necessary, the indifference of art historians to any genre not in the outdated canon from which they and textbook-writers still take their cues.

While the excellent essays and descriptions fill most of the pages, it is the extraordinary illustrations and photography that set this catalogue apart. The diagrams of the stages of the construction of a statue, the x-rays, and the magnified cross sections of paint layers illuminate the explanations of technical matters. The photographers listed on page 208 certainly merit more credit than they receive. The large color photos of the statuary are so fine that the catalogue is worth the price for them alone. No one, after looking at the pictures of these amazing creations, can fail to see why art historians must give them a place of honor in future accounts of Western sculpture.


John Marino’s well written, carefully researched, and detailed book will be useful for those studying seventeenth-century Baroque festivities in their urban social setting. It contains a discussion of public spectacles (seasonal, civic, religious, and occasional) in Naples in the period of Spanish Hapsburg rule (1503-1700). In this period the city grew in size from 155,000 inhabitants in 1528 to ca. 360,000 before the plague of 1656 to become the largest city in Europe after Paris. The Spanish authorities tried to limit population growth that had led to provisioning problems and urban unrest. Ruled by vice-roys, Naples became the keystone of Spanish influence in Italy, a city of remarkable riches, diversity, and spirit: “the jewel in the Spanish crown” (29). Its festivities were played out in the city streets, which became the stage where different groups asserted their identity and projected their message to this great urban audience. Central elements of cohesion were the five noble “segni” of the Neapolitan nobility, based in districts with complex membership (which did not include all feudal nobles of the Kingdom), and the one “seggio del popolo”
seventeenth-century news (which excluded plebeians). The “seggi” had some role in municipal government. A typical procession might begin with troops and trumpets followed by carriages with the Viceroy and Sindaco, great office holders, the feudal nobility grouped by title, the representatives of the “seggi,” the legal “togati” of magistrates, and officials of the Royal palace. Many festivities emphasized symbolically the ancient Greek foundation of Naples, before Rome, and the distance of Neapolitan from Roman culture.

Due to archival damage during World War II records of the “seggi” in the Archivio di Stato no longer exist, but Marino has thoroughly explored other archives and the printed literature of the period: contemporary accounts, guidebooks, almanacs, and memorials of particular occasions. There were many festivities during the year, beginning in September after the hot summer, with the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, September 8th. Then came St. Januarius (September 19th) who was Naples’ chief patron saint. His preserved blood liquefied on auspicious occasions. He was so important that he had a second feast-day in May. St. Theresa of Avila (who became a patron of Spain) did not have a clear presence, but the Spanish Jesuits of St. Ignatius, who acquired an important church in 1584, became very conspicuous. The festive year continued through the Advent and Christmas seasons to Carnival with its raucous celebration and the Easter season, culminating with the week-long observance for S. Giovanni Battista that centered on his feast-day, June 24th. Some of the festivities were largely secular, such as the welcome given to new viceroys for their three-year terms, which often happened during the S. Giovanni celebration. No Spanish ruler visited Naples after Charles V in 1535, but there were festivities to welcome other foreign princes and great nobles. Some festivities were continuing memorials of significant events, such as the Battle of Lepanto (in October 1571) or the great eruption of Mount Vesuvius (in December 1631).

There was a significant development in the nature of festivities in that the Church after Trent, and the viceroys tended to exert control over earlier more popular celebrations, especially after the week-long plebian Masaniello (Tommaso Aniello) revolt in July 1647, which was set off by imposition of a new tax on fruit. S. Maria Maddalena (whose feast day was in July) gradually fell from prominence while
Corpus Christi rose. The decoration of churches came to assert the new order of Trent. The nobles of the “seggi” became more closely associated with the Viceroy, and they receded from popular involvement into parlor games in their private palaces. Marino provides a good example of the change in festivities through the feast of S. Giovanni Battista. This was very ancient, from the fourth century when a temple of Partenope had been transformed into a church of S. Giovanni. By the sixteenth century S. Giovanni had accumulated a week-long celebration with conspicuous popular involvement: the guilds decorated floats in the procession, there were mountains of free food, and there was nude bathing in the Bay of Naples. There was a confraternity of S. Giovanni and his preserved blood also liquefied. To counteract the “pagan” elements, the Church in the 1560s began to recommend a day of meditation in church, a “Forty Hour Vigil.” To exert their own authority, the Viceroys in the 1580s joined and dominated the procession. Gradually the “popular” elements were muted and the vitality of the feast of S. Giovanni dimmed.

The lesson for “becoming Neapolitan” from this interesting book is that Neapolitan society, as seen through its festivities, was becoming more stratified in the Baroque period. As the author concludes at one point (227), the development of Neapolitan festivities “shows the co-option of popular celebrations by elite civil and clerical powers … and eventually exhaustion of any authentic popular participation.” This, with the final enfranchisement of the middle classes in the nineteenth century, was the lasting legacy of Baroque Naples: its plebeians were excluded.


This beautifully written, stridently polemical book advances, against the grain of current Milton scholarship, the provocative thesis that Milton was not a Puritan. The evidence against Milton as a Puritan is laid out in convincing detail, but the terminology may be daunting