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FRANCIS PARKMAN'S ROMAN EXPERIENCE (1844)

On 5 April 1844, the twenty-year old Francis Parkman (1823-93) wrote to his mother, Caroline Hall Parkman (1794-1871), from Rome.¹ He had been there for some six weeks and was about to leave for Florence. He had fallen under the charm of the Eternal City. "You may think two months a long time to remain in Rome, but it is not too much to see the place thoroughly—in fact, it is not half enough. I do not think the time could be more profitably spent."² He was careful to reassure her that his extended stay had nothing to do with a new penchant towards Roman Catholicism: "The farce of [Joseph] Coolidge Shaw has not been reenacted in my person." J.C. Shaw (1821-50 or 1851), as we shall see, was a cousin of the Parkmans and had recently converted, vainly trying to persuade Parkman to follow his example. "We are in the midst of the fooleries before the Holy Week," Parkman continued, going on to describe the weeks before Easter and the pagan rites performed by the superstitious faithful in their thousands.³

Almost 46 years later, a historian of great repute, Parkman was still using expressions of the kind to describe his days in Rome to a considerably wider public. That had proved a useful, first-hand introduction to the Catholic world he was afterwards to write about so extensively in his books, he explained. However, it had had no particular effect on his philosophical or religious convictions, despite the many positive aspects he was forced to acknowledge in so many members of the Catholic Church.⁴ One

¹A preliminary and shorter version of this article was published as Luca Codignola, "Francis Parkman. I giorni romani (18 febbraio-9 aprile 1844)," *Il Veltro. Rivista della Civiltà Italiana*, 38:3-4 (maggio-agosto 1994):163-184. The author wishes to thank James M. Muldoon for his most useful comments on the draft of this manuscript.

²Massachusetts Historical Society, Parkman Papers, Francis Parkman to Caroline Hall Parkman in Boston, Rome, 5 Apr. 1844; published in Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16-17. This was most probably Francis Parkman's answer to the objections contained in a letter, signed by his mother and father, Francis Parkman (1788-1852), that he had just received.

³Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16.

⁴Parkman, "Convent."

of Parkman's biographers, American historian Howard N. Doughty (1904-70), who carefully examined his four months in Italy, maintains that Parkman's Roman experience, though important, "was less direct in its bearings on what he was to do, and was not of a particularly dramatic cast,"⁵ an opinion on which American literary critic Jenny Franchot disagrees.⁶ American art historian William L. Vance too is not convinced of the truth of this image of basic uniformity in the "antagonistic attitude towards Catholics" which Parkman tries to give to himself. According to Vance, his days in Rome had a significant influence on his perception of Catholicism, despite his profoundly Protestant, Bostonian background.⁷

Everything we know about Parkman's stay in Rome comes from three printed sources, all of them his. The first to be published was the autobiographical article which appeared in the popular *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1890, three years before his death. After the publication of his journals, "A Convent in Rome" is chiefly interesting as an end-of-life interpretation of his visit to Catholicism's spiritual and political centre, although it contains additional information not given in the journals.⁸

The second source, the journals themselves, are of course by far the most important. During his European tour (16 November 1843-17 June 1844), Parkman kept a journal, written in ink in two thick notebooks. The first of these, with a leather spine and marbled-paper covers, contains the notes on his Rome visit. These journals were used by Parkman's earliest biographers, Charles Haught Farnham (1841-1929), his personal secretary, and by Henry Dwight Sedgwick (1861-1951).⁹ Both underestimated them and actually drew on them very little. To all intents the journals "dropped out of sight and out of memory" from 1904 to 1940, when the American historian Hugh Mason Wade (1913-86) rediscovered them in a drawer in Parkman's old house in Boston, at 50 Chestnut Street. Immediately after publishing his biography of Parkman, Wade edited the entire journals *corpus* (1943-46), publishing them in 1947. The weeks in Rome are documented in almost daily entries, with the exception of the period between 28 February and 23 March. Seemingly written at the end of his stay, the

⁵Doughty, *Parkman*, pp. 77-86, quotation at p. 78. Doughty, however, points out that, "in a lesser way," Parkman's Roman days were comparable to his sojourn among the Sioux.

⁶Franchot, *Roads*, p. 386 n. 59.

⁷Vance, *America*, 2:163.

⁸Parkman, "Convent."

⁹Farnham, *Life*; Sedgwick, *Parkman*.

account allows no precise reconstruction of the sequence of events, although the most significant facts and impressions are given sufficient space.¹⁰

The third source is the above-mentioned letter to Parkman's mother, dated 5 April 1844, published in 1960 in a selection of his letters edited by the American historian Wilbur R. Jacobs, Parkman's most recent biographer. His criteria for selection was based on "literary merit or ... significant information about his life, his work, or his times." Unfortunately for us, only the letter to his mother contains any reference to the time in Rome.¹¹

Parkman's biographers have used the above sources basically for a discussion of his Rome stay as a necessary part of his European *Grand Tour*, a common enough event for such young Americans as could afford the far-from-negligible travel costs.¹² His itinerary is familiar to cultural historians and literary critics researching the presence of Americans in Italy, above all in the nineteenth century. For the latter, however, Parkman is one of many, and their actual focus is on other figures in literary and art history, or in the history of diplomatic relations. No-one has hitherto examined the two months in Rome as anything beyond Parkman's own account of them, and yet it is a mistake to circumscribe them within the usual European *Grand Tour*. By examining them in detail, this article tries to assess how and to what extent they have helped to define his position towards Catholics and Catholicism as shown in his multi-volume series, "France and England in North America."¹³

Parkman was only nineteen when he informed his Harvard tutor Jared Sparks (1789-1866), the American historian and friend of his father's, that he intended to dedicate himself to research into the Seven Years' War.¹⁴ He soon afterwards extended his field to the North American conflict between France and England. To this end Parkman considered it necessary to "to paint the forest and its tenants in true and vivid colors" and "to realize a

¹⁰Wade, *Parkman*; Wade, ed., *Journals*, 1947. The portion relating to 28 February-23 March is 1:179-188.

¹¹Jacobs, *Parkman*; Parkman, *Letters*, 1: lxi.

¹²Jacobs, *Parkman*, pp. 219-226, has the latest bibliography on Parkman, but omits Eccles, "Parkman," which came out roughly at the same time. Eccles, however, does not even mention Parkman's *Grand Tour*.

¹³All quotations from Parkman's works are from their latest two-volume edition (1983-91).

¹⁴Harvard College Library, Sparks Papers, Parkman to Jared Sparks, Cambridge, 28 April [1842]; published in Parkman, *Letters*, 1:9.

certain ideal of manhood, a little mediaeval.”¹⁵ To get to know the aboriginal peoples, Parkman went West along the Oregon Trail. To get to know the Middle Ages, Parkman went to Rome.¹⁶

As Parkman confessed in 1890, his attraction for “phenomena of religious enthusiasm, whether in its active or fossilized state” went hand in hand with “a fancy for mediaevalism,” and the desire “to get for a while out of the nineteenth century.”¹⁷ In fact, at the time of Parkman’s tour the Middle Ages were romanticized as the golden age of Catholicism—“intellectually and aesthetically alive, peace loving, charitable and honest.”¹⁸ In one of her letters from Rome to the *New-York Daily Tribune*, for example, American literary critic Margaret Fuller Ossoli (1810-50) described the white-cloaked Italian Risorgimento leader, Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82), as the quintessential medieval hero.¹⁹ Garibaldi’s medieval image held on for many years: “The man who more than any man of our time has furnished modern Europe with a specimen of medieval romance has just died ... His match must be looked for among the Knights of the Round Table or the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne,” *The Nation* reported in 1882.²⁰ The Eternal City was then much more than a tourist attraction. It could provide Parkman with a vision of a Catholicism that was much different from that circulated in the United States, and especially in New England, in the 1830s and the 1840s. In those decades, when Parkman was a child and then young man, the xenophobia mainly directed at the large waves of migrants from Ireland found its most vocal expression in the anti-Catholic nativist propaganda, as witnessed by the 1834 fire that destroyed the Charlestown, Massachusetts, Ursuline school for girls and the Maria Monk hate literature.²¹ Quintessential, “medieval” Catholicism, as provided by

¹⁵Massachusetts Historical Society, Parkman Papers, Parkman to Martin Brimmer, [Boston, 1886]; published in Sedgwick, *Parkman*, p. 329, and partially in Parkman, *Letters*, 1:184 nn. 1-6.

¹⁶Parkman later explained: “I was led into a convent by the same motive that two years later led me to become domesticated in the lodges of the Sioux Indians at the Rocky Mountains” (Parkman, “Convent”, p. 450).

¹⁷Parkman, “Convent”, p. 450.

¹⁸Allitt, *Converts*, p. 44, also p. 45.

¹⁹Fuller Ossoli, *New-York Daily Tribune* (11 August 1849).

²⁰[Anon.], *The Nation*, 34 (June 1882), p. 477.

²¹On 11 August 1834 a Protestant mob attacked the Ursuline Academy, a school for girls located in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and burned it down. As for Maria Monk, the fictional protagonist of *Awful Disclosures*, allegedly describing

Rome, would have allowed Parkman to examine at first hand the Catholicism which formed the mental backdrop to the French Canadians who had fought and had been defeated by the English Americans, a conflict whose story he wanted to tell.

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On 17 February 1844, Parkman took the stage-coach and left Naples. He was accompanied by Theodore Parker (1810-60) and his wife, "a pretty, timid, gentle woman, ... full of curiosity to know everything."²² He had met the Parkers in Naples and they had tackled Vesuvius together.²³ Although only 34, Parker, a Unitarian minister from West Roxbury, Massachusetts, was already an established scholar and religious polemicist. He had recently published *A Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion* (1842). A year later Parker was to retire from the ministry to found a religious congregation in Boston. The journey to Rome took one day, one night, and part of the following day. To avoid worse problems, the group decided to waive its "rights as a traveller" and give handsome tips to the customs officers waiting for them at midnight on the border between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal States.²⁴

On Sunday, 18 February the travellers awoke at dawn in the middle of the Pontine Marshes. Later they had their first glimpse of the Basilica of St. Peter's. All around, there were "remains of temples, aqueducts and tombs." Parkman wrote that Parker "became inspired," while his wife "studied every ruin ... in the guide book." Last of all, the Coliseum—and the hunt for a hotel. The city seethed with visitors and, Parkman recounts, a number of less fortunate English travellers had "walked the streets all night."²⁵ Exactly where Parkman and the Parkers stayed we do not know. Some time later Parkman said that his friends had taken up residence in Via del Babuino, one of the main roads in eighteenth-century Rome, between Piazza del Popolo and Piazza di Spagna. As for Parkman himself, his references to a "Hotel d'Allemagne" would point to his having stayed there for at least some part of his Rome stay.²⁶

the sexual debauchery of Catholic convents, see Reed, *Six Months*. See also Franchot, *Roads*, pp. xvii-xxi; Allitt, *Converts*, p. 24; Sylvain, "Affaire;" Schultz, *Fire*.

²²Parkman, *Journals*, 1:175.

²³Parkman, *Journals*, 1:167-168.

²⁴Parkman, *Journals*, 1:174.

²⁵Parkman, *Journals*, 1:174-175.

²⁶Parkman, *Journals*, 1:181; Parkman, "Convent," p. 449.

The reason for the presence of so many visitors was immediately clear: 18, 19, and 20 February were the three days of Carnival. In his journals Parkman dutifully and in detail describes the parades down the Via del Corso ("a most grand and solemn architecture"), the horse races, the game of the "moccoletti", the theatre shows, and the masked balls.²⁷ "So much for my classic 'first impressions' of Rome!," Parkman wrote, with unwonted irony.²⁸

After 21 February (Ash Wednesday), Parkman threw himself into a round of visits to "churches, convents, cemeteries, catacombs, common sewers ... and ten thousand works of art" lasting at least until 26 February. Parkman had soon had enough and had no trouble admitting that he would "not give a damn for all the churches and ruins of Rome" if he could have "one ride on horseback among the Apenines [*sic*]."²⁹

In the meantime, Parkman had established contact with the American community in Rome. One first such contact was at the traditional party to celebrate George Washington's birthday, on 22 February. "The Americans here must needs [*sic*] get up a dinner, with speeches, toasts, etc.," Parkman wrote. "It was like a visit home."³⁰ Some years previously, in 1830, the American writer James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) had also been at one of these parties, and had commented that his fellow countrymen were "vary patriotic, but quite moderate in [their] expression." Comprising "near seventy" people in Cooper's day, the community was now, according to Parkman, "a large number," and composed of "artists and others."³¹

The place of honour at the festivities went to General John Adams Dix (1798-1879), who presided over the lunch table. A veteran of the War of 1812, then editor of the literary and scientific journal *The Northern Light*, published in Albany, Dix was shortly to assume great prominence in the Democratic Party and was sent to Paris as a diplomat. Other important

²⁷Parkman, *Journals*, 1:175-176.

²⁸Parkman, *Journals*, 1:178.

²⁹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:178-180.

³⁰Parkman, *Journals*, 1:178. Parkman took this opportunity to contrast the British community, 4,000 "boisterous and haughty" people, to the American one, "very quiet and apparently timid." On this contrast Parkman will often insist (see for example Parkman, *Journals*, 1:190, 198; Parkman, *Letters*, 1:17).

³¹Cooper, *Excursions*, 2:172; Parkman, *Letters*, 1:17. According to Parkman, rumours which had 40,000 foreigners living in Rome were a gross exaggeration (Parkman, *Journals*, 1:197).

Americans present included George Washington Greene (1811-83), then the United States consul to the Holy See (1837-45) and afterwards a historian and university lecturer. Parkman got on particularly well with Greene. They met up in Liverpool, the last stage of Parkman's European tour, and travelled together on the *Acadia* back to North America.³² Also present at the festivities was Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-76), a philanthropist who later founded the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston, with his wife, Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910), the author of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and one "Mr. Conrade," from Virginia, of whom nothing is known.³³ Colonel Winchester and his son William (Bill) were also in Rome at that period. Parkman met up with them in Liverpool and they formed part of the homeward-bound party on the *Acadia*.³⁴ When Parkman left Rome for Florence, he was accompanied by another young American, one Marquand, whom he afterwards re-encountered in Milan.³⁵

It was probably during the first half of March that Parkman came, quite unexpectedly, across two more Americans, William Morris Hunt (1824-79) and his brother, John Hunt.³⁶ W.M. Hunt had been at Harvard University with him, before being sent down for poor results. His family had brought him to Italy to study painting and sculpture. When Parkman met him he was studying under the American sculptor Henry Kirke Brown (1814-86). He was later to become a well-known artist in Boston. The two of them decided to set off on a seven-day tour of the Roman Castelli, the volcanic lakes and wine-growing area to the south-east of Rome, modulating from soft hills to rough mountains. This is described in detail in Parkman's journals and needs no repetition here. It is sufficient to add that the Parkers and J. Hunt accompanied Parkman and W.M. Hunt as far as Tivoli, before leaving them in the company of one Giuseppe to go on to San Cosimato, Subiaco, Lake Albano, Rocca di Santo Stefano, Civitella, Cara, and Velletri.³⁷ On a second, three-day trip to the Castelli (26-28

³²Parkman, *Journals*, 1:178, 232, 234-235; Parkman, "Convent", p. 451.

³³For a description of the festivities and the names of some of those who attended them, see Parkman, *Journals*, 1:178.

³⁴Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16; Parkman, *Journals*, 1:231-234.

³⁵Parkman, *Journals*, 1:199, 207-208.

³⁶Parkman, *Journals*, 1:181.

³⁷Parkman, *Journals*, 1:182-188; Parkman, "Convent", pp. 450, 458. According to Jacobs, who does not disclose his source, W.M. Hunt took part in this tour with his mother and sister, whereas his brother, J. Hunt, is not mentioned in this regard (Parkman, *Letters*, 1:17 n. 2). Civitella and Cara were not identified by this writer.

March), Parkman visited Albano, Rocca di Papa and Lake Nemi, this time unaccompanied.³⁸

Between trips, Parkman spent at least two days in the city, 24 (a Sunday) and 25 March. On the Sunday afternoon he went to high mass in St. Peter's. He was singularly struck by the numbers present ("several thousand people"), by the hundreds of lighted candles, and by the halberdiers of the Swiss Guard.³⁹ Passion Sunday, the last Sunday before Easter, is of considerable importance in the Roman Catholic church. The pope himself, Gregory XVI (Bartolomeo Alberto Cappellari, better known as fra' Mauro, 1765-1846), was present at the mass, celebrated by Charles Michael Baggs (d.1845), the bishop of Pella, vicar apostolic in the Western District of England and assistant to the papal throne. The sermon was preached, in Latin, by Alduino Patscheider, the Procurator General of the Servants of Mary.⁴⁰

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Another young "innocent abroad" who certainly did not take part in the Washington celebrations was Ignace St. Ives (b.c.1817),⁴¹ who, with the Jesuit Thomas Glover (fl.1807-55), was the person most to influence Parkman during his stay in Rome. Little is known of the relations between Parkman and Glover, a scholar of repute who had represented the English provinces both in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal States. Parkman himself mentions him only once,⁴² and never in his journals. Yet they must have met shortly after Parkman's arrival in Rome, probably between 19 and 23 February, and it is quite clear that any general mention of the Jesuits, both in his journals and in his 1890 article, "A Convent in Rome," is made with Glover in mind. They had frequent conversations, and Glover gave Parkman a number of books to read.⁴³ "It is ... startling to a 'son of Harvard,'" Parkman wrote while in Rome, "to see the astounding

³⁸Parkman, *Journals*, 1:188-190.

³⁹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:188.

⁴⁰*Diario di Roma*, 25 (26 March 1844).

⁴¹St. Ives's name is variously mentioned with the initials "J" (Parkman) or "I" only. His name appears in full only in a document preserved in Archivio Generale della Congregazione dei Passionisti, Registro de' Signori Esercitantì che si ricevono in questo ritiro de' SS. Giovanni e Paolo Dall'Anno 1833, al 1853, ff. 344v-345r, no. 153.

⁴²Parkman, "Convent", p. 454.

⁴³Parkman, "Convent", p. 450.

learning of these Jesuit fathers [i.e., Glover], and the appalling readiness and rapidity with [which] they pour forth their interminable streams of argument" and put to good use the "heavy batteries of learning and logic."⁴⁴ In fact, in spite of their being on the wrong side of history, Parkman admired the Jesuits as individuals who were both learned and unflinchingly devoted to their cause. One of his books, *The Jesuits in North America*, was entirely devoted to the depiction of their virtues, which "shine amidst the rubbish of error, like diamonds and gold in the gravel of the torrent."⁴⁵ One wonders whether he also saw in them some of the moral and physical strength that he employed in battling against the crippling disease that accompanied him throughout his life.

Glover had been introduced to Parkman by St. Ives, an obscure eighteen-year-old probably from the American South⁴⁶ and a recent convert to Catholicism, a relative of the Episcopalian bishop L. St. Ives. Parkman took an immediate dislike to St. Ives. They met at the Parkers' residence, and St. Ives "presently undertook" his fellow countryman's conversion.⁴⁷ They apparently continued to meet during Parkman's stay in Rome, despite St. Ives's decision, on 27 February, to stop any attempts at conversion because he was "disgust[ed]" by the absence in Parkman of "logic enough ... to be convinced of anything."⁴⁸ Many years later, in "A Convent in Rome," Parkman recalled his extreme dislike of his neo-convert fellow countryman's company. "His whole look inspired distrust." He was arrogant, revelled in boasting of his sinful and dissolute former life, loathed democracy, and was "fiercely arbitrary and domineering," although he was humility itself "toward those in high places." Parkman found him, in a word, a

⁴⁴Parkman, "Convent," 434; Parkman, *Journals*, 1:180. The relations between Glover and the English Jesuits are mentioned in Basset, *Jesuits*, pp.373, 429; and Edwards, *Jesuits*, pp.143, 170, 317.

⁴⁵Parkman, *Jesuits*, 1:712. On Parkman's overall view of the Jesuits, see the perceptive remarks in Franchot, *Roads*, pp. 64, 80.

⁴⁶Archivio Generale della Congregazione dei Passionisti, Registro de' Signori Esercitanti che si ricevono in questo ritiro de' SS. Giovanni e Paolo Dall'Anno 1833, al 1853, ff. 344v-345r, no. 153, gives New York as St. Ives's place of provenance, but this could simply be his last address. Parkman, an American citizen himself, is more reliable. He defines St. Ives a "Virginian" in his journals and "born in one of the Southern States" in 1890 (Parkman, *Journals*, 1:179; Parkman, "Convent", p. 450). In another document there is a reference to his activities in Philadelphia (see note 68).

⁴⁷Parkman, "Convent", p. 450.

⁴⁸Parkman, *Journals*, 1:179.

"hypocrite and liar," "one of those to whom the imposing spectacle of organized power in the Roman Church appeals with resistless fascination."⁴⁹

At the same time, St. Ives was a man of considerable resources. He not only introduced Glover to Parkman⁵⁰ and to Father Luca, director of the spiritual retreat which, as we shall see, took place in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, on the Celio, but was also under the protection of the powerful Charles Januarius Edward Cardinal Acton (1803-47). The latter, who was General Auditor of the Apostolic Chamber, financed St. Ives when he entered the convent on 4 June 1843 to begin his spiritual retreat. St. Ives had already converted to Catholicism and had abjured his former faith, as Father Luca well recalled some time later.⁵¹ It was Acton who wrote to Giacomo Filippo Cardinal Frasoni (1775-1856), then Prefect of the Sacred Congregation "de Propaganda Fide," five weeks after Parkman's departure from Rome, towards the middle of March, requesting a place for St. Ives in Propaganda Fide's Collegio Urbano, the college in Piazza di Spagna which trained young non-Italians destined to return to their native countries as missionaries.⁵²

St. Ives also had the advantages of a "keen intellect" and a "remarkably vivid imagination." If he did not manage to sway Parkman, he certainly exercised a profound influence over others, not least J.C. Shaw, Parkman's cousin and brother of Quincy Adams Shaw (d.1908), who was shortly to accompany Parkman along the Oregon Trail. J.C. Shaw was reading law at Cambridge, but had met St. Ives on a visit to Rome shortly before Parkman's, and had been converted to Catholicism.⁵³

⁴⁹Parkman, "Convent", p. 450; Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16. One must note that Parkman hated democratic society as much as St. Ives, at least after his Oregon Trail journey.

⁵⁰Both Parkman and Parker suspected that the Jesuits (that is, Glover) and the other ecclesiastics used St. Ives, whom they did not trust, in order to obtain the conversion of others.

⁵¹Father Luca "seemed surprised and startled at hearing that I was a Protestant, but presently, with a benignant smile, expressed a hope that I should be reclaimed from my errors, saying that another American had been there before me and happily found grace to see the truth. This was my acquaintance J— [St. Ives]" (Parkman, "Convent", p. 452).

⁵²This writer has found not Acton's letter, but the copy of Frasoni's affirmative answer in Archivio della Sacra Congregazione "de Propaganda Fide," *Lettere*, vol. 331, f. 354rv, [Frasoni] to Acton, [Rome], 17 May 1844. To be admitted to Collegio Urbano was rather difficult.

⁵³Parkman, "Convent", pp. 449-450. "Ah! I hope you will follow in your good

This “farce” of his cousin J.C. Shaw’s, as Parkman described it in the letter to his mother,⁵⁴ was to develop into a total and lasting conviction. On 30 April 1844, when Parkman had left Rome, J.C. Shaw sent St. Ives a copy of the long review, by the philosopher Orestes Augustus Brownson (1803-76), then editor of the *Boston Quarterly Review*, of Parker’s most recent book, *Discourse of Religion*, speculating on Brownson’s conversion to Catholicism with the enthusiasm of the conviction of the neophyte.⁵⁵ Some months later, on 14 August, J.C. Shaw announced to his friend in Rome his intention of becoming a priest. His circle of friends was the same as Parkman’s and St. Ives’s—Cardinal Acton, Glover the Jesuit, one Dr. Grant, and, in England, a bishop, probably Thomas Griffiths (1791-1847), bishop of Olena and vicar apostolic in the London District. His long letter denotes the strong religious enthusiasm rapidly sweeping through certain circles of American youth—people like J.C. Shaw, St. Ives, the young Virginian McIntosh, a colleague of J.C. Shaw’s who had recently returned to the United States ready to take on the opposition of his mother, “a rigid Presbyterian.” J.C. Shaw, like McIntosh, was profoundly disturbed by the idea of having to choose between his new faith and his strong affection for his father, who had told him that “Catholicity was only for the slaves” and that “the tour of the West, &c” (which his brother Q.A. Shaw was to go on shortly afterwards) should blow the Catholic cobwebs away.⁵⁶ But these young men were all part of a movement that was by no means a minor one.⁵⁷ During the central decades of the nineteenth century, hundreds of thousands of English and American Protestants converted to

cousin’s path,” St. Ives had said when Parkman was introduced to him (“Convent”, p. 449).

⁵⁴Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16.

⁵⁵Archivio della Sacra Congregazione “de Propaganda Fide,” Congressi, America Centrale, vol. 13, ff. 571r-641v, J.C. Shaw to St. Ives, Cambridge, 30 April 1844. A similar comment on Brownson in *ibid.*, ff. 1183r-1185v, J.C. Shaw to St. Ives, care of Acton, Savin Hill, 14 August 1844.

⁵⁶Archivio della Sacra Congregazione “de Propaganda Fide,” Congressi, America Centrale, vol. 13, ff. 1183r-1185v, J.C. Shaw to St. Ives, care of Acton, Savin Hill, 14 August 1844. On the importance of family networks on the conversion process, see Rose, “Roads.”

⁵⁷This movement has recently been examined by a number of important studies. See Franchot, *Roads* (with a long section on Parkman, pp. 62-82), focussing on Protestant ambivalence towards Catholicism; Allitt, *Converts*, emphasizing intellectual motives; and Rose, “Roads,” on the role of family networks.

Catholicism, as many as 350,000 to 700,000.⁵⁸ Furthermore, according to American historian Patrick Allitt, “nearly all the major Catholic intellectuals writing in English between 1840 and 1960 were converts to Catholicism” and maintained “extensive transatlantic contacts.”⁵⁹

In spite of J.C. Shaw’s hopes and all Glover’s and St. Ives’s attempts, Parkman showed no external sign of any inner conflict which might have been shaking the foundations of his long-standing Unitarianism.⁶⁰ J.C. Shaw’s example aside, there was little doubt that Cooper’s pronouncement that “one of the last things that an American would be likely to suspect, is the conversion of his countrymen to the Roman Catholic faith.”⁶¹ This would especially apply to Parkman, a member of the Boston aristocracy, with “his rather dyspeptic attitude towards races, nationalities, religions, and social classes other than his own,” as described by one of his most outspoken critic, historian Francis Jennings (1918-2000).⁶² St. Ives had given up his attempts. J.C. Shaw, who had met Parkman during his Rome stay, wrote to St. Ives that, after the latter’s words to him, he “had hoped to greet [Parkman] as a new brother,” but had realised that “on the contrary, his prejudices [we]re very strong.”⁶³

In actual fact, Rome was taking quiet if invisible hold of Parkman. Shortly before Sunday, 24 March, he admitted to himself “that a place on every account more interesting — and which has a more vivifying and quickening influence on the faculties — could not be found on the face of the earth.” In later life he was still more explicit about his waverings over Catholicism: “I had some slight suspicion that the exclusive claims of Rome might not be without foundation after all.” About a year later, however, J.C. Shaw gave him a book which he defined the last word against heresy. This was *The End of Religious Controversy*, by John M. Milner (1752-1826), formerly bishop of Castabala and apostolic vicar in the English Midland District, a prolific and controversial, if otherwise uninspiring, author. It was enough, however, to confirm Parkman in his origi-

⁵⁸Ahlstrom, *History*, p. 548; Bochen, *Narratives*, 1980, p. 57. See also Rose, “Roads,” p. 36 n. 1; Franchot, *Roads*, p. 281.

⁵⁹Allitt, *Converts*, pp. ix, 1.

⁶⁰Later, Parkman tended towards agnosticism in religion.

⁶¹Cooper, *Excursions*, 2:172.

⁶²Jennings, “Parkman,” p. 320.

⁶³Archivio della Sacra Congregazione “de Propaganda Fide,” Congressi, America Centrale, vol. 13, ff. 1183r-1185v, J.C. Shaw to St. Ives, care of Acton, Savin Hill, 14 August 1844.

nal convictions, and he had "remained ever since in solid unbelief as to the doctrines of Rome."⁶⁴ A few years later he was to put into the mouth of Vassall Morton, the main protagonist of one of his short stories, published in 1856, what Jacobs, Parkman's latest biographer, considers the most succinct synthesis of his position as regards Catholicism: "I was born and bred among Protestants. I respect your ancient church for the good she has done in ages past, and for the good men who have held her faith; but I do not believe in her doctrine, nor approve of her practice."⁶⁵

As we know, the "face" of his cousin J.C. Shaw's conversion was to continue in the face of his family's initial disapproval, even though J.C. Shaw was to die six years later, in 1850 or 1851, without having finished his studies, and thus unordained.⁶⁶ Of the destiny of his friend McIntosh we know nothing. Research in the Rome archives has, however, thrown up some interesting facts about St. Ives. After being admitted to Propaganda Fide's Collegio Urbano in May 1844, as we saw above, St. Ives was very soon removed, on account of a clear and total lack of vocation. Shortly afterwards, at the intercession of Karl Augustus von Reisach (1800-69), rector of the Collegio Urbano and at the time bishop of Eichstatt and coadjutor of the bishop of Munich and Friesing, St. Ives was sent to Munich, Bavaria, to stay with "a distinguished and zealous" local ecclesiastic. However, the nuncio in Munich, Michele Viale Prelà (1798-1860), bishop of Carthage, had not the slightest intention of concerning himself with him, far less keeping him, so on 29 May 1845 Propaganda Fide wrote both to Viale Prelà and to Acton, St. Ives's patron, suggesting that St. Ives find himself gainful employment, since he had no right to church subsidy. If he particularly wished, Propaganda Fide's letters went on, he could return to the United States and ask a bishop to admit him to a seminary and re-examine his vocational aptitude.⁶⁷ Worse was to come. On 12

⁶⁴Parkman, *Journals*, 1:180; Parkman, "Convent", p. 450. Parkman implicitly mentioned Milner's treatise as "Mills's End of Controversy" ("if I rightly remember" ["Convent", p. 450]). This was [Milner], *End* (1818), later often republished. The Anglican Bishop of St. David's was Thomas Burgess (1756-1837).

⁶⁵Parkman, *Morton*, p. 198. Jacobs deals with Parkman's position with regard to Catholicism in Jacobs, *Parkman*, pp. 137-142.

⁶⁶Parkman, *Letters*, 1:18 n. 4.

⁶⁷Archivio della Sacra Congregazione "de Propaganda Fide," *Lettere*, vol. 332, f. 344rv, Giovanni Brunelli (1795-1861), Bishop of Thessalonica and Secretary of Propaganda Fide, to Acton, [Rome], 20 May 1845; *ibid.*, f. 324rv, [Fransoni] to Michele Viale Prelà, Archbishop of Carthage, Nuncio in Munich, [Rome], 29 May 1845.

January 1846, Francis Patrick Kenrick (1797-1863), bishop of Arathia and administrator of the diocese of Philadelphia, informed Rome of his total opposition to St. Ives's ordination, given the acts of fraud committed both in Philadelphia and in England.⁶⁸ What became of him thereafter is so far not known.⁶⁹

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His Rome stay was coming to an end, and Parkman had already decided not to leave without trying out the monastic life. Here his academic interest in a return to the Middle Ages, which would have inclined more towards castles than convents, was probably proceeding in parallel with a more personal curiosity in a religion he had hitherto met primarily through the written word. Parkman needed a "clear impression of monastic life, and of Roman Catholic ecclesiasticism in general." Both in Sicily and during the two visits to the Roman Castelli, he had made a point of visiting all the convents he came across.⁷⁰ At the Franciscan convent of San Cosimato, on the tip of a 341-metre-high hill, on a sheer precipice overlooking the Aniene River, Parkman had witnessed the "admirable example of courage and enthusiasm" of the friars living in such a dangerous spot. Parkman

⁶⁸Collegio Irlandese, Rome, American Papers, 1829-49, no. 106, Kenrick to Paul Cullen, Rector of the Collegio Irlandese, Philadelphia, 12 January 1846; excerpts in *ibid.*, no. 1139. The letter does not clarify it, and we do not know whether St. Ives committed the acts of fraud of which he was accused prior to his departure for the United States, or, as it is more probable, after his return to the United States in the second half of 1845. Cullen (1803-78) was appointed cardinal in 1866.

⁶⁹The unpublished details of the life of St. Ives would suggest that historians need to extend their research beyond Parkman's interpretation of his Rome stay to the various people he relegates to the background, acting out the roles he himself assigns them. Some of these figures are not unknown to history, and their papers might well offer new perspectives on Parkman himself. It would seem unlikely, for example, that the Jesuit Glover has nowhere recorded his impressions of his meetings with Parkman and St. Ives, and some evidence must surely transpire from Greene, the consul, the philosopher Parker, General Dix, Howe, the philanthropist, W.M. Hunt, the artist, the whole Shaw family, and St. Ives's relationship with his relative, the Episcopalian bishop, L. St. Ives. Above all the whole of Parkman's unpublished correspondence should be re-examined. As for Cardinal Acton, a preliminary search in the Acton papers, for which I am grateful to Giovanni Pizzorusso and Matteo Sanfilippo, has led nowhere (see Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Spogli dei Cardinali, Acton, vols. 1-7).

⁷⁰Parkman, "Convent", p. 450.

wanted to accept the Franciscans' hospitality, but W.M. Hunt demurred.⁷¹ Near Subiaco, they came across a Benedictine convent which seemed particularly to fit Parkman's medieval bill. "Full of relics of the middle ages," it seemed "doomed to speedy destruction." Parkman "was under strong temptation to beg the fathers to let [him] stay... a few days," but once again the impulse was unrealized.⁷² On 27 March he asked to be admitted to a convent of the Order of the Passionists at Rocca di Papa. "[A]lone on the rocky side of the mountain,"⁷³ its interior was "the gloomiest and darkest I have seen"—and thus an ideal setting for the young Bostonian. The superior, however, refused hospitality, insisting he had first to clear it with his superior in Rome.⁷⁴ Once back in Rome, on 28 March, Parkman tried once more at a convent of the Capuchin friars, but this time the answer came "peremptorily".⁷⁵

In a last-ditch attempt he knocked at the door of the Passionist convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, "just beyond the Coliseum."⁷⁶ This time he was luckier. A friar told him to return in the afternoon, when he would find a room ready. Parkman ran off to tell the Parkers, in Via del Babuino, and, at T. Parker's warnings of the danger of a still-flourishing Sacred Roman and Universal Inquisition, he asked him to inform Greene, the

⁷¹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:183. In describing those days Parkman makes a number of mistakes. The convent is spelled "San Cosinato," the river becomes the "Anio", and the Franciscans are transformed into Benedictines. These mistakes are repeated by all of Parkman's biographers.

⁷²Parkman, *Journals*, 1:185.

⁷³In actual fact, the convent, built in 1783, is on the top of Monte Cavo (m 949), the second-tallest hill of Colli Albani, at about an hour walk from Rocca di Papa (m 681).

⁷⁴Parkman, *Journals*, 1:188-190.

⁷⁵Parkman, *Journals*, 1:190. Parkman's strong words against the Capuchins, written in 1890 ("the dealings of that ghastly brotherhood were with the dead and not the living" [Parkman, "Convent", p. 450]), were probably the result of further reflection, because there is no trace of that kind of attitude in the journals.

⁷⁶Parkman, "Convent", p. 451. For almost contemporary illustrations of the Passionist convent, see Bartolomeo Pinelli (1781-1835), "Veduta del Colle Celio, presa dal Palatino," 1825, published in Rossetti, *Roma*, p. 172; and in *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, 6 (1980), p. 1238; George Belron Moore (1805-75), "San Giovanni e Paolo," [undated], published in *Roma nelle stampe*, p. 93; and Karl August Lindemann-Frommel (1819-91), "SS. Giovanni e Paolo," 1846, published in *Roma nelle stampe*, pp. 90-91.

consul, should he not be back by Palm Sunday, four days later.⁷⁷ Parkman had been sent to the Passionists and Father Luca by St. Ives.⁷⁸ In Parkman's opinion, the Passionists were "the strictest of the orders of monks—wear hair-cloth next to the skin—lash their backs with 'disciplines' made of little iron chains, and mortify the flesh in various other similar ways."⁷⁹ Entry to the convent was problem-free. It regularly took in lay persons for short-term spiritual retreats, and some thirty Italians were then resident.⁸⁰ Nor did the fact of Parkman's Protestantism prove a problem. Father Luca seemed "startled" when, at their first meeting, he discovered Parkman was a heretic,⁸¹ a sure indication that no-one had thought fit to inform him of the fact. 28 March was Parkman's first day in the convent. A notice on the walls of his cell forbade, among other things, distracting oneself by looking out of the window. After noting down his impressions in his journals, Parkman pushed his chair to the window to look at the Coliseum, "with Rome behind it—gardens in front, and endless ruins—arches—columns—walls—and fountains—around." Hundreds of bells were ringing, and the dome of St. Peter's was "red in the light of the setting sun." The sky was clear and the temperature had dropped to C8 or C9 degrees, after the mild C15 of noon.⁸²

Parkman has left no precise notes of the people he met during his time at the convent. He certainly spent considerable time with Father Luca, "plump and well-fed, with a double-chin like a bull-frog," significantly at variance with the "dry, leathery visages of the monks." In actual fact Father

⁷⁷Parkman, "Convent", p. 451; Parkman, *Journals*, 1:190.

⁷⁸Parkman, "Convent", p. 451.

⁷⁹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:188. Similar descriptions are in Parkman, *Letters*, 1:16; Parkman, "Convent", p. 451.

⁸⁰Parkman, "Convent", p. 451; Parkman, *Journals*, 1:190-191, 195.

⁸¹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:191; Parkman, "Convent", p. 452. That Parkman did not raise any special interest seems to be proved by the fact that no official document of the convent mentions his name or his presence. It must be also said, however, that the first volume of the official register of the convent, in which all important facts relating to the convent were duly noted, has been missing for decades. Only the second volume, which does not include 1844, is still extant (Archivio Generale della Congregazione dei Passionisti, Platea di questo Ritiro de' SS. Gio: e Paolo in cui si descrivono le notizie spettanti al sud.to incominciando dall'Anno 1830. Volume 2).

⁸²Parkman, *Journals*, 1:191; Parkman, "Convent", p. 451; *Diario di Roma*, 26 (30 March 1844).

Luca was not a Passionist, but a secular priest who was staying temporarily at the convent to oversee the lay retreats. He was in some hope of a speedy conversion of the young American who at some point had obviously been entrusted to him, and when Parkman left, still an "unbeliever", he took "the kindest leave of [him]" and gave him a "book of Catholic devotion" which his pupil promised to keep "in remembrance of a very excellent man."⁸³ On 29 March the General of the Order, Antonio Testa (1787-1862), known in religion as Antonio di San Giacomo, "a tall, portly man with a stern and austere countenance," visited the convent, but neither Parkman nor the superior mentioned having met him.⁸⁴ Both in his journals and in his 1890 article Parkman mentions a number of other Passionists, but gives no names. They tried in various ways to convince him of his heresy, although Parkman comments that none of them was as adept "at argument, or sophistry, as the Jesuits." As for the lay Italians taking part, they were friendly and welcoming: "There is nothing gloomy or morose in the religion of these Italians here; no camp-meeting long faces."⁸⁵

There is no need, here, to go into the details of Parkman's four days in the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (28-31 March), as he has exhaustive accounts in both the journals and in "A Convent in Rome."⁸⁶ It is worth noting, however, that he gives more a sequence of impressions than of events. It was indeed impressions, not facts, that the future Boston historian wanted. But he had soon had enough of it, and on Sunday morning, 31 March, he left, apparently in some hurry, the convent's "gloomy galleries and cells." He "got into the fresh air," jumped on a cab, and went to the Parkers in Via del Babuino. After a relatively cool night, the temperature was moving towards *C12* degrees. It was Palm Sunday, the beginning of the

⁸³Parkman, *Journals*, 1:193, 195; Parkman, "Convent", pp. 452-453. Father Luca's name does seem to be in any of the documents preserved in Archivio Generale della Congregazione dei Passionisti. The only Luca of this period seems to be Giovanni Luca Sofia, known in religion as Giovanni Luca dell'Assunzione (1764-1850), formerly Consultor General (1821-27) and Procurator (1815-21, 1827-31), but he was certainly not the Father Luca in question.

⁸⁴Parkman, "Convent", pp. 452-453; Parkman, *Journals*, 1:192. Testa was general of the Passionists from 1839 to 1862. See *Superiores Generales cum suis consiliis ordine chronologico relati* (1747-1982), Rome: Segretariato Generale dei PP. Passionisti, 1983.

⁸⁵Parkman, *Journals*, 1:192-193.

⁸⁶See also Parkman's direct reference to his Passionist convent experience in Parkman, *Jesuits*, 1:475 n. 2.

Holy Week. The “motley crowds and gorgeous ceremonial” awaited the American visitors.⁸⁷

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The Sunday celebrations were inaugurated and presided over by Gregory XVI, who blessed the crowd, gave out olive sprigs in memory of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and took part in the solemn procession leading to St. Peter’s. The pope was accompanied by dozens of cardinals, archbishops, and bishops. Parkman’s journals note the impressive figure of the pope, “seated on a species of canopied throne borne on the shoulders of men, with his Swiss guard round him, one of whom bore a sword whose blade—six feet long—represented flames of fire.” Inside the basilica, mass was celebrated by Niccolò Clarelli Paracciani (1799-1872), a Curia man and the most recently appointed cardinal (22 January 1844).⁸⁸ At ten o’clock that evening, a similar procession accompanied the High Penitentiary, Castruccio Cardinal Castracane degli Antelminelli (1799-1852), to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, where the prelate began the pre-Easter confessions which took place in each of the major Roman basilicas in turn.⁸⁹ We have no idea whether Parkman was present and know nothing of his movements over the next two days (1-2 April). According to the periodical *Diario di Roma*, which appeared twice a week and zealously gave news of any event occurring in the city, nothing of any significance went on at that time.

Parkman returned to St. Peter’s on 3 April, when the Tenebrae Matins were sung in the Sistine Chapel,⁹⁰ and again on 4 April, when he was laughing and cursing, jostling and being jostled in the crowd of thousands trying to catch a glimpse of the day’s ceremonies. Firstly, high mass in the Sistine Chapel, attended by Gregory XVI and celebrated by Luigi Cardinal Lambruschini (1776-1854), who, as Secretary of State and Secretary of Briefs, was the highest official in the Roman Curia. Then there followed the procession to the Cappella Paolina, where the consecrated host “was placed in the midst of the high altar in the midst of a thousand candles”

⁸⁷Parkman, *Journals*, 1:195; Parkman, “Convent”, p. 454; *Diario di Roma*, 27 (2 April 1844).

⁸⁸Parkman, *Journals*, 1:193; *Diario di Roma*, 27 (2 April 1844).

⁸⁹*Diario di Roma*, 27 (2 April 1844).

⁹⁰*Diario di Roma*, 28 (6 April 1844); Parkman, *Journals*, 1:193. Parkman erroneously refers to the Cappella del Coro, a chapel within St. Peter’s basilica, not to the Sistine Chapel.

and worshipped by the faithful. The pope was then "borne ... on the shoulders of men to the window of the Loggia," whence he blessed the crowd while a cardinal cursed "Jews, heretics, etc." All present, Parkman notes, removed "their hats, and most of the heretics imit[ed] them, in ignorance of the compliment they were receiving." Lastly, in the Baptistery of St. Peter's, Gregory XVI washed the feet of thirteen pilgrims in white robes (actually priests representing pilgrims, Parkman adds) and served them with food in the Loggia. It seemed to him that all the Italians present "regard[ed] the affair as an amusement," while manifesting no particular reverence.⁹¹

St. Peter's was the focus of the main events of Catholic ritual. Good Friday (5 April) was a special day in the Holy Week, Parkman explains, when the Resurrection is celebrated "by anticipation." The pope proceeded to the Sistine Chapel where Cardinal Castracane degli Antelminelli celebrated mass and Giovanni Battista Marrocu, professor of theology at the local Università della Sapienza and definitor of the Conventual Franciscans, gave an "eloquent and moving" sermon in Latin. Parkman observed some of the ceremonies in St. Peter's from the door of the Cappella del Coro. What particularly struck him was the sudden change from the "dismal and lugubrious tone" of the chants, and the "wretched and disconsolate" attitude of the clergy, to an atmosphere of ecstatic worship at the sound of the bells and cannon shots coming from Castel Sant'Angelo. An acquaintance of Parkman's, one Mancinelli, who he had bumped into in St. Peter's, explained that the "damn fools" were so ecstatic because, by removing the purple drape covering the image of Christ, they imagined they had witnessed his resurrection.⁹²

Two events took place on Holy Saturday (6 April) which Parkman fails to mention in his journals. The first was another high mass in the Sistine Chapel, this time celebrated by Cardinal Frasoni in the presence of the

⁹¹Parkman, *Journals*, 1:196-198; *Diario di Roma*, 28 (6 April 1844). The Cappella dei Santi Processo e Martiniano, mentioned in *Diario di Roma*, is now better known as the Baptistery. In the letter to his mother, Parkman refers to the ceremony of the washing of the feet as if this had happened on 6 April, not on 4 April. A similar episode in Parkman, *Journals*, 1:208-209.

⁹²Parkman, *Journals*, 1:198; *Diario di Roma*, 27 (2 April 1844). Mancinelli is mentioned twice in the journals, but no further information is provided on him. He spoke English, and Parkman seemed to use him as a sort of Roman assistant. The dismissive way in which he mentions Mancinelli could indicate that his presence did not need to be registered in a journal because he was a regular presence and could not be forgotten.

pope.⁹³ The second was the publicly celebrated baptism and confirmation of two former Jews, the twenty-two-year old Eichim Goldenberg, from “Unghwchevarre”, who was given the name of Francesco Maria Paolo, and the nineteen-year-old Giacobbe Forti, from Siena, rebaptized Gaspare Maria Amato. The ceremony was performed by Costantino Cardinal Patrizi Naro (1798-1876), Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Residence of Bishops, and took place in the Basilica of the St. John Lateran before a large crowd of visitors, both “foreign and national.”⁹⁴

Easter Sunday (7 April) was of course the culmination of the events of the Holy Week. High mass was celebrated by the pope himself, assisted by dozens of cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, including Cardinal Lambruschini; Adriano Cardinal Fieschi (1788-1858), Prefect of the Apostolic Palace; Tommaso Cardinal Riario Sforza (1782-1857), Camerlengo di Santa Romana Chiesa, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; and Ludovico Cardinal Gazzoli (1774-1858), Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Good Government.⁹⁵ Parkman avoided the tedious repetition of ceremonies already described in detail in previous days’ journal entries, simply noting that the pope had “a second time” blessed “a huge army” which had gathered in front of St. Peter’s. He had, however, been fascinated by the “myriads of candles” illuminating the cold night and the basilica in a phosphorescent light, “faint and beautiful” until, at eight o’clock, the lights of St. Peter’s were lit and St. Peter’s “was all at once a glare of light,” a sight, he wrote, “well worth all the rest of the Holy Week.”⁹⁶ The celebrations were wound up on 8 April with the traditional and spectacular “exhibition of fireworks” at Castel Sant’Angelo, which Parkman compared to the “eruption of Mt. Etna.”⁹⁷ On 9 April, sorry to leave, Parkman left Rome and headed for Florence.⁹⁸ He was never to return.

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To be sure, it is a fact that Parkman had formed his own opinion of both the aboriginal peoples and Catholicism well before his European and

⁹⁴*Diario di Roma*, 30 (13 April 1844).

⁹⁵*Diario di Roma*, 29 (9 April 1844).

⁹⁶Parkman, *Journals*, 1:198; *Diario di Roma*, 29 (9 April 1844). The first blessing had taken place on 3 April.

⁹⁷Parkman, *Journals*, 1:199; *Diario di Roma*, 29 (9 April 1844) and 30 (13 April 1844).

⁹⁸Parkman, *Journals*, 1:199.

Oregon Trail tours. According to Jennings, no external influence could change his deep Anglosaxon, social Darwinist imprint, although it is impossible to disentangle the factors contributing to Parkman's hostility: "[T]he nervous disease torturing him even as a young man, the environment of Boston in his youth, his reading and education." With regard to the aboriginal peoples, Jennings adds, "there is reason to believe that the [Oregon Trail] adventure merely confirmed and strengthened preexisting attitudes".⁹⁹ Why then Parkman's western journey is considered by historians an essential stage in his life and career, whereas the trip to Rome merits little more than a footnote?

Parkman went to Rome to examine Catholicism that had been the essential background of the history of French Canada. As all his readers know, Parkman read the conflict between France and England as armed combat between "Liberty and Absolutism," with religion a main protagonist. New France he saw as the "unflinching champion of the Roman Catholic reaction," New England as the "vanguard of the Reform."¹⁰⁰ Doughty maintains that "no part of his European trip had a more quickening influence on his historical dealings with ... Catholic Canada."¹⁰¹ And Franchot explains that this "sequential narrative," made of what Parkman encountered in Italy early in his life and incorporated later into his "mature" history, legitimized his interpretation of Anglo-America's victory over ecclesiastical corruption and political authoritarianism."¹⁰²

In agreement with Jennings, this writer believes that Parkman's views on both Catholicism and the savagery of the North American aboriginal peoples was well formed before his Roman visit and the Oregon Trail journey. However, perhaps even more than the latter, it was Parkman's direct experience in Rome which took him beyond a vision of indistinguishable multitudes and undifferentiated masses to the single men and women they comprised. Overall, the Catholic church would remain a reactionary and authoritarian body. But it would comprise refined and respected scholars such as Glover, sound and tolerant spiritual counsellors such as Father Luca, rigid, repulsive bigots like St. Ives, ingenuous, obtuse enthusiasts such as the good friars at the convent of San Cosimato, and gory custodians of skeletons such as the Capuchins. As for the faithful, the common people in the Papal States, as a good post-revolutionary New Englander

⁹⁹Jennings, "Parkman," p. 320.

¹⁰⁰Parkman, *Pioneers*, 1:14.

¹⁰¹Doughty, *Parkman*, 1962, pp. 77-86, quotation at p. 85.

¹⁰²Franchot, *Roads*, p. 35.

Parkman wryly notes their tendency not to take overseriously the magnificent ceremony imposed on them by an all-too-present, all-too-visible hierarchy. At the same time he is forced to observe the absence of any sign of reaction to the old régime, collectively transforming them into easily-humoured and easily-satisfied crowds. The Boston historian's days in Rome significantly confirmed Parkman's vision of Catholicism as a doctrine and of the Holy See as a centre of political power. They also helped depict its clergy as a varied and multifaceted category, and its faithful as crowds which their religion made indistinguishable from the crowds of any other Western religion.

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