assistito al carnevale di Roma, e che si sono divertiti. Beati loro!"³⁶

Stahr's distinction between the Italian carnival and the more highly-structured and rehearsed German carnival was no longer valid. The model seems to be in part that of the historical 'tableau vivant', with something of the political allegory of the Renaissance or Baroque periods. The humour, the parody, the interest in historical reconstructions and literary and cultural references derived largely from the 'Circolo Artistico' and, perhaps, ultimately from the feast of Cervara, the artists' carnival. Murray's Handbook for 1894 describes it as having originated with the German artists in Rome, and promoted by the International Artistic Club.³⁷ The origins of the

society which organized this feast (a spring festival, taking place in May) are lost in the mists of time, according to Clementi (he mentions the fact that Salvator Rosa was at the head of such a society in the seventeenth century). However, he tells us, the Società di Ponte Molle was celebrating its thirtieth Olympiad in 1844.³⁸

This agrees with the comment of Wey: "À la suite de la paix de 1815, cette 'Società di Ponte Molle' était organisée et agrandie, elle institua la fête du Printemps qui, à partir de 1820 a diverti la population Romaine. Sa plus brillante période a été de 1832 à 1845, sous la présidence du chevalier Nerly."³⁹ Elliott gives an extended description of one such 'festa' in the 1850s indicating its mixture of pomp and burlesque, its dignitaries, its militia, its musicians, its high priests, etc.⁴⁰ In some respects, with its carnival flavour and its comic reversals, it was a conscious echo of the medieval Feast of Fools - its heroes, for example, being borne on asses. The feast, as mentioned earlier, was interrupted by the revolution of 1848, and did not resume till 1853, in which year the artist Nino Costa was one of the winners at the Cervara games: "'Vinsi al medievale gioco dell'anello ... Ed arrivai primo nella corsa degli asini ... (the prize was) una pentola artisticamente dipinta con asini eroicamente amorosi, nel fiorito maggio."⁴¹ This latter detail further emphasizes the medieval carnival flavour of the occasion.

With the dominance of the Germans among the foreign artists in Rome it is not surprising if the format of the carnival should approximate very much to that of such German carnivals as Cologne, revived in 1837, or Nuremberg, revived in 1843.⁴² In these carnivals, as in the Munich 'Fasching', the impulse behind the renewal of the old festival came from artists' associations. A central place was held in these carnivals by the masked ball. This feature of carnival, much

favoured by the aristocracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had been the main interest of the foreign visitors of the early part of the nineteenth century, with their love for 'character masks' on literary, historical, artistic themes; these were the very themes which attracted the artists. Their fondness for the burlesque contests and plays in the grottos of Cervara, a kind of natural stage-setting, requiring artificial lighting, already indicated something of a preference for an indoor rather than an outdoor affair. The masked-ball or 'veglione' took on an increased importance, and the one which outshone all the others in this period was that given by the 'Circolo Internazionale'. Del Balzo mentions those at the Alambra, the Politeama and at the Argentina: "Ma un sol ballo eclisse tutti gli altri, un sol ballo rimarrà storico nella cronaca elegante di Roma, ed è quello che danno gli artisti nel loro Circolo Internazionale la sera del giovedì grasso."⁴³

The 'veglione', at the 'Circolo Internazionale', or in the other venues mentioned, seemed to be now the central feature of the carnival in Rome. The masked ball was by now well democratized and was much frequented by the middle classes, who were deserting the Corso. Even the lower classes had their 'veglione' - at the Politeama theatre. Another indication of the quieter, less wild carnival of these years was the 'veglione', held during the day, for children, who had never featured very prominently in the carnival; they, too, had their theatre, the Costanzo: "Delle feste nuove introdotte nel carnevale di questi ultimi anni, i veglioni dei bambini sono le meglio riuscite."⁴⁴

3. Rome has changed

But even the 'veglione', according to the 'Osservatore' in the following year, was in decline, having become almost indistinguishable

from the 'gazzarra sfrenata e ineducata per le vie.'⁴⁵ The masking in the street had declined in quality, become a rather perfunctory and graceless affair; there is little mention of the scenes between maskers which aroused such admiration in the earlier periods. The same situation was to be met in the Neapolitan carnival in these years, as we may see in Miranda's 'Breve storia del carnevale a Napoli'.⁴⁶ For Yorck von Wartenburg, writing in 1891, the few masks which he did see were 'jämmerlich und schmutzig.'⁴⁷ The old carefree spirit had departed, and visitors emphasized the joylessness of the occasion. For Zörnstein, in 1869, there was not the genuine joyfulness and simple pleasure he had witnessed in other Italian festivals - perhaps, he suggested, because it was no longer an Italian festival, since so many foreign elements had been introduced into it.⁴⁸ For Moüy, in 1887, it gives no idea of the old Roman carnival: "en réalité il n'y a guère de gaïeté et pas le moindre tumulte burlesque. Le carnaval est décidément partout en décadence. Déjà mort à Paris, il n'est plus à Rome que l'ombre de lui-meme. Ce siècle devient sérieux en vieillissant, ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'il soit plus sage."⁴⁹ Perhaps the only people who took a keen interest in the carnival now were those who profited materially from it - owners of houses on the Corso, confetti and 'moccoli' sellers, hirers of chairs and cushions, mask-makers, etc.

There is little need to say much about the roughness of the confetti battles, now reduced largely to plaster and flour, or even soot and ashes.⁵⁰ There was still the same delight in pursuing some hapless foreigner who had ventured on the Corso in a top hat, or bowler, as Rydberg found to his cost on his arrival in 1874.⁵¹ And the ladies, especially, needed to protect themselves from the hail if they ventured on to the street; even if they prudently remained on the balconies, their good looks were concealed by the ugly masks they wore for protection: "Masked and muffled ladies there were in abundance,

but their masks were of ugly wire, perfectly resembling little covers placed upon strong cheese in German hotels, and their drapery was a shabby water-proof with the hood pulled over their chignons. They were armed with great tin scoops or funnels, with which they solemnly shovelled lime and flour out of the bushel-baskets and down on the heads of people in the street. They were packed into balconies all the way along the Corso, in which their calcareous shower maintained a dense, gritty, unpalatable fog."⁵²

The street was abandoned, according to the 'Osservatore Romano' to: "turbe di mascalzoni che ad ogni passo gettano in faccia il terriccio che raccolgono sul selciato."⁵³ This last detail might suggest that there was now an element of class-hatred at work. This is stressed by Clementi: "il Corso diveniva sempre più asfissiante per il rapido aumento della popolazione ... violenti assalti contro qualunque manifestazione di signorilità e di caratteristica bizzarria ... Gli artisti perciò nel 1882 si riconcentravano nel loro annuale veglione."⁵⁴ There was an occasional dissenting voice. Gabelli, for example, still talks of the old spirit surviving, protected by years of isolation, and of a gentleness and docility which one would look for in vain in London, Paris or Vienna.⁵⁵ But the years of isolation were now over and Rome was attracting a large number of immigrants, putting considerable pressure on the city.

The social fabric of the city had changed; that easy mingling of the different social classes which Gabelli refers to, and which was the wonder of earlier visitors to the city, could no longer subsist. The middle classes had been expanding over the years; social distinctions were beginning to be felt more clearly. The carnival was showing signs of becoming more and more a middle-class affair, whose venue was less and less the public street. The 'veglione', as we have

seen, was not a completely middle-class habit; and it is worth pointing out that Pesci echoes the sentiments of earlier observers in stressing the fact that the people's good humour never went beyond the limit, and that respectable middle-class fathers were not afraid to take their wives and daughters to the 'veglione' at the Politeama, on the other side of the Tiber.⁵⁶

The city itself had changed physically. While still remaining 'Caput Mundi' for many, now that it was the capital of Italy it had grown considerably. It was no longer the 'capoluogo' of an impoverished and backward state, with little industry or commerce to speak of, and which had still something of the air almost of a country-town set down within the perimeter of the capital of a vast empire. Large sections of the city were being demolished and rebuilt, including some of the loveliest parts, like the Ludovisi palace and gardens in what is now the via Veneto area. Rome was now a boom town, and building speculation was rife. Foreign visitors to the city after 1870 lamented these changes; it was in these years that the image of 'Roma sparita' began to develop. These foreigners, like Henry James, deplored the loss of the picturesque dress of the people, the old buildings, customs, the stillness and romantic decay of the city, destroyed by the efforts of the new 'barbarians'. Even some of those who had criticized severely the old order deplored the change in the city: "Una volta perso l'interesse per la città reale ... nient'altro si chiede alla Città Eterna se non di conservare questo suo volto pittoresco melancolico, la sua "calma tragica", come dirà il Gregorovius - Da questa pretesa verranno le critiche mosse ai restauri e alla modernizzazione, processi già avviati nel periodo napoleonico."⁵⁷ (We have seen the process underway in earlier decades - producing works like, for example, Story's 'Roba di Roma').

Among the changes brought by redevelopment which would affect the

carnival was the creation of a new street in the city centre - the via Nazionale, which became in this period the location of large-scale masquerades. With the building of bigger and more elaborate 'carri' there were complaints about the inability of the Corso to cope. The 'Osservatore Romano' was, of course, among the most vocal critics, in 1885 once more taking the opportunity to attack the committee's mishandling of the carnival: "Se non successero disgrazie serie, fu un vero miracolo, e ad evitarlo non hanno certo provveduto quelli, cui spetta in questi giorni la direzione del Corso ... Un'altra cosa, cui il comitato avrebbe dovuto provvedere, è la dimensione dei carri, alcuni dei quali, troppo grandi per il Corso, misero in serio pericolo la folla, e andavano urtando qua e là sfasciando fanali e sbattendo per i muri."⁵⁸

By 1881 the via Nazionale was being used for the procession of coaches, normally held only on the Corso, glitteringly illuminated for the occasion.⁵⁹ The narrowness of the Corso had always constituted a problem, particularly for the horse-races, but up to now it had been the most suitable street in Rome, nevertheless, for the occasion. We have seen how occasionally the 'corso' of the coaches had to be diverted into the side streets to relieve the crush - along via Condotti to Piazza di Spagna, for example. In this period we find it being extended to via Ripetta. Ripa Grande, the Pantheon, etc. With the opening of the via Nazionale the Corso had lost its unique position in the carnival; it was no longer the one main venue. (The horse-races continued there for a few more years).

Another venue which assumed a central importance in these years was not a new one but one which centuries earlier had held pride of place - Piazza Navona, the scene of jousts, tourneys, and even bullfights in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods. But the old

amphitheatre of Diocletian had been also the scene of a lively marketplace, with all that this implied of outdoor entertainments - charlatans, travelling players etc. who performed on the trestle-stages, as seen in prints; it had been the people's square. And it was here, with the increasing 'gentrification' of the Corso and the via Nazionale, that the people tended to congregate in carnival. While remaining a commercial centre during carnival, with stall-holders dressed up as Pulcinella or 'pagliacci', it still retained something of the old 'teatro di piazza' of earlier centuries. Del Balzo describes it in 1880: "... alberi luminosi ... festoni ... botteghe tenute in gran parta da pulcinelli, che fanno il diavolo a quattro, per tirar l'acqua al proprio mulino. Ai due lati, dietro ciascuna fontana, un palco per l'orchestra, e dietro il palco dell' orchestra, negli archi dell'ellissi, botteghe più grandi, teatrini, diorami, ciarlatani e donne fenomeni.

Le due bande suonano a vicenda, e il popolo balla e i venditori strillano. Intorno c'è un vero bazar ... I bimbi e i monelli fanno ressa intorno alle banche di dolciumi ... un altro spettacolo; si illumina a bengala la fontana Bernini ..."⁶⁰

The material changes, however, do not count as much as those relating to the population of the city. The population more than doubled in the closing decades of the century, according to Seronde Babonaux's statistics from 229, 316 in 1871 to 642, 254 in 1901.⁶¹ Although she indicates that the proportion of native-born Romans remained constant, around half of the total population, inevitably the character and the attitudes of the people changed, and the newcomers had limited interest in the old traditions.⁶² The city retained something of its rustic flavour into the present century, and its links with the surrounding countryside; the people of Trastevere, once the area of the 'vignaroli' and the 'giardinieri', now began to

describe themselves as the 'veri Romani de Roma'; and in our own century the Trastevere 'Festa de Noantri' has become the distinctive Roman festival, taking over from the 'Ottobrata' and from carnival itself. Some impression of this 'festa' may be obtained from the study of the carnival scenes 'off-Corso', which, for some foreign commentators, constituted the real festival of the people.

Rome had grown too large; the old neighbourly spirit which transcended social differences had gone; the new Romans came from different areas with different backgrounds, traditions, language. They were ignorant of the customs and traditions of the carnival, and of its regulations. The festival was a family affair, its spirit and its rules understood by few foreigners, and therefore, probably, by few newcomers. Consequently, after 1870, with the continuing influx of foreigners and newcomers, and with a new generation of 'Romani de Roma' who had not known the splendours of carnival before 1848, those who retained a knowledge and love of the carnival and its traditions found themselves very much in the minority. This change in the actual make-up of the population probably, more than any other reason, helps explain the decline of the carnival; to quote the words of Silvio Negro in 'Seconda Roma': "Ma a Roma esso (i.e. the carnival) era più che un 'occasione di divertimento, era l'indice di un modo di vita, una delle espressioni tipiche di quella rustica metropoli."⁶³ A sense of community is essential to the occasion, and this can only exist with a high degree of social cohesion.

Related to this is the question of the civic function of the festival. According to De Antonis, writing in this period: "Dei carnevali e delle corse del 1870 in poi, non mette il conto d'occuparsi di proposito. Il carnevale finì d'essere una istituzione per divenire un passatempo popolare. Al governo che cessava da ogni

ingerenza, si credette di istituire un comitato carnevalesco per tenere in piedi il carnevale."⁶⁴ The sense of a civic occasion, of a pride in the institutions of the city, may be one aspect of the carnival; but, of course, the sense of an official occasion, of civic pride, had diminished considerably after the period in which the Roman people had had some say in the running of the city - in the days of Agone and Testaccio. With the confirmation of Papal power and the strength of the new aristocracy, the carnival had become an instrument of the government in the control of the people, a 'safety-valve', as Lassels had called it.⁶⁵ It had been considered by many in the years before 1870 as an institution irremediably marked by the Papal state, and after 1870 it was an unfortunate reminder of it, which it was probably better to allow to die quietly. The attempt of the French in 1798-99 to re-introduce the concept of a civic fête had been short-lived.

It would be truer to say, with regard to the statement of De Antonis, that the carnival suffered in this period more from the fact that it was over-organized - if not quite institutionalized. Comparatively little effect had been produced by the efforts of the committees, the prizes and other inducements, to promote a sense of real participation. The efforts of artists and committees were fruitless because they hardly touched the people, and their basic enjoyment of the occasion. The people tended to find themselves relegated once more to the role of spectators; and carnival is never satisfactory if there is a distinction between actors and spectators.

Carnival does not perhaps belong in the modern world. Its roots lie in the Middle Ages and, beyond that, in the pagan mentality of more primitive periods. Its roots are in ritual, the agrarian rites of the changing seasons, the re-awakening of spring after winter. Rationalism (with its rejection of the old beliefs and superstitions),

industrialism (with its severing of links with the rural world), socialism (with its emphasis on the divisions between the classes, and its awareness of the mechanisms of social and political exploitation), the development of a middle-class, commercial mentality (with its emphasis on the work ethic and material progress); all of these militated against the survival of the age-old carnival spirit: "Era para una epoca de aristocrata y de pueblo: la burguesia republicana y el socialismo obrero lo miraban con desprecio."⁶⁶

An enlightened observer such as Lady Morgan, seeing the carnival as an instrument for the exploitation and manipulation of the people, tended to ignore the whole ritual element in the occasion: "The carnival is the wreck of one of these popular institutions which can flourish only in barbarous times, and in days of profound and rude ignorance. As knowledge spreads, such periodical excitements to relaxation and pleasure gradually lose their influence ... Man is not made for stated seasons of hilarity, nor to put on and put off his cares by act of parliament."⁶⁷ She ignores the need man had for patriotic moments of release, especially given the monotony of life in those earlier days; those moments of release can come now virtually when and where the people wish; they no longer have the need for such fixed periods of enjoyment as carnival - or perhaps they simply believe that they don't.

4. The end of the horse-race

The event which dealt the mortal blow to the carnival was the suppression of the horse-race, the prime attraction for the Romans themselves, if not for the foreigners; the focal point around which were regulated all the day's activities. For Leone Paladini, who gives the most eloquent and detailed defence of the race, in his 'apologia'

written just before its abolition, it is indispensable to the occasion: "Il vero popolo romano, dalle classi elevate alla classe più infima, idolatra le corse dei barberi."⁶⁸ For this writer it is something peculiar to Rome itself, to be found nowhere else.⁶⁹ Ademollo, among others in this period, echoes these sentiments: "Il carnevale Romano ... è rappresentato più che altro dalla Corsa dei Barberi. Sopprimete la corsa, e il Carnevale sparisce."⁷⁰ The voices of the liberals had been raised for some time now against the barbarism of this event, the cruelty and danger it involved. It too became an instrument in the political controversy, as the two political camps in Rome argued over its existence. The liberals saw it as a barbaric custom to be removed, one which had no place in a civilized and enlightened capital city. At every accident, or death, on the Corso the liberal press raised a cry for the abolition of the race, while the 'Osservatore Romano' upheld it as the centre-piece of the carnival: "Ora le tradizioni sono cambiate. La corsa dei barberi, questo avanzo di barbarie, questa memoria di governi incivili, mercè la civiltà del Prefetto Gravina, e le tanto sapienti quanto umanitarie diatribe del Diritto, della Rassegna, della Riforma ecc. ecc. è stata cancellata dal carnevale Romano. E il carnevale non è più quella baldoria, quel diavolerio di gente che si diverte, come era una volta."⁷¹

From the start of this period the sad chronical of accidents, fatal or not, was resumed - exacerbated by the removal of the military. Now that the Papal dragoons were no more, and the French gendarmes had been removed, the gap was filled initially by the army; not a municipal force, and therefore with no particular love of this duty; in fact there was also a resentment at having to risk their lives because of the indiscipline of the people.⁷² After a serious

accident in 1873 the town council voted in favour of the abolition of the races, and proposed that a more civilized alternative be found to replace them.⁷³ The ban lasted, however, for only two years; due to public protests the races were allowed once more in 1876, when more victims were claimed. They survived, amid continual controversy, till 1883, when the last death occurred, a young boy who died under the eyes of Queen Margherita herself.⁷⁴ A.G. Mackinnon mentions the little cross on the Palazzo di Venezia which marks the spot of the fatal accident.⁷⁵ Leone Paladini's 'Apologia' was written the year before, while discussions and arguments were in progress, but from the new edition published in 1895 we can see that the polemic continued. The Romans were loath to give up this favourite sport, whose danger was, according to Leone Paladini, the main attraction. In his opusculè, in fact, he goes so far as to say that to remove the danger, to put the race in a safe enclosed space, would be to lose the thrill of the occasion and its peculiar character. And, he adds, if the occasional spectator gets carried away by the excitement and throws himself onto the course, so be it!⁷⁶

The loss of the race left a very large gap to be filled; various proposals were put forward, and some were put into effect, to replace it. The promotion of artistic masquerades was suggested, partly to compensate those who were losing financially from the change, the hirers of balconies and windows on the Corso. In 1892 a kind of Roman Circus was proposed: "Nel 1892 si sperò di poter sostituire alle corse qualche cosa di nuovo ... e d'antico. In Piazza del Popolo si costruiva un Circo romano, con un grande Arco di trionfo di fronte al Corso e nel Circo si fecero corse di bighe di tipo classico e corse di butteri della Campagna romana."⁷⁷ Yorck von Wartenburg was present at one such peasant-race in the preceding year.⁷⁸ But races of mounted horses in the enclosed space of the Piazza, were presumably a poor

substitute for the excitement of the 'Corsa dei barberi'. Further suggestions were made - such as a bicycle race.⁷⁹

Such initiatives had by now almost an air of desperation about them. 'The Roman World' (27 February 1897) reported that the streets were thronged, but the old carnival had gone 'beyond recall'.⁸⁰ The newspaper seemed to have forgotten this verdict seven years later - or was the writer's tongue, as seems possible, firmly in his cheek?: "There are always a number of people annually turning up in Rome who lament the carnival is dying or dead ... It degraded into brutality and ruffianism, as anyone resident in Rome for the past ten years can well testify to ... The carnival of Rome, in the real sense has however not ended ... It is less noisy but not less animated. We have in its place the tender and delicate breakfasts, where matrimonial alliances are initiated; the afternoon five o'clocks."⁸¹

The point of view of the Roman may be found in Trilussa's 'Er carnovale de mo': "er carnovale s'ariduce a gnente ... Dicheno bene, sa, ' li mi padroni: / de tutta er carnovale de 'na vorta / che ciarimane mo? 'N par de ... vejoni."⁸² Del Balzo's words of 1880 had been over-optimistic: "Il Carnevale muore e resuscita ogni anno ... perche e un 'abitudine del popolino e del popolo Romano."⁸³ For the English-speaking traveller the advice was conflicting; Baedeker in 1900, and again in 1907, gives the impression that the carnival survives as usual; Murray's Handbook of 1894 (ten years after the loss of the horse-race) reports it as already dead. The last word on the subject might be accorded to the novelist Francis Marion Crawford (son of the American sculptor, William Crawford, who had settled in Rome). Comparing the present-day carnival with the one which was still so vivid in his memory, experienced as a child in 1859, he proclaimed that: "In a closer sense Carnival is the Carnival in the Corso, or

was; for it is dead beyond resuscitation, and such efforts as are made to give it life again are but foolish incantations that call up sad ghosts of joy, spiritless and witless."⁸⁴

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to look at the carnival over a period of roughly two hundred years in an attempt to establish its main features, describe its development and the ways in which it was affected by events.

The immediate impression, on examining the individual features (masks, races, confetti battles, 'mocoli' evening) is of a basically constant phenomenon, undergoing only superficial modifications (in the conduct of the races, for example, or in the popularity of certain masks). This is as might be expected of an essentially seasonal festival in a city which during this period retained strong links with its surrounding countryside. In the attempt to piece together the picture of the carnival scenes over the period, in the absence of such a description in earlier writers on the carnival, details have been brought together from a large number of separate accounts. These scenes relate for the most part to the participation of the people, an extensive treatment of which is lacking in earlier studies of the carnival.

While the essential features of carnival were relatively constant over the period, the event itself was inevitably conditioned by the social and political context, and should not be separated from it. After a long period of stability. Papal Rome and the carnival in their last one hundred years were to experience revolution and years of political unrest. The latter had not been present for a long time (it had been there in, for example, the occasional conflict between city magistrates and Pope, or the factions, like the Colonna and the Orsini, which had divided Rome, or occasional fighting between different foreign nationals. These conflicts had sometimes left their mark on the carnival, which offers a perfect occasion for disorders. With the events after 1789 the old regime was shaken, though it strived to deny or ignore these events and return to the old order.

Rome and the attitudes of the Roman people were changing gradually in the course of the nineteenth century, and these changes inevitably affected the carnival. Despite the superficial resemblances the carnival described by Goethe was a different affair from the one witnessed by Hawthorne, because the mood of the city was different.

Carnival was the victim of political unrest; but it also represented a facet of a life-style which could not long survive in the modern world, not at least in a large city, and not in the capital of a newly united country. The mood of the city had changed noticeably in the years after 1848; the people were becoming more disaffected with the regime, the rising middle-class was turning away from the rowdier pursuits of carnival; foreigners were taking on an even larger role in the event, and changing its character. Despite the promotion of the carnival after 1870 the public carnival, the essence of the event, continued to decline. The public spectacles were little different from those of other European cities. On the one hand it had become much more of a tourist attraction, on the other a noisy free-for-all, avoided by the upper and middle classes, and without the tolerant and good-natured humour of earlier days. The people had changed, too, not just in their mood, but with the presence of a large influx of 'new' Romans, unfamiliar with the old traditions.

The picture remains sketchy in certain areas. It is hoped that the general lines are clear, for the event and its development over the years. But much more research needs to be done in the key area of the masks and the scenes acted out on the Corso, as the prelude to their interpretation. It is here that the whole ritual of the occasion may be seen more clearly, and where the so-often dismissed 'gazzarra sul Corso' may take on a meaning. A fruitful further line of research would be the relations between such scenes and masks and those of stage comedy, particularly the *Commedia dell'Arte*.

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Chapter One

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Chapter Three

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59. Skene, p. 116.
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Chapter Four

1. J. Mayne, The Journal of John Mayne during a tour on the Continent upon its Reopening after the Fall of Napoleon, 1814, ed. J.H. Colles, London, 1909, p. 251.
2. Clementi, II, p. 300.
3. A.J.B. Thomas, Un an à Rome et dans ses environs, Paris, 1823, p. 6.
4. C. Dickens, pp. 451-452.
5. See Chapter Three, Note 12.
6. Clementi, II, p. 310; II, p. 373.
7. Clementi, II, p. 303.
8. J. Bramsen, Letters of a Prussian Traveller ..., London, 1818, 2 volumes, II, p. 191.
9. W.W. Story; quoted in S. Negro, p. 127.
10. A. Cunningham, The Life of Sir David Wilkie, London, 1843, 3 volumes, II, p. 225.
11. E. Amadei, Roma in un diario inedito del primo Ottocento, Rome, 1961, p. 30.
12. Cunningham, II, p. 230. Viollet-le-Duc went to a ball at the Torlonia palace in 1837, and remarked on the absence of French ladies, and the fact that English was heard on all sides. (Lettres d'Italie (1836-37), Paris, 1971, p. 234).
13. S. Rogers, The Italian Journal of Samuel Rogers, edited with an account of Rogers life and of travel in Italy in 1814-21, by J.R. Hale, London, 1956, p. 236.
14. Clementi, II, p. 320.
15. A. Cunningham, II, p. 225.
16. A. Potocka, Voyage d'Italie 1826-27, Paris, 1899, p. 109.
17. A. Yates, A Winter in Italy, London, 1844, 2 volumes, I, p. 124.

18. John W. Armstrong, Diary of John W. Armstrong, Portugal, France, Italy, Alps. MS in Trinity College Library, Dublin, Box Nos. 6409-10), 2 parts, I, p. 608.
19. Sydney (Lady) Morgan, Italy, London, 1821, 2 volumes, II, p. 292.
20. A counter to such claims is found in Del Cerro, who speaks of an anti-English feeling in Rome during these years, giving some examples on pp. 128-129.
21. F.W. Waiblinger, in the selection Mein flüchtiges Glück, Berlin, 1974, p. 364.
22. Negro, p. 218.
23. G. Head, Rome. A Tour of Many Days, London, 1849, 3 volumes, II, p. 64.
24. Clementi, II, p. 478-479.
25. Mortoft, p. 136.
26. Clementi, II, p. 333.
27. E.J. Delécluze, p. 144.
28. Dickens, p. 444.
29. Clementi, II, p. 318.
30. G. Checchetelli, Il Carnevale di Roma -esposto in nove scene, Rome, 1843, p. 16. Clementi, quoting from the Notizie del giorno, for that year, tells us that "La civiltà bandisce ogni giorno di più i rozzi e spesso incomodi confetti di gesso" (II, p. 387).
31. G.S. Hillard, Six Months in Italy, London, 1853, 2 volumes, II, p. 6.
32. C. de Norvins, L'Italie pittoresque, Paris, 1850, p. 114.
33. Bramsen, II, p. 203.
34. E. Briffault, Le Secret de Rome au XIX ième siècle. 1. Le peuple. 2. La Cour. 3. L'Église, Paris, 1846, p. 152.
35. Many expressed their regret when this high pavement was lowered in the 1830s, Belli and D'Azeglio among others; see Checchetelli,

- p. 15: "l'ultima ruina del Carnevale fu l'abbassare il gradino del palazzo Ruspoli".
36. Delécluze, p. 167.
 37. A. Stahr, Ein Jahr in Italien, 3rd edition, Oldenburg, 1864, p. 491.
 38. Hillard, II, p. 4.
 39. Hillard, II, p. 9.
 40. W. Ermeler, Briefe aus Italien, Berlin, 1861, p. 340.
 41. Bence Jones, I, p. 188.
 42. Pöllnitz, II, p. 60.
 43. H. Crabb Robinson, Diary reminiscences and correspondences of Henry Crabb Robinson, ed. T. Sadler, London, 1869, 3 volumes, II, p. 460.
 44. J.W. Armstrong, I, p. 608.
 45. Delecluze, p. 193.
 46. H. Matthews, The Diary of an Invalid (in years 1817, 1818 & 1819), 2nd edition, London, 1820, p. 149.
 47. J.R.D. Beste, Transalpine Memoirs, London, 1826, 2 volumes, I, p. 115.
 48. J.H. Harris, Memoirs of an Ex-Minister, 3rd edition, London, 1884, 2 volumes, I, pp. 186-187.
 49. Webb, I, p. 219.
 50. D.C.G.D. Stein, Reise durch Italien, Leipzig, 1829, p. 170.
 51. A. Kephhalides, I, pp. 45-46.
 52. Andersen, Rømerske Dagbøger, p. 67. The obverse of this tolerance and the leniency of the forces of law and order is seen in the fact that crimes committed during the carnival were punished much more harshly than usual. See Stahr, pp. 521-523.
 53. J.A. Galiffe, Italy and its inhabitants; an account of a tour in

- that country in 1816 and 1817, London, 1820, 2 volumes, II, p.428.
54. Millin, p. 49.
55. MacFarlane, p. 157.
56. F. Lewald, The Italiens at Home, London, 1848, 2 volumes, II, p. 20.
57. Stahr, p. 516. It should be noted that the British could be prone to complain bitterly if they were attacked. There is an example of this in Countess Blessington's novel Strathern or Life at Home and Abroad. A Story of the Present Day, London, 1845, 4 volumes, II, pp. 231-232.
58. Head, II, p. 67.
59. Head, II, p. 67. Frances Elliott considered that the blue wire masks used by the ladies were hideous (Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy, ed. used Leipzig, 1872, 2 volumes, II, 69.
60. E. de la Rochère, Rome, Tours, 1853, p. 389.
61. C.A. Easton, Rome in the 19th century (1817-1818), Edinburgh, 1820, p. 232.
62. M.L. de Sivry, Rome et l'Italie méridionale, Paris, 1843, p. 159.
63. Galiffe, II, p. 428.
64. F.A. Vane, Narrative of a visit to the courts of Vienna, Constantinople, Athens, Naples, etc., London, 1844, p. 205.
65. John Milford, Observations moral, literary, antiquarian, Made during a Tour through the Pyrenees, South of France, Switzerland, The Whole of Italy and the Netherlands in the Years 1814 and 1815, London, 1818, 2 volumes, I, pp. 342-343. See, too, G. Laourens, Tableau de Rome vers la fin de 1814, Brussels, 1816, p. 270, and The Marble Faun, New York, 1966 (Airmont Classics Series), pp. 302-303.
66. Sivry, p. 160.
67. A. Boecklin, Böcklin Memoiren, Berlin, 1910, p. 34.

68. Head, II, p. 70. We have seen, in an earlier period, Goethe's 'scopette' (p. 453) free to circulate on the Corso without male escort, carrying little brooms for defence and offence, and flourishing them in the face of a stranger.
69. K.A. von Hase, in Viaggio in Italia: Diario a piu voci ed. G.E. Viola, Rome, 1977, 2 volumes, I, p. 189.
70. Lady Morgan, II, p. 287.
71. H. Wreford, Rome, Pagan and Papal, by an English Resident in that City, London, 1846, p. 185.
72. Dickens, pp. 448-450.
73. Berry, Extracts of the Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry = From the Year 1783 to 1852, ed. Lady Theresa Lewis, London, 1865, 3 volumes, III, p. 295.
74. W. Ermeler, Briefe aus Italien, Berlin, 1861, p. 355.
75. F. Hebbel, Werke, volume 5, Munich, 1967, p. 610.
76. H. Zörnstein, Italien in den Jahren 1868 und 1869, Berlin, 1870, 2 volumes, II, p. 102.
77. M. de Santo-Domingo, Roman Tablets, London, 1826, p. 9.
78. F.B. de Mercey, La Toscane et le Midi de l'Italie: Notes de voyage, études et recits, Paris, s.d. 1858, 2 volumes, II, p. 94.
79. Galiffe, II, p. 436; II, p. 430.
80. Delécluze, p. 165.
81. Zörnstein, II, p. 102.
82. Galiffe, II, p. 436.
83. G. Laourens, p. 273.
84. Viollet-le-Duc, p. 248.
85. Stahr, p. 532.
86. Yates, I, p. 188.
87. S. Martin, Narrative of a Three Years Residence in Italy 1819-22

- with illustrations of the present state of Religion in that country, London, 1828, p. 147.
88. Matthews, pp. 163-164.
 89. V.M. Conti, La Sepoltura del Carnevale, Biblioteca Casanatense, MSS. 3968, p. 153.
 90. L.M.J. Lacour-Delâtre, Ricordi di Roma, Rome, 1870, pp. 175-176.
 91. L. Simond, Voyage en Italie et en Sicile, Paris, 1828, 2 volumes, I, p. 351.
 92. Mayne, p. 251; Bence Jones, I, p. 178.
 93. Head, II, p. 77.
 94. Matthews, p. 154.
 95. Mayne, p. 251; Bence Jones, I, p. 179.
 96. Milford, I, p. 344.
 97. Clementi, II, p. 308. The amount of the prize-money aroused the scorn of Valadier, who considered it unlikely to stimulate the zeal of the breeders, mainly middle-class entrepreneurs. (Rome Vraie, Paris, 1867, p. 109).
 98. Clementi, II, p. 320.
 99. Bence Jones, I, p. 179.
 100. Clementi, II, p. 309; II, p. 311.
 101. H.W. Williams, Travels in Italy, Greece and the Ionian Islands, Edinburgh, 1820, 2 volumes, II, p. 100.
 102. Easton, p. 237.
 103. Monsieur Valéry (A.C. Pasquin), Rome et ses environs, Brussels, 1842, pp. 282-283.
 104. C. Trant, The Journal of Clarissa Trant, 1800-1832, ed. C.G. Luard, London, 1925, p. 182; Rogers, p. 237.
 105. Fanny Mendelssohn (F. Hensel), Italienisches Tagebüch, Frankfurt, 1982, p. 74.
 106. Valadier, p. 110.

107. A. Helfferich, Briefe aus Italien, Leipzig, 1850, 2 volumes, II, p. 323.
108. Clementi, II, p. 403.
109. Martin, p. 148.
110. Simond, I, p. 351.
111. See, for example, Waiblinger, pp. 487-488. See, too, Stahr, p. 507.
112. Clementi, II, p. 319.
113. Amadei, pp. 28-29; Simond, I, pp. 351-352. See also F. Valentini, p. 29.
114. Checchetelli, p. 49. A similar scene is reported in Countess Blessington's novel, Strathern, II, p. 229.
115. Martin, p. 145.
116. Rogers, p. 244.
117. Head, II, p. 71. See Valentini, p. 25.
118. Martin, p. 145.
119. Laourens, p. 271. Figures on stilts continued to be popular and are seen in the prints in Valentini's book, and in Bridgens, plate no. 39 (R. Bridgens, Sketches illustrative of the manners and costumes of France, Switzerland and Italy, London, 1821).
120. Martin, p. 146.
121. Stein, p. 172.
122. Valentini, p. 25.
123. Rogers, p. 240.
124. J. Fenimore Cooper, Excursions in Italy, London, 1838, 2 volumes, II, p. 210.
125. Trant, p. 179.
126. Laourens, p. 271. Other popular female costumes in these years show the influence of the operatic stage - Norma, Lucia di

- Lammermoor, etc. (Il Giornale Letterario, 1841, p. 8; Checchetelli, p. 15).
127. Easton, p. 232.
128. Thomas, p. 8. S. Negro (p. 370) indicates that lovers took full advantage of the occasion, citing the example of Arnold Böcklin with his Angela - see note 67.
129. L'Album, Giornale Letterario e di Belle Arti, 8 anno, Rome, 1841, p. 7.
130. Valentini, p. 23: "non ne accade mai qualche scandalo come alcuno potrebbe pensarsi".
131. Von Hase, II, p. 189.
132. Head, II, p. 77.
133. Checchetelli, p. 28.
134. Andersen, L'improvvisatore, p. 99. He does not seem to be aware that the type represents the 'nobile spiantato', who possesses little more than the title he flaunts so proudly.
135. V.M. Conti, Il Carnevale Anacreontico, MSS. 3969, Biblioteca Casanatense, p. 302. The satirical disposition and the use of stilts are two details which relate him to the Poet.
136. Lacour-Delâtre, p. 174.
137. L'Album, 1841, p. 7.
138. Kephhalides, I, p. 48.
139. L.H. Friedländer, Views in Italy during a journey in the years 1815 and 1816, London, 1821, p. 113.
140. Dickens describes this scene, pp. 452-453. See, too, Story, I, p. 34.
141. Stahr, p. 506. Bandits are referred to in the pages of Laourens, p. 271, and in Il Pirata of 1841, Milan, 9 March, pp. 91-92.
142. Valentini, p. 22.
143. Laourens, p. 269.

144. Stein pp. 173-174.
145. Il Pirata, 9 March, Milan, 1841, p. 91.
146. F. Mendelssohn, p. 73.
147. A. Cunningham, II, p. 241.
148. Checchetelli, p. 34.
149. The most famous Charlatan of these years was the one impersonated by the Roman poet Belli in 1828. See Il Ciarlatano in Lettere giornali Zibaldone, ed. G. Orioli, Turin, 1962 (pp. 421-432).
150. W.W. Story, Roba di Roma, London, 1863, 2nd ed. 2 volumes, I, p. 93.
151. The Marble Faun, p. 303.
152. Andersen, L'Improvvisatore, pp. 100-102.
153. Checchetelli, p. 54.
154. Valentini, p. 23.
155. Easton, p. 232; Norvins, p. 114: "dont le costume est si favorable à la taille des dames".
156. Kephalaides, I, p. 47.
157. Valentini, p. 25.
158. Andersen, L'Improvvisatore, p. 100.
159. Valentini, p. 32.
160. Easton, p. 232.
161. Valentini, p. 20.
162. Valentini, p. 28; Millin, pp. 28-29.
163. Delecluze, p. 185. Williams (II, p. 99) mentions this, too, as does Easton (p. 239) who adds that the maskers adopt these voices to perplex each other.
164. Briffault, p. 152.
165. Valentini, p. 27.
166. Millin, p. 30.

167. V.M. Conti, Il Carnevale Anacreontico, p. 304.
168. Mayer, p. 228.
169. Valentini, Plate 2.
170. Valentini, p. 28.
171. Lacour-Delâtre, p. 174.
172. Hillard, II, p. 8.
173. Mayer, p. 241.
174. Uwins, Memoir of T. Uwins, R.A., London, 1858, 2 volumes, II, p.5.
175. Checchetelli, p. 49.
176. Valentini, p. 24.
177. Dickens, p. 376.
178. Dickens, pp. 429-430.
179. Easton, p. 239.
180. Wehrhan, p. 259.
181. Lalande, VI, p. 170.
182. Delécluze, p. 189; p. 168.
183. Matthews, p. 149.
184. Easton, p. 236.
185. Delécluze, p. 165.
186. Skene, p. 115.
187. Martin, pp. 146-147.
188. Clementi, II, p. 335.
189. Laoureins, p. 270; Catherinet de Villemarest, IV, p. 14.
190. Potocka, pp. 109-110.
191. Clementi, II, p. 314.
192. Clementi, II, p. 328.
193. A. Cunningham, II, p. 230.
194. Valentini, p. X.
195. Checchetelli, p. 14.
196. Armstrong, I, p. 606.

197. Andersen, L'Improvvisatore, p. 98.
198. Spence, p. 95.
199. De Staël, Corinne, p. 191.
200. Friedländer, p. 113.
201. Mayer, pp. 232-233.
202. Silvagni, III, p. 152.
203. Goethe, p. 453.
204. Mayer, p. 227.
205. De Musset, p. 238.
206. Stahr, p. 519.
207. H. Berlioz, The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz, tr. D. Cairns, London, 1969, pp. 168-169.
208. Galiffe, II, p. 438.
209. Von Hase, II, p. 189.
210. The occasion was possibly the election of Pope Gregory XVI.
211. J.L.F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Reisebriefe aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1832, Leipzig, 1862, p. 106.
212. Ermeler, p. 338.
213. E. Speckter, Briefe eines deutschen Künstlers aus Italien, Leipzig, 1846, p. 140.
214. Leflon, II, p. 794.
215. J. d'Estourmel, Souvenirs de France et d'Italie, Paris, 1861, p. 112.
216. Speckter, pp. 148-152.
217. Chigi, Il tempo del papa: Diario del Principe Chigi 1830-55, Rome, 1966, p. 41. See also d'Estourmel, pp. 100-111.
218. Silvagni, III, pp. 261-264.
219. Speckter, p. 153. See also p. 149.
220. D'Estourmel, p. 93.

221. Clementi, II, p. 355.
222. Friendländer, pp. 112-113.
223. Silvagni, III, p. 95.
224. Waiblinger, p. 200.
225. Clementi, II, p. 367.
226. Viollet-le-Duc, p. 247.
227. Gorani, II, pp. 145-146.
228. Lady Morgan, II, p. 286.
229. Del Cerro, p. 389.
230. Lalande, VI, p. 171; Lacour-Delatre, pp. 172-173.
231. Gogol, Rome, Oeuvres Completes, Paris, 1966, p. 750.
232. Berry, III, p. 288.
233. Silvagni, I, pp. 55-56.
234. Leflon, II, p. 565; Clementi, II, p. 349.
235. Clementi, II, p. 363.
236. Clementi, II, p. 404.
237. A. Herzen, Lettres de France et d'Italie, Geneva, 1871, p. 124;
p. 163.
238. Clementi, II, p. 351; Gregorovius, p. 71.
239. Story, II, p. 213; Silvagni, II, p. 21.
240. MacFarlane, p. 160.
241. Lady Morgan, II, p. 291; Amadei, p. 29.
242. Gogol, Rome, pp. 752-753.
243. Waiblinger, p. 364.
244. Delécluze, p. 193.
245. J.W. Bergsøe, Von der Piazza del Popolo. Novellen Cyklus aus Rom,
Tr. F. Busch, Bremen, 1871, p. 125.
246. Stahr, p. 496.
247. See Chapter Six, pp. 15-16.

Chapter Five

1. Clementi, II, p. 404.
2. A. Herzen, p. 162; p. 163.
3. Chigi, p. 217.
4. G.S. Hillard, II, p. 12.
5. Clementi, II, p. 402; p. 404.
6. A.M. Ghisalberti, Roma da Mazzini a Pio IX / Ricerche sulla Restaurazione Papale del 1849-50, Varese, 1958, p. 226.
7. Ghisalberti, p. 272.
8. E. Lafond, Rome, Lettres d'un pèlerin, Paris, 1852, 2 volumes, II, p. 118.
9. H. Zörnstein, Italien in den Jahren 1868 und 1869, Berlin, 1870, 2 volumes, II, p. 85.
10. Clementi, II, p. 414.
11. L. Mariani, Ordinanza di Polizia sopra i divertimenti del carnevale (8 February 1849), Museo di Roma, Archivio Fotografico, No. X d. 7320.
12. Clementi, II, p. 419.
13. Ademollo, p. XII.
14. N. Roncalli, Diario di Nicola Roncalli dall'anno 1849 al 1870, ed. R. Ambrosi de Magistris and I. Ghiron, Turin, 1887, pp. 234-235.
15. Clementi, II, p. 419.
16. Clementi, II, p. 418, quoting from the memoirs of the actor Salvini.
17. Del Cerro, Roma che Ride, p. 358.
18. Ghisalberti, p. 250.
19. Chigi, p. 314; Roncalli, p. 235.
20. E. Dicey, Rome in 1860, Cambridge-London, 1861, p. 170.

21. Clementi, II, p. 402.
22. Clementi, II, p. 417.
23. Clementi, II, p. 414.
24. Clementi, II, p. 414; Roncalli, p. 210.
25. A. Helfferich, Briefe aus Italien, Leipzig, 1850, 2 volumes, II, pp. 323-324.
26. E. de la Rochere, Rome, Tours, 1853, pp. 386-387.
27. Helfferich, II, p. 311; II, p. 312.
28. F. Wey, Rome. Descriptions et souvenirs, Paris, 1872, p. 523.
29. Roncalli, p. 376.
30. Helfferich, II, p. 320.
31. Clementi, II, p. 421; Roncalli, pp. 235-236.
32. La Rochère, p. 394; Helfferich, II, p. 317-318.
33. Roncalli, p. 252; pp. 253-254.
34. Clementi, II, p. 428.
35. D. O'Donovan, Memories of Rome, London, 1859, p. 119.
36. E. Haeckel, Briefe an die Braut, 1859-1860, Leipzig, 1921, p. 12.
37. Clementi, II, p. 431, quoting from the Giornale di Roma, 4 February.
38. N. Hawthorne, Passages from the French and Italian note-books of Nathaniel Hawthorne, London, 1871, Boston, 1872, 2 volumes, II, p. 223.
39. F. Gregorovius, Diari Romani, tr. R. Lovera, Milan, 1895, p. 69 (9 June, 1859).
40. Roncalli, p. 362.
41. Clementi, II, p. 433.
42. Roncalli, p. 362.
43. Roncalli, p. 363.
44. Dicey, p. 173; p. 164.
45. H.D. D'Ideville, Journal d'un Diplomate en Italie. Notes intimes

pour servir à l'histoire du Second Empire, Paris, 1873, p. 64.

46. Ghisalberti, p. 27.
47. Ghisalberti, pp. 27-30.
48. Clementi, II, p. 410.
49. Helfferich, II, p. 319.
50. Roncalli, p. 208.
51. Roncalli, p. 544.
52. Gregorovius, p. 71.
53. Dicey, p. 167-168.
54. Roncalli, p. 376, tells us that in 1860 the French forces were divided, for and against the Papal gendarmes.
55. Roncalli, p. 408.
56. Gregorovius, pp. 182, 272, 323.
57. Roncalli, p. 483, quoting contemporary satirical verses.
58. Gregorovius, p. 182.
59. Clementi, II, p. 452.
60. Zörnstein, II, p. 88.
61. Roncalli, pp. 234-235.
62. Roncalli, pp. 505-506.
63. Hawthorne, I, p. 62.
64. Zörnstein, II, p. 90.
65. Zörnstein, II, p. 91.
66. Dicey, p. 169.
67. Zörnstein, II, p. 68.
68. Justi, Briefe aus Italien, Bonn, 1922, p. 170.
69. G. Greenwood, Haps and Mishaps of a Tour in Europe, Boston, 1854, pp. 232-233.
70. Zörnstein, II, p. 98.
71. Greenwood, see Note 71.

72. Zörnstein, II, pp. 91-92.
73. O'Donovan, p. 121; Zörnstein, II, p. 88.
74. De Staël, Corinne, p. 191.
75. P. de Musset, Voyage pittoresque en Italie, partie meridionale et en Sicile, Paris, 1856, p. 238.
76. N. Hawthorn, The Marble Faun, See Chapter Four, note 151.
77. Hawthorn, (Notebooks), I, p. 67; The Marble Faun, p. 302.
78. G. Bizet, Lettres de Georges Bizet, Paris, 1907, pp. 35-36.
79. Bizet, p. 35.
80. Haeckel, p. 121.
81. Lafond, II, p. 121.
82. Story, II, p. 84; M.J.M. Dunbar, Art and Nature under an Italian Sky, Edinburgh, 1852, p. 160.
83. Dicey, p. 172.
84. Clementi, II, p. 436.
85. Greenwood, p. 232.
86. Clementi, II, p. 403.
87. R.H. Busk, Contemporary Annals of Rome, Series I, March 1867 to March 1868, London, 1870, p. 405.
88. Clementi, II, p. 431.
89. Zörnstein, II, p. 102. See Chapter 4, Note 76
90. N. Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 301.
91. Hawthorne, (Notebooks) I, p. 66.
92. Zörnstein, II, p. 90.
93. Ambros, Aus Italien, Pressburg & Leipzig, 1880, 2 volumes, p.332.
94. E.C.G. Murray, From Mayfair to Marathon, London, 1853, p. 338.
95. Zörnstein, II, p. 92.
96. See Chapter Four. Note 67.
97. Lafond, II, p. 118.
98. Elliott, II, p. 20.

99. W.W. Story, II, p. 172.
100. Roncalli, p. 405.
101. R. De Cesare, Roma e lo stato del papa dal ritorno di Pio IX al XX settembre, Rome, 1907, 2 volumes, I, p. 336.

Chapter Six

1. W.S. Edwards, Italy as I saw it: Facts and Impressions, London, 1856, p. 34.
2. De Cesare, I, p. 336. See Chapter Five, note 103.
3. This was in response to penitential exercises organized for the occasion by a society called I crociati, formed to defend the rights of the Church. (Clementi, II, p. 458).
4. Gregorovius, Diari Romani, pp. 468-469.
5. Clementi, II, p. 461.
6. Clementi, II, p. 475. The clerical party had obeyed the Pope's instructions in 1871 and abstained from the pleasures of the carnival, instituting a kind of anti-carnival, reminiscent of the Jesuits's 'Quarant Ore'. (Clementi, II, p. 458).
7. 'Vere de Vere' (G. d'Annunzio) in La Tribuna, 14 Feb. 1885.
8. L'Osservatore Romano, 17 February 1885.
9. Ademollo, p. 195.
10. See Chapter Five, note 11.
11. Clementi, II, p. 479.
12. "A Munich, désormais, l'image de 'Fasching' a été fixé pour l'essentiel par les sociétés d'artistes qui se sont établies alors et par leurs bals. Ici comme ailleurs, conformément aux goûts de l'époque, on choisissait pour de telles manifestations des thèmes historiques, ainsi pour le premier des bals ce fut Ivanhoë, le roman alors à la mode de Walter Scott. Plus tard, en 1840, suivit - regardée comme un point culminant - une représentation particulièrement élaborée et pompeuse de l'entourage du peintre de Nuremberg Albert Durer et de l'Empereur Maximilien I." (B. Denke, 'Le carnaval en Allemagne', in Le Masque dans la tradition européenne, ed. S. Glotz, Exhibition catalogue,

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13. The Circolo Tedesco itself put on grand celebrations, as in 1877, to welcome His Majesty, the Carnival (Clementi, II, p. 473).
 14. E.C.G. Murray, p. 337.
 15. Via del Corso, p. 290.
 16. See Chapter Four, note 246.
 17. Clementi, II, p. 479.
 18. C. Del Balzo, Roma, Milan, 1882, p. 324.
 19. L'Osservatore Romano, 17 Feb 1885.
 20. V. Rydberg, Roman Days, tr. A.C. Clark, London, 1879, p. 291.
 21. Del Balzo, p. 333.
 22. Clementi, II, p. 471.
 23. L. Giordani, Ciceruacchio e una Corsa dei Barberi, in Strenna dei Romanisti, volume XV, Rome 1954, p.217
 24. Clementi, II, p. 463.
 25. Del Balzo, p. 333.
 26. Clementi, II, p. 463.
 27. Clementi, II, p. 477.
 28. Murray's Handbook, 1894, p. 115.
 29. The Roman World, 17 February 1912.
 30. Clementi, II, p. 474.
 31. Zörnstein, II, p. 85. The revival of the past was not confined to the Roman carnival; slightly later we find the process taking place, for example, in Florence, and Gori, author of 'Firenze Magnifica' and 'Le Feste di San Giovanni', was a historian of the old festivals and a prime mover in their recreation.
 32. L'Osservatore Romano, 14 Feb 1885 "Tutte le maschere italiane convenute a Roma fecero ieri la loro comparsa per il Corso sui loro carri, alcuni dei quali veramente magnifici."
 33. Plate XXI in Clementi, II.

34. Via del Corso, p. 292.
35. Clementi, II, p. 65; II, p. 336.
36. L'Osservatore Romano, 19 February 1884.
37. Murray's Handbook, 1894, p. 9.
38. Clementi, II, p. 391.
39. Wey, p. 532.
40. Elliott, II, p. 9-21.
41. In S. Negro, p. 312.
42. Burke, p. 20.
43. Del Balzo, p. 355.
44. L'Osservatore Romano, 26 February 1884.
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60. Del Balzo, p. 315; p. 316; pp. 320-321.
61. Seronde-Babonaux, De l'urbs à la ville de Rome. Croissance d'une Capitale, Paris, 1980, p. 186.
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69. Ibid.
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71. L'Osservatore Romano, 19 February 1884.
72. Leone Paladini, p. 23.
73. Clementi, II, p. 465.
74. L. Giordani, p. 217.
75. A.G. Mackinnon, Alma Roma, London & Glasgow, 1926, p. 26.
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80. The Roman World, 27 February 1897.
81. The Roman World, 16 February 1904.
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