

# The aesthetics of Rome's decaying antiquities

The tension between past and present on Hendrik Fagel's Grand Tour, 1786-1787



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## **Introduction, Status Quaestionis and methodology**

‘‘Rome has been described by the ancient poets as the beauty and mistress of the world, as the goddess of cities, as of immense extent, and eternal duration. Nor does this panegyric seem, even in our eyes, too florid, or too highly coloured, if we consider the grandeur and magnificence of a place whose foundations still appear as it were indestructible.’’<sup>1</sup> Thus the British antiquarian Stephen Weston in 1776 vividly illustrated the wide admiration for the Eternal City. Already since the late Middle Ages, Italy had attracted members of the European elites, who sought in its universities and academies the highly estimated knowledge and expertise of the Italian Renaissance. With the unprecedented prosperity and peace of the eighteenth century, however, the amount of northern European travellers increased significantly and their goals in Italy became more closely associated with tourism. In this period, many European noblemen, especially the British, made a Grand Tour to Italy, to discover its ancient beauty and its unparalleled richness of arts and culture. It was more than a simple journey or a temporary fashion; it became a decisive moment in the cultural training of every cultivated European. Although the origins of the Grand Tour go back to the sixteenth century, it experienced its apogee in the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The itinerary of the Grand Tour changed slightly in emphasis over the course of the century, but the eternal city of Rome remained the indisputable climax of the Grand Tour.<sup>3</sup> As just emerged from Weston’s statement, Grand Tourists were fascinated by the ‘eternal duration’ of Rome. Precisely this relationship between the ancient past and contemporary Rome of the eighteenth century, is where this thesis focuses on.

### **A ‘definition’ of the Grand Tour**

A lot has been written on the Grand Tour, especially by British historians.<sup>4</sup> This is not surprising, since the majority of travellers making a Grand Tour was British. Although several

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Weston, *Viaggiana: or, detached remarks on the Buildings, Pictures, Statues, Inscriptions, &c of Ancient and Modern Rome*, 1776 (second edition, London, 1790), 175.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Grand Tour’, in: Ian Chilvers, *The Oxford Dictionary of Art and Artists*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Oxford, 2014). <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095903557>, last consulted 9-6-2017.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Ann Naddeo, ‘Cultural capitals and cosmopolitanism in eighteenth-century Italy: the historiography of Italy and the Grand Tour’, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 10 (2005), 183.

<sup>4</sup> Standard works are for instance John Towner, ‘The Grand Tour: a key phase in the history of tourism’, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12 (1985), pp. 297-333; Christopher Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (London, 1987); Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1992); Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance* (London, 1998); Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour* (New Haven and London, 2003); Rosemary Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour: the British in*

variations fit under the umbrella of a ‘Grand Tour’, most scholars agree on the basic definition of the phenomenon. The Grand Tour in the form with which it is now most commonly associated, developed fully only in the eighteenth century, when most better-off men regarded it as part of their education to explore the European continent along common routes and standardized itineraries. As Anne Hultzsich noted in 2014, the Tour’s roots lie in the seventeenth century however, when the growing importance of aesthetics became the main motive for travelling. The term ‘Grand Tour’ was first used by Richard Lassells in his *The Voyage of Italy* of 1670.<sup>5</sup> Even though the number of travellers to Italy rose considerably in the late seventeenth century, it is generally seen as a quintessentially eighteenth-century experience, Rosemary Sweet claimed in 2012.<sup>6</sup>

The conventional understanding of the Grand Tour is that it was meant to provide the final education and polish for well-to-do young men, and later sometimes also women, before they were ready for adulthood. In practice however, the spectrum of travellers undertaking a continental journey was more diverse than this traditional picture implies. But Sweet still recognizes a general pattern: “the travellers had at least some ambition to acquire cultivation and refinement; to improve their taste by studying the finest specimens of art and architecture; and to participate in the leisure pursuits and sociability of polite company in the different countries through which they passed.”<sup>7</sup> James Buzard (2002) supports this traditional picture. He says that the Grand Tour was the paradigm for travelling between 1660 and 1837, when a new paradigm of mass tourism and leisure travel emerged. According to Buzard, the Grand Tour’s “leading purpose was to round out the education of young men from the ruling classes by exposing them to the treasured artefacts and ennobling society of the Continent.”<sup>8</sup> Often following an academic education, the Tour was a social ritual intended to prepare young men to assume the leadership positions preordained for them at home. ‘Grand Tour’ began as a French phrase – *le grand tour* – but it was appropriated by Britons of the late seventeenth and

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*Italy, c. 1690-1820* (Cambridge, 2012). For useful historiographical overviews, see for instance: John Wilton-Ely, “‘Classic ground’: Britain, Italy, and the Grand Tour”, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 28 (2004), pp. 136-165; Barbara-Ann Naddeo, ‘Cultural capitals and cosmopolitanism in eighteenth-century Italy: the historiography of Italy and the Grand Tour’, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 10 (2005), pp. 183-199; Gerrit Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen? Evoluties in vroegmoderne reiservaringen van Hollandse en Brabantse elites (1600-1750)* (Hilversum, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Anne Hultzsich, *Architecture, travellers and writers: Constructing histories of perception 1640-1950*, Studies in comparative literature; vol. 26 (Oxford, 2014), 58.

<sup>6</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 9-10.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, 3.

<sup>8</sup> James Buzard, ‘The Grand Tour and after, 1660-1840’, in: Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge, 2002), 37-52, there: 38-39.

early eighteenth centuries whose wealthy nation had created a ‘substantial upper class with enough money and leisure to travel’.<sup>9</sup>

In the last decade, these kinds of general descriptions are increasingly being challenged. As we have seen before, Sweet pointed at a high degree of diversity within the Grand Tour. Indeed, we should be aware of the fact that the term ‘Grand Tour’ is essentially a construction of modern British research, and was actually hardly used in the eighteenth century. Gerrit Verhoeven points out a lot of varieties and different approaches to the genre of travel writing. The excellent methodological introduction of his book *Anders Reizen?* of 2009 reminds us that not all kinds of early modern travel could be called a Grand Tour. Apart from the traditional educational, antiquarian or artistic purposes of the Grand Tour, we also have to consider religious, diplomatic, or commercial functions of travelling.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, some caution is required with general definitions such as the one that Buzard gives.

Another point of criticism on the British dominance in the literature is the consecutive lack of attention for Italy. ‘Just as most British tourists to Italy in the eighteenth century returned home with all their prejudices confirmed, readers of Jeremy Black’s latest book on the Grand Tour learn very little about Italy in the period and a lot more about Britain.’<sup>11</sup> In this way Melissa Calaresu in 2005 began her review article on Jeremy Black’s *Italy and the Grand Tour* from 2003. Historical research on the Grand Tour, which has grown significantly and become a serious focus of academic study in the last decade, has always been dominated by British interests. The great number of British tourists and the vast amount of contemporary sources in English have partially determined this emphasis. French scholars, however, have also concentrated on the travels and writings of their compatriots, resulting in the scholarship on the Grand Tour being mainly nationally focused.<sup>12</sup> Calaresu, herself of Italian origin, especially studies the Enlightenment in Naples and Rome, which confirms her previous point about the national focus of scholars. Thus, her criticism on Black is completely in line with her attempts to nuance the stereotypes about Italians.<sup>13</sup> All we can conclude from this is that the traditional picture of the Grand Tour did not go unquestioned.

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<sup>9</sup> Buzard, ‘The Grand Tour and after’, 39.

<sup>10</sup> Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen?*, 29-30.

<sup>11</sup> Melissa Calaresu, ‘Jeremy Black: Italy and the Grand Tour’, *European History Quarterly* 35:1 (2005), 179-181, there: 180.

<sup>12</sup> Calaresu, ‘Jeremy Black: Italy and the Grand Tour’, 180.

<sup>13</sup> On this subject, see also Calaresu, ‘Images of Ancient Rome in Late Eighteenth-Century Neapolitan Historiography’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58, no. 4 (1997), 641-661; Calaresu, ‘Looking for Virgil’s Tomb: The End of the Grand Tour and the Cosmopolitan Ideal in Europe’, in: Jas Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and Visions. Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London, 1999), 138-161; Calaresu and Helen Hills (eds.), *New Approaches to Naples, c. 1500-1800: the power of place* (Ashgate, 2013).

## Travel writing

Italy is generally considered as the cradle of tourism. As the early Grand Tourist Joseph Addison already wrote in 1705, ‘there is certainly no place in the world where a man may travel with greater Pleasure and Advantage than in Italy.’<sup>14</sup> Therefore the field of tourism, and especially travel writing, deserves some attention here. In recent years, the genre of travel writing has received a lot of scholarly attention, and the Grand Tour has a prominent position in this field. According to Antoni Mączak the field of tourism and travel writing is very topical: ‘[...] we still encounter in people with an urge to travel that same curiosity about the world as well as the snobbery of the early tourists – that naïve faith in yet mistrust of anything foreign.’<sup>15</sup> The fundamental dilemmas of foreign travel, its psychology, hardly seem to have changed over the centuries. Things such as expenses, the fear of danger, the isolation and the exhaustion are concerns of all times.<sup>16</sup>

The Dutch historian Peter Rietbergen in 2006 expressed a rather optimistic view upon travelling. Seen from a pessimistic perspective, a lot of people wonder whether travel and the subsequent encounter between other cultures is a factor of cultural integration. Do not most travellers carry only their own identity and prejudices with them, which are consequently often confirmed by this confrontation with the ‘Other’? Travel does not very often seem to result in positive interaction, let alone integration. Yet Rietbergen tries to confront this negative view by showing that travel outside Europe and inside Europe itself led to cultural change. Besides the linguistic benefits, travel also caused greater knowledge about such fields as the geography, economics, politics and the morals and customs of other regions, both for the individual traveller, but also for the broader regional cultures of which Europe was comprised.<sup>17</sup> Many travellers gained some knowledge about other countries and peoples; yet, most of them hardly understood or valued the different, national or regional, cultures they met elsewhere in Europe. From their recorded experiences it appears that prejudices were only to a minor extent removed by travelling. On the contrary; they frequently appear to have been confirmed by it.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Joseph Addison, *Remarks on several parts of Italy, &c. in the years 1701, 1702, 1703, 1705* (second edition, London, 1718), preface.

<sup>15</sup> Antoni Mączak & Ursula Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), 2. Although his focus (16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries) is a bit too early for my research, Mączak has some useful general information about early modern travelling.

<sup>16</sup> Mączak & Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: a cultural history* (London, 2006), 272-273.

<sup>18</sup> Rietbergen, *Europe*, 295.

Moreover, in the genre of travel writing, the term ‘apodemic literature’ is an important concept. First coined by the German scholar Justin Stagl in 1980, ‘apodemic’ denotes the didactic and instructional texts that travel guides were. Also called ‘Reisekunst’ or the art of travel, apodemic literature is comprised of works in which the central concern is providing systematic rules useful for travel and observation. In terms of cultural construction, apodemic literature is materially as well as affectively performative.<sup>19</sup> This literature, so to say, attempts to steer people in some direction and influence their actions. This is what makes it performative. In this respect, also John Urry’s notion of ‘the tourist gaze’ is a relevant theoretical concept. It entails that the ways in which people observe is determined by a socio-cultural framework. People gaze upon the world through a particular filter of ideas, skills, desires and expectations, framed by social class, gender, nationality, age and education. In other words, gazing is a performance that orders, shapes and classifies the world, rather than reflecting it. Therefore, travellers cannot just objectively experience the countries they visit, but are always implicitly or explicitly comparing it with their own situation. Gazing at particular sights is conditioned by personal experiences and memories and framed by rules and styles, as well as by circulating images and texts.<sup>20</sup> This concept is applicable to the Grand Tour, since the itineraries for travellers were highly standardized in guidebooks, so their expectations were already formed at home. A key theme here is thus the interplay between those preliminary expectations and actual experiences.

Finally, Chloe Chard in 1998 pointed at the workings of pleasure and imagination within travelling. Most people assume that a traveller engaged in translating the foreign into common discourse. Consequently, the traveller set himself or herself the task of producing an effect of pleasure, which lies in the fact that foreignness is often valued as a desirable departure from the familiar and the mundane.<sup>21</sup> Stressing the deviations from the well-known, domestic situation is one key task or purpose of travel writing. Travellers, in some way, demand from the foreign that it should proclaim itself as different from the familiar. At the same time, they define their own task as one of grasping that difference.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Gavin Jack & Alison Phipps, *Tourism and Intercultural Exchange: why Tourism Matters* (Clevedon, 2005), 78.

<sup>20</sup> John Urry & Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles, 2011), 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> Chloe Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography, 1600-1830* (Manchester, 1998), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*, 3.



## **The Enlightenment, cosmopolitanism and civilisation**

As is often stressed in the literature, there was a narrow relation between the Grand Tour and the Enlightenment. For instance, according to Barbara Ann Naddeo (2005), the Enlightenment made the Grand Tour a cosmopolitan affair. This means that a common culture transcending national divisions came into being, creating a sort of pan-European identity. Alongside this view, Peter Rietbergen claims that travel was a crucial element in the formation of a cosmopolitan culture which increasingly tied together the elites of the various countries at a European level. Precisely through the interaction of partly traditional, partly new elements that now started functioning together, did cultural life in the centuries between c. 1500 and 1800 acquire a peculiarly 'European' character.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, Naddeo also deals with the question of the significance of the Grand Tour for its hosts, and therefore she turns to the work of Franco Venturi, who was the first to study the impact of the Enlightenment on the Italian culture. 'For Venturi, the Grand Tour importantly represented one of the cultural conditions for renewal, in so far as the Tourists' barrage of criticism provided a sort of Archimedean point from which Italians too could view the contemporary state of their society and culture.'<sup>24</sup> In other words, thanks to the northern Europeans, Italians came in touch with Enlightenment thought. Furthermore, Venturi regrets the fact that a lot of English travellers had such negative attitudes towards Italy. Initially only interested in the classic past of Italy, the differences between the glorious, splendid past and the contemporary misery and poverty were soon being highlighted.<sup>25</sup> Thus Venturi in 1973 commenced a new trend in the historiography, by focusing on the reactions of Italians on the Grand Tourists visiting their country. Currently, Melissa Calaresu is the main representative of this perspective. In 1999, she claimed that by the end of the eighteenth century, visitors of Naples became more interested in the inhabitants of the city, which revealed several fault lines in the aforementioned enlightened rhetoric of cosmopolitanism. While it used to be common to describe the Neapolitan people as touristic curiosities, these stereotypes were more and more being challenged.<sup>26</sup>

As becomes clear in Nelson Moe's book *The View from Vesuvius* from 2002, the 'backward' south of Italy was getting increasingly admired as being more natural and

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<sup>23</sup> Rietbergen, *Europe*, 273.

<sup>24</sup> Naddeo, 'Cultural capitals and cosmopolitanism in eighteenth-century Italy', 184.

<sup>25</sup> Franco Venturi, 'L'Italia fuori d'Italia', in: Ruggiero Romano & Corrado Vivanti (eds.), *Storia d'Italia*, vol. III, *Dal primo Settecento all'Unità* (Turin, 1973), 987-1170, there: 1012-1013.

<sup>26</sup> Melissa Calaresu, 'Looking for Virgil's Tomb: The End of the Grand Tour and the Cosmopolitan Ideal in Europe', in: Jas Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and Visions: towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London, 1999), 138-161, there: 138-139.

untamed.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, as time passed, the gravity of the Tour's itinerary shifted to the South, with its sun-drenched landscape often considered as the unspoilt Arcadia. Here the roots of civilisation were to be found, as well as the rituals and mythologies that modern 'civilisation' had destroyed.<sup>28</sup> This is the reason why German travellers, such as Goethe, were so fascinated by the beauty of Sicily's nature. Also the Scandinavian Grand Tourists sought the warmth of the South, and the idyllic and picturesque landscape it contained. Nevertheless, as Cesare de Seta has stressed in 1996, most of the time the itinerary of the Tour still had its focus in Rome. The *Caput Mundi*, while loaded with pagan and Christian relics, was becoming increasingly secularised through the cosmopolitan community of visitors that it attracted, drawn to the city despite their persistent denominational and ideological prejudices. Those cosmopolitan travellers regarded Rome as an objective that was uniquely important for the atmosphere of the ancient world that it retained.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Rome was considered as the cradle of classical civilisation, both in its original (ancient Rome) and in its recreated (Renaissance) manifestations.<sup>30</sup>

### **Admiration of the ancient past**

This focus on the ancient past originated in the early eighteenth century, when Johann Winckelmann proclaimed that the modern artist and poet could become great and original only by imitating the ancients. This spurred the erudite European noblemen to travel to Italy, where obviously the most examples of perfect ancient art, architecture and poetry were to be found. But not only in arts, also in politics and education the Greek and Roman antiquity were all-pervasive in the eighteenth century European societies. This was the situation in which the Grand Tour could flourish. Male adolescents from the higher social classes already enjoyed an education in classical history, poetry, architecture and art at home. But a journey to Greece or Italy, where they could study the famous examples in real life, served as the fulfilment of their education and the beginning of full-fledged adulthood. John Wilton-Ely is one author who stressed (in 2004) this connection between the classics and the Grand Tour. According to Wilton-Ely, 'at the heart of this exceptional phenomenon is the protean nature of the classical tradition, derived from Greek and Roman Antiquity, and transmitted from the Renaissance,

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<sup>27</sup> Nelson Moe, *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question* (Berkeley, 2002), 1-2.

<sup>28</sup> Cesare de Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', in: Andrew Wilton & Ilaria Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1996), 14.

<sup>29</sup> De Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', 14. On the link between Italy and the Enlightenment, see also: Cesare de Seta, *L'Italia del Grand Tour da Montaigne a Goethe* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn, Naples, 2001).

<sup>30</sup> Buzard, 'The Grand Tour and after', 39.

through the age of the Enlightenment to the world of Romanticism.”<sup>31</sup> However, the didactic value of classical antiquity, which the Grand Tour exemplified, did not remain unquestioned: outside the world of public schools, educational curricula expanded to include new subjects of greater relevance to a modern, commercial age.<sup>32</sup>

But still, the preoccupation with the (classical) past is often considered as the most important feature of the Grand Tour. Indeed, as Francis Haskell has claimed in 1996, after the year 1720, British visitors to Rome, Naples, Florence and Venice came primarily to admire the past and condemn the present. The special appeal of the past had certainly long been a very powerful one, but only in the eighteenth century British travellers began to restrict the lure of Italy within such very narrow boundaries.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, the main reason for travelling to Italy or Rome in particular was an obsession with the past. For a lot of intellectuals and travellers, Rome was the common past source of civilisation. But at the same time, it was the basis for modern life.<sup>34</sup>

We have seen that the predominance of and admiration for the ancient past is widely acknowledged in the historiography on the Grand Tour. However, a comparison of this glorious past with the situation in eighteenth-century Rome and the attitude of its inhabitants has received too little attention. Some authors have briefly pointed at this tension, sometimes accompanied with disappointment of Grand Tourists, but it is not yet sufficiently investigated. Since Rome was then in a state of decay and the Papal states witnessed severe economic problems, it is plausible to suggest that Grand Tourists visiting Rome experienced tensions between the glorious ancient Roman past and the dreadful situation in modern Rome. Extending on those incomplete and unsatisfactory remarks, I will maintain a close focus on the Eternal City itself, as well as the primary sources: journals or reports of a journey in Italy. The best way to examine these conflicting aspects of the Grand Tour is studying personal descriptions of such Tourists, which is why I chose one of those sources: the travel journal of the Dutchman Hendrik Fagel the younger, called *Journal van zijn verblijf in Rome en andere Italiaanse steden* (‘Journal of his stay in Rome and other Italian cities’), which reports his travels from November 1786 till June 1787.

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<sup>31</sup> Wilton-Ely, ‘“Classic ground”’, 137.

<sup>32</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 25.

<sup>33</sup> Francis Haskell, ‘Preface’, in: Wilton & Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> De Seta, ‘Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century’, 13-14.

Generally speaking, many travellers were not interested in the contemporary society of the countries they travelled in. On the contrary, most of them seem annoyed by foreign customs and behaviour. Central and north Europeans expressed this negative appreciation precisely about the countries of the south: for them, the vision of a glorious and idealized past, widely sought after, that was the basis of ‘high’ culture, of the ‘great’ tradition, inevitably clashed with the realities of daily life, of contemporary culture in that very region.<sup>35</sup> This admiration of the, especially ancient, past was the main reason that attracted travellers to Rome. Since Rome was often considered as the cradle of civilisation, the *Caput Mundi*, sophisticated noblemen felt that they belonged there. This was an important idea in the Age of Reason, when a sense of cosmopolitanism started to grow significantly. Initially only interested in the classic past of Italy, the differences between the glorious, splendid past and the contemporary misery and poverty were soon being highlighted.<sup>36</sup> Thus, we can assume that Grand Tourists highlighted the difference between the glorious past and contemporary decay in Rome. They probably expected to walk into the footsteps of famous Romans, but were disappointed by the poor and dirty city. I will investigate whether this tension is experienced or described by a Dutch Grand Tourist. To this end, the aforementioned journal, as well as some personal correspondence, of the politician and diplomat Hendrik baron Fagel will be thoroughly analysed. However, where this is helpful I will also make use of other descriptions of a Grand Tour in order to complement Fagel’s texts and to illustrate the different tensions.

## Methodology

This thesis is divided into three chapters, which will contribute to answering the central research question: *did eighteenth-century Grand Tourists experience tensions between the Roman past and present and is this also the case in the travel report of Hendrik Fagel jr.?* It is first of all useful to dedicate a chapter to a general overview of Italy in the eighteenth century and a background of the travellers that were visiting it. Therefore, the corresponding sub-question of this first chapter is ‘what is the general background of Italy and of the travellers to that country during the Grand Tour?’.

The second chapter, as it were, elaborates my hypothesis. As will be clear by now, the central theme is the different possible tensions between Rome’s glorious ancient past and the

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<sup>35</sup> Rietbergen, *Europe*, 295.

<sup>36</sup> Venturi, ‘L’Italia fuori d’Italia’, 1012-1013.

contemporary miserable and immoral situation.<sup>37</sup> Thus, this chapter will deal more closely with several possible areas of tension. First of all, there is the most important historical tension, which focuses on descriptions of Rome's ancient monuments and ruins. The second area of tension deals with the social aspect: Rome's inhabitants and their customs. Thirdly, since Rome was the capital of Catholicism, the religious aspect was something travellers wrote about extensively. We can assume that the predominance of churches and clergymen in the city provoked conflicts with protestant visitors. The last type of friction could be geographical, where it is helpful to maintain a close focus on the city of Rome and its surroundings: where do we actually find this tension? In other words, I will differentiate between the centre, i.e. the area around the Forum Romanum, and the periphery of Rome. In this regard, a place that could possibly be addressed is for instance the Vatican, which is interesting as to possible religious friction. Another example could be an area outside the city, the *Campagna*. As a development towards Romanticism, this countryside surrounding Rome gradually gained importance in a new spiritual attitude towards the beauty of nature.

In the third and last chapter, the main source will be approached alongside the question 'is a tension between past and present being addressed in this travelogue?', complemented by a short background of the author, Hendrik Fagel. To analyse the source material as elaborately as possible, I selected one Dutch travel report. The reason for this is that British Grand Tourists are already extensively studied; they were after all the most numerous travellers. On the contrary, the journal of Hendrik Fagel is relatively unknown, since it is not published and only available in manuscript form. Further analysis of this source may yield new insights, especially when it comes to possible differences between British and Dutch 'Grand Tours'. Fagel's journey possibly even deviated from Grand Tour in the common, British sense of the word. In short, the travelogue will be thoroughly analysed by looking at descriptions of Rome. In this analysis of the eighteenth-century text, there are several aspects we must keep in mind. All the eighteenth-century travellers had in common a fresh, clear-eyed determination to look at the new lands, and to describe what they saw as accurate as possible. People making the Tour during Romanticism, however, were more self-absorbed. The analytical and descriptive objectivity of the eighteenth-century texts is transformed into the study of the traveller's own temperament.<sup>38</sup> The approach is more

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<sup>37</sup> Authors who pointed at the political and economic problems of eighteenth century Rome are for instance: Venturi, 'L'Italia fuori d'Italia', 1012-1013; Matthew Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', in: Sturgis, *When in Rome: 2000 years of Roman Sightseeing* (London, 2011), 170-209, there: 175; John A. Marino, *Early Modern Italy: 1550-1796* (Oxford, 2002), 6.

<sup>38</sup> De Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', 18.

individualistic, focused on the own feelings and experiences. However, saying that Grand Tourists were entirely objective perhaps goes somewhat too far. Travellers making a Grand Tour had often read travel guides at home, or brought those with them on their journey. This is also the case with famous classical texts of Cicero, Livy or Virgil. Thus, travellers were often highly dependent of standardized itineraries. So one important notion underlying this thesis is the discrepancy between expectation and reality. As we have seen with Urry's theory of the tourist gaze, travellers were influenced by the socio-cultural situation at home. Their expectations were for a large part created by the (ancient) literature they read beforehand or the travel guides they took with them.

Moreover, we have to be careful with using the term 'Grand Tour', since this concept is more or less an umbrella under which several varieties of travelling in the eighteenth century can be placed. For instance, we can distinguish between the educational journey, art travels, or the political and diplomatic visits. Since I am mostly concerned with the Roman past, I will focus on travellers from the higher classes with a strong antiquarian interest. Although a lot of published books recount the experiences of travelling in Europe between 1660 and 1840, much of the relevant literature on the Grand Tour exists in private manuscript correspondence.<sup>39</sup> Whether the Grand Tour experiences were published or not, the authors were probably rather prejudiced. Travellers indeed had a 'tourist gaze', meaning that their observations were influenced by their socio-cultural background.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, to engage with the sources as critically as possible, it is also essential to know the background of the authors, which may explain the opinions they express. Still, their opinions sometimes have to be taken with a grain of salt. For this reason, I will apply a critical attitude and try to avoid accepting their descriptions as a mere truth. As Verhoeven also warns us, 'early modern travelogues were careful literary creations, containing hyperboles and epic elements.'<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Buzard, 'The Grand Tour and after', 38.

<sup>40</sup> Urry & Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen?*, 27.

## **Chapter one: Italy and the visiting Grand Tourists**

Rome in the eighteenth century was a very ambiguous city. Dominated as it still was by the classical heritage, the city was also severely impoverished and decayed. The urban plan which had seemed so impressive to visitors only a hundred years before was now felt to be too incomplete and too compromised. For example, in the 1790s the British traveller Sarah Bentham was much disappointed in seeing Rome. ‘The streets are narrow, dirty and filthy. Even the palaces are ... intermixed with wretched mean houses.’<sup>42</sup> This quote perfectly reflects both the situation in Rome, and how this is experienced by a traveller. The aim of this introductory chapter, therefore, is twofold. First of all, it is to sketch a general overview of Italy, and Rome in particular, in the eighteenth century. What was the reality of Italy, the actual situation that the Grand Tourists experienced? The second goal is to focus specifically on those Tourists: what was the profile of such a traveller? Who were they exactly? This is relevant in order to analyse why they felt possible tensions. Besides a sketch of the socio-cultural background, aspects to be dealt with here are for instance the guidebooks and classical texts they read, or the expectations they had beforehand. In other words, the desires and expectations of travellers can give us more insight in their attitudes or backgrounds that possibly collided with Italy.

### **The situation in Italy and Rome**

Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, Italy was peaceful again after it had fought several wars. It was now comprised of separate states which enjoyed varying forms of generally fragile government, so Italy no longer posed a political threat and was essentially a friendly country.<sup>43</sup> While the sixteenth century witnessed the emergence of humanism and religious reforms, the *Settecento* (Italian for eighteenth century) can be characterised with Enlightenment and political reform. The stable political system was based on an institutional order which was formed by Spanish domination. At the same time, the revived Church contributed to this stable and peaceful situation.<sup>44</sup> This was the ideal situation for the development of mass tourism that characterized the Grand Tour. As the cradle of tourism,

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<sup>42</sup> Sarah Bentham, *Journal of her travel to Italy, 1794*, quoted in: Sturgis, ‘Rome and the Grand Tour’, 175.

<sup>43</sup> John Ingamells, ‘Discovering Italy’, in: Wilton & Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, 21.

<sup>44</sup> Marino, *Early Modern Italy*, 2.

Italy had already created an infrastructure by the Middle Ages, which was developed in the centuries of the modern era and readily adapted to suit new demands.<sup>45</sup>

However, while the period from 1748 till 1796 was a time of peace for entire Italy, with reforms in several fields, for the Papacy it meant an age of continuing internal decay. Rome fed on the fame of its past and kept its borders closed for the Enlightenment. Trade and industry hardly existed, agriculture remained backward, and in the administrative area arbitrariness and corruption blossomed. Only culturally and intellectually speaking, the *Settecento* formed a creative period. It was an age of the foundation of big libraries and museums, of salons and Academies. Popes revived the imperial grandeur by creating a monumental townscape. In social terms, Rome was essentially a provincial city dominated by the papal court and princely families like Colonna, Borghese, Pamphili and Orsini. Those families maintained private collections that rivalled the Vatican museum. Besides, archaeological excavations caused an important breakthrough: the Classical World was discovered for the second time. The periods of Baroque and Rococo definitively finished; with this second Renaissance, the Neo-Classicism was born in Rome.<sup>46</sup> Thus, starting at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Italy slowly assumed its real shape in European consciousness. As a result of the cultural interaction of the Grand Tour, the idea of Italy as a single nation in the modern sense was one of the tourists' most important contributions. A single Italy, not geographically or physically but rather mentally, was born out of the creative imagination of the entire Continent.<sup>47</sup> Put differently, they constructed 'Italy', which was de facto still a collection of several variously ruled states, as one nation. Italy, as characterised by visitors, was homeland to confidence, superstition, beauty, charlatanism and a glorious past; it was a vast cabinet of curiosities.<sup>48</sup>

As we have seen before, economically speaking Rome experienced difficult times in the *Settecento*, as the population of Rome had declined severely ever since Antiquity. The Roman aristocrats seemed impoverished, and their palaces in a state of decay. The British traveller Tobias Smollett complained that the corridors, arcades, and staircases in the palaces of the most elegant Romans were depositories of nastiness.<sup>49</sup> But despite all this misery,

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<sup>45</sup> Maćzak & Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, 65.

<sup>46</sup> Ronald de Leeuw (ed.), *Herinneringen aan Italië. Kunst en toerisme in de 18<sup>de</sup> eeuw* (Zwolle, 1984), 125; Wilton & Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, 137.

<sup>47</sup> De Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', 17.

<sup>48</sup> Paola Bertucci, 'Back from wonderland: Jean Antoine Nollet's Italian tour (1749)', in: R.J.W. Evans & Alexander Marr (eds.), *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Aldershot, 2006), 193-212, there: 194-195.

<sup>49</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 175.



Rome still attracted hordes of European noblemen making a Grand Tour. Regardless of their various points of departure or their personal objectives, the travellers shared a common purpose. There are evident national differences, such as British passion for portraiture and landscape or the French interest in ethnography and costume, but we should keep in mind that the Tour was always essentially cosmopolitan.<sup>50</sup> Although this research focuses especially on a Dutch source, I will also sketch a general profile of British travellers, since they were the dominant factor of the Grand Tour.

### **Travellers in general**

Although the chosen route through Italy varied for each traveller, the itinerary in Rome itself was almost always the same. Most of them reserved at least a few days for Rome's ancient centre: the Forum Romanum and Capitol hill. The Forum Boarium, Palatine, the baths of Diocletian and Caracalla, the Via Appia with the tomb of Cecilia Metella, and the pyramid of Cestius were generally visited as well. Other Grand Tourists chose to start their sightseeing trip by visiting St. Peter's church, as well as the Belvedere, gardens and library of the Vatican. After this, the travellers spread out over several squares, churches, villas and palazzi. Most of them preferred the Villa Albani, Villa Borghese and Palazzo Colonna because of their collections of paintings and sculptures, while the Villa Pamphili and Villa Medici were visited for their gardens.<sup>51</sup>

The main purposes of making a Grand Tour were learning about other cultures, observing different social and political systems and admiring ancient and Renaissance monuments. Travellers often had different preferences, such as education, art, politics, philosophy or commerce, but most of them were part of the nobility or the ruling class. Besides, they often saw themselves as more than just tourists; instead, they strove to become important 'arbiters of taste'. To this end, it was a common habit to mingle with the local high society and increase one's knowledge of the ancient authors. In other words, the goal was to return home 'improved', and thus to contribute to creating the cultural identity of their own country.<sup>52</sup>

The education that a Grand Tour offered in politics, statecraft, antiquity and connoisseurship were crucial features for the construction of elite manhood. Indeed, one of

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<sup>50</sup> De Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', 17.

<sup>51</sup> Ronald de Leeuw (ed.), *Herinneringen aan Italië. Kunst en toerisme in de 18<sup>de</sup> eeuw* (Zwolle, 1984), 126.

<sup>52</sup> James T. Boulton & T.O. McLoughlin (eds.), *News from Abroad. Letters Written by British Travellers on the Grand Tour, 1728-71* (Liverpool, 2012), 5.

the foremost goals was to make the young traveller a man of the world. Travel facilitated social polish through conversation in aristocratic circles, through mixing with the polite society of other nations and through the acquisition of accomplishments.<sup>53</sup> The Tourists who were interested in different political and economic systems in the countries they visited, sometimes discussed those topics with local scholars. Others, however, considered the Grand Tour as an opportunity to familiarize with another, freer culture, focusing on fashion, manners and women instead of monuments.<sup>54</sup> The British art critic Laura Gascoigne is even more outspoken about this, claiming that ‘the priorities of the young men were socialising, drinking, gambling, and sex, with cultural improvement relatively low on the list.’<sup>55</sup> Although this may be a bit exaggerated, it is clear that not every traveller was entirely focused on the classical heritage.

### **The British Grand Tourists**

The typical Grand Tour in the eighteenth century was in fact a rite of passage for young British noblemen. The traveller was generally in his early twenties and had just completed an education at the universities of Oxford or Cambridge.<sup>56</sup> They were mainly attracted to Italy, and Rome in particular. Those members of the British elite, who considered themselves as intellectually and culturally superior, thought that they belonged in the Eternal City; they even considered themselves as being Romans. Thus, England’s intellectual roots were supposedly anchored in the classical writings and art of Greece and Rome. According to the writer Samuel Johnson, ‘All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean.’<sup>57</sup> One of the purposes of the Grand Tour, therefore, was to learn from the cultural ties with Europe, to become acquainted with a part of their own heritage. Travellers desired to grasp the cultural traditions that had shaped their own country and Europe. Since Europe was so diverse, British Grand Tourists expected to learn new ideas that brought them closer to the source of European culture. A lot of places were seen as the source of their own cultural heritage.

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<sup>53</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 16; Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 23.

<sup>54</sup> Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 6.

<sup>55</sup> Laura Gascoigne, ‘Roman Souvenir’, in: *The Spectator*, 13-02-2008. Last consulted on 20-05-2017. <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2008/02/roman-souvenir/#>

<sup>56</sup> Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 5.

<sup>57</sup> James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, vol. 3 (London, 1816), 35, quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 9.

Therefore, many considered it recommendable, perhaps even necessary, to visit the places where important things had happened.<sup>58</sup>

Moreover, some people assumed that the aforementioned existence of British cultural superiority was based both on a common British capacity for objectivity and on the power of money. Cultural tourism encouraged the British ruling class to confirm their prejudices in several significant ways: that they were cleaner than the continentals; that their politics were more democratic, or at least less despotic; and that their religion was more rational.<sup>59</sup>

However, the Grand Tour also aroused more awareness and understanding of other countries. ‘‘The presumption for most travellers was that when they returned from the Tour they would see Britain and its place in Europe in a fresh cultural, social and historical light; the Tour gave a breadth and depth to their way of thinking; it so challenged their values – social, political, cultural – as to prompt them to reflect on what they had and what they presumed was worth having.’’<sup>60</sup> This is a more optimistic view than most historians have, who often claim that prejudices are being confirmed. Instead, Boulton and McLoughlin say that values were actually challenged; travellers became more open-minded.

One of the most important features of a British traveller was the passion for art, especially painting. This could be either active, meaning painters who went to Rome to improve their skills, or passive: a lot of rich British aristocrats wanted to have a portrait of themselves, preferably made by famous portraitists such as Pompeo Batoni or Angelika Kaufmann. Another option was to increase one’s knowledge of art by visiting art galleries, museums and palazzi, in order to become a true ‘connoisseur’. As a result, an entire trade in paintings and sculptures emerged, since buying an original artwork of a famous artist stood high on the list of many Grand Tourists. Whether it was original or a copy or fake, art was an indicator of taste and knowledge, i.e. of being a connoisseur. This was all part of a process of learning, with acquiring elegance, refinement and good taste as the central purpose. Furthermore, many travellers deemed it an essential task to make contact with influential people, in other words, forming a network of acquaintances to participate in the higher social circles.<sup>61</sup> There were at one point so many British travellers, that the Frenchman Charles de Brosses in 1739 even claimed that some left Rome ‘‘without having seen anyone but other Englishmen and without knowing where the Colosseum is’’. Clearly, he was exaggerating

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<sup>58</sup> Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 2-3 and 9.

<sup>59</sup> Nigel Llewellyn, ‘‘Those loose and immodest pieces’’: Italian art and the British point of view’, in: Shearer West (ed.), *Italian Culture in Northern Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1999), 67-100, there: 75.

<sup>60</sup> Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 20.

<sup>61</sup> Ibidem, 11-12.

about the Colosseum, but he was right about the company. Few British visitors to Rome, except the odd Catholics, associated with Italians.<sup>62</sup>

### **The Dutch Grand Tourists**

Dutch travellers were, in contrast to their British or German counterparts, rarely part of the high nobility, but they had instead a distinct civic profile. The image of rich aristocrats is therefore not entirely applicable to Dutch Grand Tourists. However, as sons of high officials, governors and merchants, those travellers were part of the higher layer of society as well. This elite obviously stands in the spotlight, as most Grand Tour travelogues were written by authors from the higher social classes.<sup>63</sup>

Art played a less important role for Dutch Grand Tourists than it did for the British. As the young Dutch travellers were often future administrators, governors and mayors, who generally had just graduated from university as well, they rather oriented themselves in the political and religious field. They could learn from a comparison with the situation abroad in order to apply this to their later careers in the Republic. In their travelogues we often find long treatises on the waning power of the republic of Venice, the lawlessness in the Papal States, and the economic mismanagement in Naples.<sup>64</sup> Nicolaas ten Hoorn for instance wrote in 1729 that his guide was particularly useful for merchants. Since in the Dutch Republic trade and commerce were pre-eminent, merchants and governors alike were very curious about the economic situation in Italy.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, Venice was attributed a lot of similarities with the Republic, and therefore it was considered an important example. The successful activities posed an example to be followed, whereas a downfall similar to the Venetian republic was something to avoid. Accordingly, the present situation or more recent history gained attention as well; Italy was also visited in search of political illumination. Indeed, although the Dutch physician and poet Gerard Nicolaas Heerkens unsurprisingly aspired to visit the birthplace of his ancient and Renaissance heroes, it is worth noting that he nurtured an equally ardent passion for more recent Italian historiography.<sup>66</sup>

The purpose of travelling to Italy for the young Dutchmen was therefore mainly educational. While the British interest in art and architecture proved their cultural preferences,

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<sup>62</sup> Gascoigne, 'Roman Souvenir'.

<sup>63</sup> Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen?*, 24.

<sup>64</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 16.

<sup>65</sup> Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen?*, 16.

<sup>66</sup> Yasmin Haskell, *Prescribing Ovid: The Latin Works and Networks of the Enlightened Dr Heerkens* (London, New York, 2013), 12.

the goals for Dutchmen were generally based on a political or economic interest. This does not mean that they were not interested in the famous Roman monuments at all; of course, they also visited the most important tourist attractions alongside the influential itineraries. The educational goals of the Dutch Grand Tour can be divided into two parts. First of all, it was the antiquarian interest in the ancient past. In Italy, after all, one could, *in optima forma* and often *in situ*, admire the classical antiquities, art and architecture. From 1750 onwards, the archaeological excavations in Pompeii and Herculaneum, of which the results could be viewed by travellers, stimulated this fascination for the ancient past. The Dutchman Willem Carel Dierkens is one example of a traveller who is highly interested in the ancient past, when he complained that many mosaics and frescoes were torn out of context and put into museums. Taken a bit broader, visiting Roman villas in the countryside or the beauty of ancient ruins situated in a landscape were later developments in this classical admiration.<sup>67</sup> The second purpose of a Tour to Italy was to learn from different forms of statecraft, economics and jurisdiction; in other words, study the modern past or contemporary situation. Those experiences could be taken into practice at home, where it was to aid ‘common good’ (‘tot nut van ‘t algemeen’). In other words, a traveller should compare the country he visited with his own country. He was expected to teach his fellow citizens all the positive experiences and results of such a comparison. It was considered a duty for Grand Tourists to share their knowledge with other; a typical presupposition of Enlightenment thought.<sup>68</sup>

Sometimes Dutch tourists even debated with rulers and cardinals, or associated with scholars. This shows another important pre-occupation for the Dutch Grand Tourists, although not very different from the Britons, that is, to be introduced in the higher social circles, in order to learn fine manners and skills such as dancing and fencing. Sometimes Italian patricians and cardinals even held open houses.<sup>69</sup> For instance, Johan Meerman had access to the higher circles, whereas Arnout Vosmaer spent an entire day with the famous engraver Gian Battista Piranesi.<sup>70</sup> So the enhancing of sociability and cultural refinement also stood high on the agenda. While the elitist travellers were often met with suspicion by the common Italian people, instead they were always welcomed very hospitable by the local aristocrats, who usually gave them a tour through their art collections.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Marie Christine van der Sman, ‘Hagenaars op Grand Tour’, *Incontri*, 17 (2002), 101-118, there: 101, 109 and 114-115.

<sup>68</sup> Van der Sman, ‘Hagenaars op Grand Tour’, 101 and 105-106.

<sup>69</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 16.

<sup>70</sup> Van der Sman, ‘Hagenaars op Grand Tour’, 112.

<sup>71</sup> E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, ‘review of J.W. Niemeijer, *Voyage en Italie, 1778* (Boulogne-Billancourt, 1994)’, in: *Low Countries Historical Review*, 111:2 (1996), 246-248, there: 247.

Regarding the written results of all those travel experiences, Dutch travellers wrote an impressive corpus of ego documents. French, British and German travelogues occurred time and again in print, but with the Dutch manuscripts this was only very rarely the case. In short, published travelogues are hardly present in the Dutch record of sources; perhaps this was because Dutch writers were too modest to share their personal texts with a bigger audience. Johan Meerman's travelogues show that the tone varied considerably between handwritten and published sources. In the printed version of his second Grand Tour (1793) he applied the tone of a more critical Enlightened thinker, who commented on the political situation, science, or the economic system.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, as was quite remarkable at that time, Meerman's journal (the manuscript from 1774-1776) was written in Dutch. The purpose of doing this was to revive Dutch culture and language, confidence and pride, and to reinforce a national feeling.<sup>73</sup>

### **Guides and guidebooks**

Since the eighteenth century was an age of reason, the route visitors followed during their time in Rome was highly rational: they sought to see everything, and to understand it according to established rules. At least, that was the ideal. To aid in its achievement, it was considered essential to engage a guide or *cicerone*.<sup>74</sup> Those tutor-guides of the Grand Tour presented illustrations from the younger travellers' classical education to elicit personal responses to art, literature, and architectural monuments of the Italian past. Important here was also moral education: one goal was to understand the ancient world.<sup>75</sup> Finding one's way around the monuments of Rome demanded a considerable amount of introductory information. Without such knowledge and without practical experience it was hard to guess the age of a monument.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, information about the age and qualities of a monument was left to the local guides, who must have told the most fascinating tales. Today's standards would consider it completely incompetent, but they saw a distinctive advantage in adding colour to their stories. Whenever guides were short of factual information they would complement this with hearsay or legends. Those guides, after all, shaped the artistic

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<sup>72</sup> Verhoeven, *Anders Reizen?*, 17-18.

<sup>73</sup> Van der Sman, 'Hagenaars op Grand Tour', 104.

<sup>74</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 176.

<sup>75</sup> Marino, *Early Modern Italy*, 3.

<sup>76</sup> Mączak & Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, 209.

sensibilities of the travellers. Hence, they were perhaps a principal factor in shaping the cultural awareness of Europe's elite.<sup>77</sup>

As either a supplement or an alternative to a *cicerone*, a guidebook could be useful. There were for instance two influential volumes of Pompilio Totti: *ritratto di Roma antica* and *ritratto di Roma moderna*. Later, Giuseppe Vasi's *Itinerario istruttivo di Roma* became the most important guide.<sup>78</sup> The itineraries of best-selling travel diaries were in fact inventories of the wonders to be found in the open-air museum south of the Alps.<sup>79</sup> All authorities agreed that there was a great deal to see. Their claims to completeness, however, were illusory, since a certain degree of selectiveness was inevitable. Moreover, large parts of Rome's heritage were deemed to be of minor interest. As in previous generations, the past of the Middle Ages was generally ignored. However, there was scarcely more concern for Rome's Baroque architecture. The famous Bernini was sometimes admired, but much else was either disparaged or passed over without comment.<sup>80</sup> Although the Pantheon was the most valued classical building, many Grand Tourists despised Bernini's towers that were added to it.<sup>81</sup> Apart from contemporary guides or diaries with advice about where to go and what to see on a Grand Tour, like the works from Thomas Nugent and Joseph Addison, many travellers also brought classical texts with them, such as Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*.<sup>82</sup>

In Rome, the emphasis was laid on viewing its buildings and monuments, as opposed to art collections in Florence or the atmosphere of the streets in Naples. The advice to rely more and more on guidebooks, was characteristic of a new development that seeing was becoming more self-reliant and less dependent upon the assistance of the *cicerone*; this also allowed more room for personal observation and discovery rather than deference to antiquarian authority and a prescriptive itinerary.<sup>83</sup> In other words, a tight balance existed between the knowledge gained from literature and travellers' own personal observations. In conclusion, guides and guidebooks played a considerable role in the artistic and classical education of the tourists. Once the traveller had returned home from his journey, it was either a printed book or his own notes that kept his memories alive. As a result, although printed

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<sup>77</sup> Mączak & Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, 210-211.

<sup>78</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 177.

<sup>79</sup> Bertucci, 'Back from wonderland', 195.

<sup>80</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 177.

<sup>81</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 125-126.

<sup>82</sup> Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 12-13.

<sup>83</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 106.

guides made less impact on the tourist's imagination than did the living word, it is the guidebooks that have survived to bear witness to people's mentality in those days.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Mączak & Phillips, *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, 211.



## **Chapter two: areas of tension**

As we have seen before, many Grand Tourists expected to see in Rome the revived ancient past, only to be disappointed in seeing a city in collapse. A glorious and idealized past all too often clashed with the realities of daily life, since contemporary misery and poverty showed no signs of a great and glorious tradition at all.<sup>85</sup> In order to elaborate on this tension between past and present, as well as others, the sub-question of this chapter is: which possible areas of tension could be experienced in Rome? Based on the profile of the travellers and the situation at Rome, four different themes could be distinguished: historical, social, religious and geographical. This chapter is thus an exploration of the different possible areas of tension to be experienced by Grand Tourists in Rome.

### **2.1 – Historical tension: past and present**

The first and foremost tension possibly experienced by Grand Tourists in Rome was the one between past and present. Admiration for the ancient past, and the subsequent desire to walk into the footsteps of illustrious Romans, was the main factor that drew travellers to Rome, but as we have seen in the previous chapter, in the eighteenth century, Rome was a poor city where vice flourished. This historical friction can then be further subdivided into; first, the physical aspect of ancient monuments and architecture itself, and second, Grand Tourists' focus on nostalgic feelings. I will discuss the monuments first, followed by the section on nostalgia and imagination.

#### **2.1.1 – Monuments**

Undeniably, there existed a discontinuity between past and present. Visitors of Italy widely perceived that Italy's present society threatened the memory of its past virtues.<sup>86</sup> This discontinuity could be further characterised by a paradox: Italy was at the one hand the pre-eminent example of historical development, with the Roman culture spreading all over Europe, but at the same time, Italy remained outside the process of civilisation in the *Settecento*; in a way it 'missed' the Enlightenment, and was therefore generally considered a backward country.<sup>87</sup> An ambiguity was also present at another level. Travellers were often

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<sup>85</sup> Venturi, 'L'Italia fuori d'Italia', 1012-1013; Rietbergen, *Europe*, 295.

<sup>86</sup> Sara Warneke, *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England* (Leiden, 1995), 112.

<sup>87</sup> Anne Hultzs, *Architecture, travellers and writers: Constructing histories of perception 1640-1950*, Studies in comparative literature; 26 (Oxford, 2014), 4.

struck by the otherness of Italy, through its museum-like character as a cabinet of curiosities. With all the ancient ruins scattered across the country, it was indeed frequently seen as an open-air museum. But in contrast to this distanced attitude, travellers (mainly the British) at the same time identified themselves with Italy and Rome, as the place where a shared cultural heritage was rooted. The Roman past was somehow appropriated by British elites, who in a process of 'selfing' sort of wanted to show that they were actually also Romans.

But this tension between past and present was something not only characteristic of the Grand Tour; in fact, we see this already two centuries earlier. Andrew Boorde in the sixteenth century considered Italy as a noble country and praised the magnificent cities and countryside, but described the inhabitants' behaviour as being deeply immoral.<sup>88</sup> Writing in approximately the same period, Roger Ascham admired Italian as a cultured language, second only to Greek and Latin, and respected ancient Rome's reputation as a place of learning and excellence, but he lamented the pervasive vices in contemporary Rome. According to Ascham, Italy had brought forward the most honourable men, but at the same place, the old and present manners differed as much as black and white, as virtue and vice. It was thus entirely common for Englishmen to combine an idealistic Italy with evil Italians. Strangely enough, this concept of Italy as a beautiful land with magnificent cities and a tradition of scholarship and culture co-existed quite harmoniously in their minds with the concept of a people spoiled by almost every vice imaginable.<sup>89</sup> In a way, the people of Italy were separated from the physical cities and monuments in the country, as if they did not threaten the ancient ruins. More than a tension between past and present, those are separated and the people are contrasted with the country as a whole. Two centuries later however, when we are in the middle of the Age of Reason, we do instead see friction evolve more clearly. The French philosopher Voltaire could not have phrased it better in 1768:

‘J’ai pleuré dans mon voyage chez vous (...) J’ai cherché le Forum Romanum de Trajan, cette place pavée de marbre en forme de réseau, entourée d’un péristyle en colonnades, chargé de cent statues; j’ai trouvé Campo Vacino, le marché aux vaches et malheureusement aux vaches maigres et sans lait... O Romains! mes larmes ont coulé et je vous estime assez pour croire que vous pleurez avec moi.’<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Warneke, *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England*, 112.

<sup>89</sup> Ibidem, 112-113.

<sup>90</sup> Voltaire, ‘L’Épître aux Romains’, in: Louis Moland (ed.), *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, vol. XXVII (Garnier, 1883), 85-87, quoted in: Venturi, ‘L’Italia fuori d’Italia’, 1054.

He spoke those words in his *Epître aux Romains*, a remarkable mix of classic memories and sharp contemporary allusions. Voltaire then goes on with urging the Roman people to be courageous again and revive the old Roman virtues: ‘Romans, listen to your fellow citizen, listen to Rome and your old courage: the Italic valour is not yet dead.’<sup>91</sup> It is quite fascinating that Voltaire claims to be a fellow citizen of the Romans, and parallel to what is mentioned in the previous chapter, something the British Grand Tourists often did as well. It became indeed a recurring theme for generations of disappointed travellers to Rome: the ‘real’ Rome, meaning that of antiquity, had disappeared underneath a veil of history and the banalities of the modern city. In that way, the one northern illusion, that of being Romans as well, made place for another: the illusion to know better than the Romans themselves how Rome should look like.<sup>92</sup> The elitist travellers thus showed their concern for the Roman heritage, and consequently their own heritage even, by making themselves inhabitants of Rome. Many aristocratic Britons indeed drew parallels between their nation’s current position, i.e. having an overseas empire, and that of the ancient Roman Empire. They felt they were living in an Augustan age as well and expected men of taste to admire and imitate Roman models. According to Richard Lassells, a young nobleman could not understand Caesar and Livy if he had not touched the ground they had walked on. As will soon be described more extensively, personal experience of the places made famous in the Latin texts which the traveller had read in school would seal the bond between ancient and modern empires. Joseph Addison’s handbook was so focused on the ancient Roman sites and monuments, the traces of classical times, that Italy can sometimes appear to be a country entirely lacking in living inhabitants or post-classical buildings. The purpose of this for the predominantly protestant Britons was to avoid the obstacle of the Roman Catholic Church. The British visitors saw a pitiful contrast between current conditions and ‘the former greatness of Rome to which they felt themselves the rightful and magnificent heirs’.<sup>93</sup>

Nevertheless, the discrepancy between past and present was not only criticized, as we see when a major shift took place in the second half of the eighteenth century. People who found the antiquarian approach dry and indigestible started to discover beauty in ruins and decay. They could appreciate the sharp contrast between antiquity and modernity that

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<sup>91</sup> Venturi, ‘L’Italia fuori d’Italia’, 1054. My own translation of the French and Italian that was used in this citation.

<sup>92</sup> Arthur Weststeijn, ‘Reizen naar Rome: klassieke dweepzucht’, *Roma Aeterna* 3:1 (2015), 6-13, there: 9.

<sup>93</sup> Buzard, ‘The Grand Tour and after’, 39-40.

confronted them at every turn. Antiquities could be admired for their intrinsic aesthetic value rather than simply their historical associations. The sensitivity to the passage of time and processes of decay grew significantly.<sup>94</sup> On the contrary, the Dutch Grand Tourist Willem Carel Dierkens was annoyed by the mixing of antiquities and more recent, sometimes ‘Gothic’ additions, or by the overgrowing of plants. For him, the ancient remains had to be presented as purely as possible. Dierkens condemned the storing away of antiquities in museums as well.<sup>95</sup> Another example of later obstructions to classical buildings is the reuse of the temple of Hadrian as a customs house, which some travellers regarded as yet another instance of the Romans’ arrogant disrespect for their heritage.<sup>96</sup> Accordingly, Stephen Weston criticizes ‘[...] the addition of rude battlements [mode of fortification, ed.] that disfigure the beauty of many an ancient monument.’<sup>97</sup> He specifically refers to the Castel Sant’Angelo, which was transformed from the mausoleum of Hadrian into a canonized place of defence by the popes.

### 2.1.2 – Nostalgia and imagination

In this historical tension, the power of nostalgia further played a significant role. Indeed, any visitor to Rome in the first half of the century viewed the city primarily as an illustration to the ancient history and classical literature with which they were so familiar. A visit to Rome was the fulfilment of this education through which knowledge of the literature and history of antiquity had been acquired. The monuments of Rome primarily gained meaning and enthusiasm from the events or personages with which they were associated. The purpose of viewing Rome’s antiquities, thus, was the nostalgic feeling to recall the specific part of poetry or historical event with which they were associated, rather than to understand them as buildings or objects *an sich*. As a consequence, travellers looked for antiquities which would confirm or illuminate the history and poetry they were familiar with.<sup>98</sup> For instance, Joseph Spence is highly excited when he visits the tomb of Virgil: ‘At the Entrance of this gloomy passage, on the side of a high rock is the Tomb of Virgil, the greatest Poet old Rome ever produc’d: [...] and the ground where he lyes, I have kisd three times, so that I reckon his Ghost very much oblig’d to me.’<sup>99</sup> Although this passage does not refer to Rome, but the

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<sup>94</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 113.

<sup>95</sup> Haitsma Mulier, ‘review of J.W. Niemeijer, *Voyage en Italie*’, 247.

<sup>96</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 101 note 7.

<sup>97</sup> Weston, *Viaggiana*, 21. The Dutch word for battlements is ‘kantelen’.

<sup>98</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 109.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph Spence, *Letters from the Grand Tour, 1730-33*, quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 115.

tomb of Virgil near Naples, it shows how eager travellers were to visit places associated with famous people from Antiquity. Accordingly, the Dutchman Johan van Spaen especially held the Pantheon in high esteem, since he was deeply moved by wandering on the same stones as some of the most illustrious Romans.<sup>100</sup>

Furthermore, the working of imagination, which was an essential part of the experience of viewing Rome and its collections, was based on a familiarity with ancient literature. With a book in one's hand or simply recalled to memory, the physical building did not even have to exist: it was sufficient only to be in the same place where famous events had taken place. Edward Gibbon wrote about the Eternal City with great emotion and imagination as well. The power of imagination was such, that every stone had become charged with meaning, as the spot on which some historic scene had taken place. The Forum, as the centre of ancient Roman life, stood at the heart of a Grand Tourist's experience of Rome.<sup>101</sup> It was consequently a city where the joy was mainly in the exercise of imaginative powers supplied with knowledge from reading, rather than the immediate sensory experience.<sup>102</sup> The grandeur of imperial Rome was therefore a construction based on familiar Latin texts that provided historical and moral authority. Nevertheless, the imaginative power that emerged from classical texts was not only appreciated. The Grand Tourist Joseph Addison, for instance, was criticised as one who had 'travelled through the poets, and not through Italy; for all his ideas are borrowed from the [ancient, ed.] descriptions and not from reality'.<sup>103</sup>

Italy's past, however, was not the only thing Grand Tourists came for, since the contemporary political situation of Italy was admired as well. Also modern history was studied, and the travellers sought to increase their knowledge of commerce and diplomacy; to widen their experience of music and theatre, local customs and folklore, and to become acquainted with cities and countries quite different from their own. Italy was also visited in search of political illumination, or to study the more recent historiography alongside the heroic ancient and Renaissance past.<sup>104</sup>

## **2.2 – Social tension: Roman people**

Most travellers hardly understood or valued the different, national or regional cultures they met elsewhere in Europe. Instead of removing the existing prejudices, they frequently appear

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<sup>100</sup> F. Kuyvenhoven & H. Tromp, 'Van Spaen in Arcadia', in: De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 43.

<sup>101</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 180.

<sup>102</sup> Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour*, 109-111.

<sup>103</sup> Ingamells, 'Discovering Italy', 21.

<sup>104</sup> De Seta, 'Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century', 17; Haskell, *Prescribing Ovid*, 12.

to have been confirmed by engaging on a Grand Tour. This is not very surprising, since the guidebooks that prepared the traveller for his new experience warned for certain habits and behaviour that were deemed characteristic of specific European nations. Thus, there were certain limits to the acceptance of the dissimilarity of various parts of Europe travellers experienced. Particularly in their depiction of several aspects of daily life – the ‘low’ culture of the ‘small’ tradition – travellers frequently showed their irritation. A normally mainly tolerant, relatively cosmopolitan traveller like John Evelyn still describes Italian behaviour as treacherous, immediately stereotyping all Italians as unreliable.<sup>105</sup> This contrast between daily life and normal people on the one hand, and the Italian aristocracy on the other hand, is something we encounter in more cases. John Boyle, the Earl of Cork, writes for instance that ‘the inhabitants of the higher sort are civil, grave, and abstemious. [...] The common people are lazy, proud, and cowardly. Not a grain of *Roman* spirit remains throughout *Tuscany*.’<sup>106</sup> Although in this case Florence is referred to, we could likewise apply this attitude to Rome. The reference to the Roman spirit is quite interesting, meaning that people were expected to live up to the ancient Roman values and valour. The exemplary behaviour and morals of the ancient Romans was, unfortunately, generally not matched by eighteenth-century Romans. Indeed, Edward Thomas spoke for many in 1750 when he expressed the ardent desire that he could have seen ‘Rome in its ancient splendour and adorned with her heroes, instead of the devils incarnate she is now generally replenished with’.<sup>107</sup>

According to John Boyle, the differences in habits and customs made it difficult to consort with Italians: ‘[...] it is irksome to begin to form new acquaintances in a distant world, where the customs, the religion, the hours, the dispositions, and all appearances, are different from what we have experienced before.’<sup>108</sup> Dutch travellers, on the contrary, were more unreserved and tolerant. For instance, Jan Alensoon used his report of 1724 to express some remarkable observations. Although Alensoon’s journal is mainly dedicated to the art treasures he saw during his journey, he also describes everyday situations. The curiosity with which this Dutchman becomes acquainted with the habits of foreign countries is striking, as well as the openness he demonstrates when observing strangers. At all times he was aware of the differences with Holland, like the way women dressed. His journal therefore bears witness

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<sup>105</sup> Rietbergen, *Europe*, 295.

<sup>106</sup> John Boyle, *Letters from Italy, in the Years of 1754 and 1755* (London, 1773), quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 110.

<sup>107</sup> Gascoigne, ‘Roman Souvenir’.

<sup>108</sup> Boyle, *Letters from Italy*, quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 108.

of a vast cultural interest, which resulted in an open-minded attitude towards the Italian people.<sup>109</sup>

### **2.3 – Religious tension: criticism, indifference, tolerance.**

As children of both the Enlightenment and Reformation, most Grand Tourists tended to be unimpressed by much of Rome's religious (i.e. Catholic) heritage, since these classically educated travellers came particularly to see the ruins of antiquity. For most eighteenth-century visitors, therefore, Rome's ecclesiastical monuments were only of secondary importance. Furthermore, it became a commonplace for these increasingly secular travellers to view contemporary Rome, dominated as it still was by the rites, the rituals and the personnel of the Catholic Church, as a breeding ground for superstition and backwardness.<sup>110</sup> Many travellers appear to be annoyed by foreign customs and behaviour that was considered bizarre. The highly desired glorious past inevitably clashed with the realities of daily life and contemporary culture in Italy. The Grand Tourists, especially the Protestants, were eager to parallel the Italian culture with the, in their eyes superstitious, Catholic faith. Consequently, growing differences between a northern Protestant culture and a southern Catholic civilization apparently started to emerge. This proves a change in especially elite values and views of what proper culture, in a civilized world, should be.<sup>111</sup>

Travelling in Italy was accompanied by a certain anxiety about the prevailing Catholic faith, which is perfectly illustrated by Joseph Spence. "Dear Mother, We are at last got to this City, from whence I shou'd rather chuse to write to you about Rome, than to have done it from that capital itself. I did not care to talk much to you about Rome till now, that I can assure you I have left the Pope's Town without turning Papist. We are now got safe to Florence."<sup>112</sup> Apparently, people at home were equally afraid that their sons would be converted to Catholicism. Rome, with the Vatican as the seat of Catholicism, was obviously seen very dangerous place for Protestants. The underlying assumption is that the Vatican actively sought to turn visitors into Catholics, and therefore Spence is relieved to have left the city safely. Moreover, Spence's disregard for the Papacy also extends to the field of monuments and heritage. He especially condemns the fact that many ancient monuments are converted into churches or other religious buildings: "but there is one thing that mortifys one,

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<sup>109</sup> Helen Metzelaar, *Met trekschuit en draagstoel: Jan Alensoons Dag-register van een reijs door Vrankrijk, Italie, Switserland ende Duijtschland in 1723 en 1724* (Hilversum, 2014), 16-17 and 25.

<sup>110</sup> Sturgis, 'Rome and the Grand Tour', 175 and 180.

<sup>111</sup> Rietbergen, *Europe*, 295.

<sup>112</sup> Spence, *Letters from the Grand Tour*, quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 118.

that they turn these old Roman things into modern Popish ones.’’<sup>113</sup> Admirers of antiquities, among which also Spence, considered this habit as a great shame.

The relation between Catholics and Protestants was not only one of friction. We get indeed the impression that the protestant Jan Alensoon had a tolerant and open mind towards Roman-Catholic practices. He regularly expressed an interest in those Catholic rituals. He could also be critical, for instance about the order of the Jesuits, who supposedly demolished parts of the ancient baths of Caracalla. In Italy there were few occasions for him to attend protestant services, but still, he easily associated with Catholics.<sup>114</sup> In conclusion, Alensoon is exemplary for the most positive or tolerant possible attitude regarding religion, as he shows an interest in or fascination for Catholic rituals. On the other side of the spectrum, the Catholic church was attacked or severely criticized, for instance by Grand Tourists as Joseph Spence. The intermediate position is best described as one of indifference, i.e. travellers who just ignored the religious monuments. They walked past churches without giving any attention, in order to follow the strict itinerary focusing on the ancient ruins and Renaissance monuments.

## 2.4 – Geographical tension

As we have seen, Rome was considered as common cultural heritage of Europe, maybe even of the entire world (hence the name *Caput Mundi*, ‘capital of the world’). Therefore, it attracted loads of sophisticated noblemen, who were all nurtured with the classical literature of Virgil, Livy, and Ovid. In Rome, they wanted to visit the places where important things had happened, as was described in the ancient histories. More specifically, it was the Forum Romanum, the political and cultural centre of ancient Rome, that gained the most attention.

‘‘Wat een verandering! Waar Cicero zijn redevoeringen afstak, blaten nu de schapen. En wat in de hele wereld bekend stond als het Forum romanum wordt nu in Rome het Koeienplein (Campo vaccino) genoemd. Ik werd het niet moe dat uitgestrekte Forum in alle richtingen te doorkruisen. Ik ging van het ene overblijfsel naar het andere, van een tafelment naar een zuil, van de triomfboog van Septimus Severus naar die van Titus. [...] Het deed mij een immens plezier

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<sup>113</sup> Spence, *Letters from the Grand Tour*, quoted in: Boulton & McLoughlin, *News from Abroad*, 119.

<sup>114</sup> Metzelaar, *Met trekschuit en draagstoel*, 24-25.



op Romeinse grond te lopen en de grootsheid van de eeuwige stad onder mijn voeten te voelen.’’<sup>115</sup>

Although the Forum Romanum was then a field full of cows and sheep, Charles Dupaty is still impressed by the glorious history of the Forum. This was the place where the imagination of the travellers was triggered the most. But still, not every Grand Tourist shared this opinion. Sarah Bentham, for instance, thought that ‘‘Rome has nothing within, nor without its walls, to make it desirable for an English person to be an inhabitant’’.<sup>116</sup> Likewise, Bentham was not impressed by Rome’s surroundings, the *Campagna*, either, which was made famous by the influential French landscape painter Claude Lorrain. The city of Rome, she wrote, ‘‘appeared to be located in a desert’’.<sup>117</sup> This was quite a common view at the end of the eighteenth century, as also appears from the travelogue of the Dutch writer Johan Meerman. As he wrote in 1793, ‘‘Nu begint [...] die droevige *Campagna di Roma*, die aan de toegangen tot zulk eene Waereldstad het gelaat eener volkomene woestyn geeft, met hier en daar slechts een enkel gebouwd stukje velds.’’<sup>118</sup> Those dry plains, this ‘doodelyke vlakke’, were further tormented by hot south-western winds, the burning sun, and the stench from the poisonous Pontine marshes. This is why Meerman preferred to travel to Florence at night.<sup>119</sup> The misery of the *Campagna* was also stressed by Hendrik Fagel: ‘‘La campagne qu’on traverse est tout ce qu’on peut imaginer de plus triste et de plus désert.’’<sup>120</sup> Comparably, he says that the surroundings of Rome were not very beautiful and the land was very infertile and hardly occupied.<sup>121</sup>

As a contrast, admiration for the countryside surrounding Rome started to increase in the second half of the eighteenth century. Near Rome, the village of Tivoli and the Alban lake and hills, with the Papal residence Castel Gandolfo, were already often visited.<sup>122</sup> But the immediate surroundings of Rome, the *Campagna*, especially gained in popularity through the

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<sup>115</sup> Translation of Charles Mercier Dupaty, *Lettres sur l’Italie*, 1785 (edition 1835), quoted in: Vautier, *Alle wegen leiden naar Rome: kunstenaarsreizen in Europa (16de – 19de eeuw)* (Brussels, 2007), 218.

<sup>116</sup> Sarah Bentham, *Journal*, quoted in: Lisa Colletta (ed.), *The Legacy of the Grand Tour: New Essays on Travel, Literature, and Culture* (London, 2015), xiii.

<sup>117</sup> Gascoigne, ‘Roman Souvenir’.

<sup>118</sup> Johan Meerman, *Eenige berichten omtrent de Pruissische, Oostenryksche en Siciliaansche monarchiën, benevens sommige daar aan grenzende staaten* (The Hague, 1793), 28.

<sup>119</sup> Meerman, *Eenige berichten*, 29.

<sup>120</sup> *Journaal van Hendrik Fagel’s reis door Italië, 1786-1787*, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Collectie Fagel, nummer toegang 1.10.29, inventarisnummer 195.

<sup>121</sup> *Brieven van H. Fagel de Jonge aan zijn grootvader Hendrik Fagel de Oude, 1786-1787*, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Collectie Fagel, nummer toegang 1.10.29, inventarisnummer 2641.

<sup>122</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 126.

German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The famous painting of Tischbein shows Goethe in the Roman countryside, amidst several ancient ruins. This perfectly shows both his fascination for antiquities and the beauty of nature. Furthermore, especially after the discovery of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Paestum, the focus of the Grand Tour shifted southwards, to the region of Calabria and even the island of Sicily.<sup>123</sup> The beauty of ruins located in an idyllic landscape was in short what eventually attracted travellers to the south of Italy as well. They were concerned most with seeing the ancient remains of for instance Pompeii and Agrigento on Sicily, which were especially admired for their aesthetical value and picturesque setting, instead of pure antiquarian purposes.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Wilton & Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, 95.

<sup>124</sup> Haitsma Mulier, 'review of J.W. Niemeijer, *Voyage en Italie*', 246.

### **Chapter three: Hendrik Fagel's Grand Tour**

Now it is time for a thorough analysis of the travel report of Hendrik baron Fagel (the younger). Apart from his *Journaal van zijn verblijf in Rome en andere Italiaanse steden*, also some of the letters he wrote to his grandfather Hendrik Fagel the older during this period in Italy will be taken into account. The structure of this chapter is similar to that of the previous one: it is divided into four different areas of tension. For each of these, I will investigate to what extent these are present in Fagel's travelogue and correspondence. Before this, however, we need to sketch a background of Fagel's life and some general information of his Grand Tour. There is considerable knowledge about Hendrik Fagel's life, however, most focus is on his professional career after 1788, so after his journey. Except for some short references in Ronald de Leeuw's *Herinneringen aan Italië*, there is little attention to Fagel's Grand Tour. On the one hand, this could be the case because his journal is not published, and on the other hand, the political turmoil of the patriotic revolution in the Dutch Republic has probably attracted most scholarly attention of that period. At any rate, the following part is a profile sketch as derived from the available literature. The profound analysis of the journal itself follows afterwards.

#### **Life and career**

Hendrik baron Fagel (the younger) was born on March 21, 1765 in Amsterdam and died on March 22, 1838 in The Hague. He was a civil servant, politician and diplomat. He studied Roman and contemporary law at Leiden university and graduated in 1785, after which he started his Grand Tour. Since 1788, he worked as an assistant clerk for the national assembly, *Staten Generaal*, while in 1790 he was fully appointed to this function. Hendrik Fagel married the Dutch Agneta Margaretha Catharina Boreel in 1790. In 1794 he was sent to England as an extraordinary ambassador. During the Batavian-French period, this stay in England was extended into an exile (for his entire family as well), and in 1804 he was naturalised into a British citizen. Thanks to all his services for the Dutch monarchy, in 1815 he was introduced in the nobility with the title of baron. During the Dutch revolution of the late eighteenth century, Fagel chose the side of the 'Orangists', meaning the supporters of the monarchy.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> P.C. Molhuysen and P.J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, vol. 3 (Leiden, 1911), 391-392; N.M. Japikse, *Inventaris van het archief van de familie Fagel, 1513-1927* (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, 1964), 41.

As preparation for the journey, Hendrik Fagel used his grandfather's library in search for relevant literature. On his Grand Tour from November 1786 till June 1787, Fagel travelled with his sister Agnes. He continued his family's traditions concerning travelling, of not having a tutor, but being accompanied by his uncle Jacob Boreel. In the eighteenth century one rarely travelled alone; most Grand Tourists were accompanied by a fellow student, friend, or sometimes a governor. The elite obviously travelled also with a few servants.<sup>126</sup> Upon entering in Rome, Hendrik Fagel described in his journal the problems of the journey so far: abominable inns with terrible beds and food. They further experienced some very bad weather as well. However, the splendid view of the Eternal City almost let him forget all those troubles, which he assigned as 'les petites fatigues'.<sup>127</sup>

### **General results from the journal and letters**

First of all, I will begin with a general overview of Fagel's journal and correspondence to point out some features that stand out. For a start, the journal is written in French, as was the common language for the educated nobility. The letters to his grandfather, however, are written in contemporary Dutch. We could say that his journal is very clearly structured: Fagel reports all his experiences very concisely, of each day he describes exactly what he has seen or done. These day-by-day descriptions were characteristic of most Grand Tour travelogues. It is not certain when he wrote down all his experiences, but the most probable is that Fagel started writing immediately after he embarked on the journey. Most travellers also kept additional notes alongside their diaries.<sup>128</sup> Like many travellers, Fagel is overwhelmed by the vast amount of art and monuments to be found in Rome. 'Wij zijn so content van ons sejour alhier dat het ons eenigsints spijt Rome voor een tijd lang te moeten verlaaten. Dagelijks siet men hier iets nieuws, en hetgeen men siet is onder verscheide gezichtspunten interessant. [...] Nooit heb ik een plaats gesien daar so veel te doen is als hier. Daar gaat geen dag voorbij of wij sien iets nieuws, en iets fraays.'<sup>129</sup> As a true Grand Tourist, he is broadly interested in various different aspects of Rome, such as ancient ruins, churches, museums, private art collections, and nature's beauty. In other words, Fagel adheres to the customary itinerary, consisting of art, antiquity and nature. Although the descriptions in his journal are generally

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<sup>126</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 13 and 17.

<sup>127</sup> Ibidem, 15.

<sup>128</sup> Ibidem, 102.

<sup>129</sup> *Brieven van H. Fagel de Jonge aan zijn grootvader Hendrik Fagel de Oude, 1786-1787*, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Collectie Fagel, nummer toegang 1.10.29, inventarisnummer 2661.

objective or neutral, in the correspondence with his grandfather he expresses his opinions more clearly.

The epistles to his grandfather, which always started with ‘‘Seer lieve Groot-Vader’’, are always ordered in almost the same way. At first, Hendrik responds to the last letter he received and informs about his grandfather’s health. He thanks him for the previous letter and stresses how it pleases him to hear from home: ‘‘Niets zal mij op reis aangenamer weesen dan van tijd tot tijd het een en ander van u en de andere Familie te mogen verneemen.’’<sup>130</sup> In short, it is a bit of small talk and curiosity about the family situation at home. Then he goes on with reporting some of his sightseeing trips that were the most impressive to him. Moreover, he reveals his future plans; which trips did he plan already or which city are they visiting next? At the end, Hendrik transfers the respect of his sister Agnes to their grandfather and he asks him to give greetings to the family in Holland. Now, before I will turn to the four areas of tension, first the field of art, which does not entirely fit in one of those areas, will be discussed shortly. It is actually not exactly an area of tension, but too important a feature of Fagel’s Grand Tour to be left out here, as it played a significant role during his Italian sojourn.

### **Renaissance and contemporary art**

Although Hendrik Fagel admired all kinds of Rome’s treasures, it seems that viewing art collections and ateliers, and eventually also buying some prints, was one of his most important preoccupations. Indeed, he extensively discussed contemporary art in the letters to his grandfather, as Fagel had visited a lot of private collections and museums during his stay in Rome. The purpose of this was to acquire some prints or drawings for his grandfather.<sup>131</sup> Fagel’s uncle Jacob Boreel was impressed by the knowledge of his cousin, who he called ‘très instruit’ as a connoisseur. As becomes clear from the impressive enumeration of artworks and ateliers he viewed, Fagel had passionately studied the Italian art during his Grand Tour. However, visiting artists’ workplaces or the palazzi of wealthy collectors had a strong social component as well, and was not only focused on the art itself.<sup>132</sup> Its goal was to manifest oneself in sociable circles. Fagel therefore often had dinner or spent the evening with a well-to-do British or German gentleman. Visiting their villas and admiring their private art collections was an important feature of socialising on a Grand Tour. ‘‘Daar gaat ook bijna

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<sup>130</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2641.

<sup>131</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 24.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, 22.

geen dag voorbij of wij ontmoeten ons in 't een of 't andere geselschap'', wrote Fagel to his grandfather.<sup>133</sup>

Hendrik Fagel appears to be a good informed art lover who is not afraid to express his opinion. ‘‘De Kunsten en schoone Weetenschappen zijn hier seekerlijk in grooten bloey en schoon men geen Raphaels of Michel-Angelos meer vind, so is er hier evenwel een groter getal van bekwaame Schilders, Architecten en Beeldhouwers dan in eenig ander land.’’<sup>134</sup> By artists as well as connoisseurs, Rome was still considered as the place to be, since the former could show his talents like in a theatre, while the latter found the most and the best artworks concentrated at one place. When Hendrik Fagel stayed in Rome, there was a sculptor at work with that big a reputation, that people even dared to compare him with the biggest modern artists like Michelangelo: Antonio Canova. Angelika Kaufmann, of whom Fagel’s grandfather had some prints, resided since some years also in Rome, and her portraits were widely sought after. In the eighteenth century, while Raphael was widely admired, Michelangelo’s reputation was not undisputed. Hendrik Fagel’s opinion is characteristic for the taste of his time. A certain statue of Christ was considered not yet idealized enough, as it seemed like the face of a somewhat normal man. He clearly implied that the polished classicism of Antonio Canova was of the highest rank, and indeed, Canova was at that time the most famous sculptor.<sup>135</sup>

Hendrik Fagel was especially overwhelmed by the sheer number of beautiful objects that were to be found in Rome:

‘‘Iemand die niet te Rome geweest is kan sig naauwlijks een idee maaken van het groot getal Teekeningen, Prenten, Beelden, Schilderijen &c [sic.] die men hier kan koopen, doch alles is excessief duur. Men kan sich in der daad geen denkbeeld maaken van de quantiteit schoone dingen, van allerley soort, die men hier kan koopen.’’<sup>136</sup>

The enormous quantity of art urged Fagel to make a wish list of which artworks he wanted to buy. The temptation of spending a lot of money was always present. Fagel addressed this matter concisely in a letter to his grandfather, when he claims that in Rome there were a lot of

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<sup>133</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>135</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 190.

<sup>136</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

occasions where wealthy people could lose their money in a very pleasurable way. Pleasurable, because they would receive nice artworks in return.<sup>137</sup> If one wished to acquire everything that was fine and precious, even the capital of the richest man would not be sufficient, says Fagel. However, one should also be content with less (expensive) possessions: ‘men kan voor een bepaalde en modique sommen dog genoeg aquireeren, om een gedachtenis te hebben van de fraaye dingen die men gesien heeft en die nergens dan hier te sien sijn.’<sup>138</sup> Buying art was important because it was so special; such beautiful works of art were not available anywhere outside of Italy.

### Historical tension

As most of the Grand Tourists, Hendrik Fagel was interested in ancient ruins and monuments as well, although this was not his primary concern. Saying that Fagel recognized a tension between past and present would go too far, but still he has some interesting remarks on the ancient Roman past. Especially his comments on the Forum Romanum are worth noting. ‘Repasant l’arc de S. Severe on se trouve dans le Campo Vaccino, ou marché aux bœufs, qui est l’ancien Forum Romanum. Peut-on imaginer un exemple plus frappant de la vicissitude des choses humaines?’<sup>139</sup> This rhetorical question is very striking, since Fagel thus stresses the discontinuity between past and present. According to him, the Forum Romanum is the strongest example of the changeability of human affairs, and consequently demonstrates the passage of time. It seems Fagel does not have a strong opinion about this, but rather accepts it as a mere fact. More so, in a way he even admires the signs of decay which testify to the passing of time. The Forum Romanum, Fagel says, consists of places which formerly served as an assembly for the greatest people in the world, where the greatest orators addressed the interests of the greatest republic that ever existed. Those celebrated places have now been changed into a cow market, but in spite of such a ‘terrible revolution’, the greatness of the Romans is still being recalled there.<sup>140</sup> Although Fagel noticed the discrepancy between the past and present situation of the Forum, this is appreciated instead of lamented, or considered positive rather than negative: ‘Malgré le peu de ressemblance qu’il y a entre le C. V. [Campo Vaccino, ed.] d’aujourd’hui et le Forum de ce temps-là, on ne peut s’empêcher d’être ému en parcourant des lieux si justement célèbres.’<sup>141</sup>

<sup>137</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 33.

<sup>138</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

<sup>139</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 196.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibidem*.

Regarding the monuments and buildings present in Rome, it is clear Hendrik Fagel had an outspoken preference for the ancient ruins, just like all other travellers. ‘‘Les ruines qui semblent  tre celles d’un b timent gothique sont quelque chose de plus m lancolique et de plus lugubre que les Ruines des  difices Romains.’’<sup>142</sup> As was characteristic for almost every Grand Tourist, medieval buildings were described with disdain or even entirely ignored in the itinerary. It was the glorious past of ancient Rome that received the most attention and appreciation. For instance, the arch of Titus or the temple of Antoninus and Faustina on the Roman forum were very much esteemed by Fagel: ‘‘le temple, dont il n’existe plus que Portique, est un des monuments les plus beaux et les mieux conserv s de Rome.’’<sup>143</sup> This is quite interesting, since this ancient temple was probably so well conserved because of the medieval church that was built inside. But this is not mentioned by Fagel; the Catholic interference in ancient buildings is apparently not a problem for him here. As we will see later in this chapter, there is not an apparent religious tension in Fagel’s writings.

### **Social tension**

One aspect of Italian society that stood out, as observed by Hendrik Fagel as well, was the poverty. About Naples, Fagel comments: ‘‘De armoede is hier so als te Rome seer groot, en men siet overal door geheel Italien hoe groot de nadeelen van eene slegte Regeering voor de Onderdaanen zijn.’’<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, the ‘romeinsche groote heeren’, even the richest, lived in a very sober and frugal manner, and they rarely invited people for dinner, unless they were good friends. Apparently, Hendrik Fagel was a good friend of cardinal Bernis, because: ‘‘Wij eeten ordinair eens in de week bij zijn eminentie, die hier als cardinaal en als Ambassadeur van Vrankrijk op een seer grooten voet leeft, en de Vreemdelingen het meeste accueil doet.’’<sup>145</sup> Clearly not every nobleman was that sober, but some of them submerged themselves in excessive wealth or luxury.

Although in Fagel’s letters the common Italian people are contrasted with the nobility, this contradiction is not connected with a temporal dimension; in other words, the social situation is not explained from a historical development. In contrast, Fagel explains the bad social situation from a political perspective. Bad government is considered as the cause of the poverty of the Italian subordinates, which implicitly suggests that Fagel regarded the political

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<sup>142</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 196.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>144</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibidem*.



situation in the Dutch Republic as superior. As is already mentioned before, one of the Grand Tour's purposes was the quest for political knowledge and inspiration. Learning from Italy's politics seems not to apply here, but rather the opposite; Italy's style of government is something that the Dutch should not follow. Thus, there is criticism instead of admiration for the politics in Italy, since it caused poverty and unhappiness among the people. Despite all the beauties present in Italy, Fagel explicitly mentions that he is relieved that he spent only a few months in Italy; he really could not have lived there for a longer period.<sup>146</sup>

### **Religious tension**

It is remarkable that unlike many other Grand Tourists, Hendrik Fagel visited a lot of churches, even some minor, unknown ones. This appears to be not out of religious devotion, but from an interest in the architecture and art to be found there. Although his visits may not be religious inspired, it is clear as well that he did not entirely disregard the Catholic church. This might be explained from the ambiguous religious situation in the Dutch Republic, where Protestantism was dominant but Catholicism was also professed as a faith. Contrarily to the state religion in Britain, the Anglican church, Holland had a double religious character, which may explain a different religious attitude. In Rome, Fagel does not show disdain for or ignorance of Catholicism, but seems to be accepted since it was an essential part of the city. So, it is far more nuanced than simply stating that all Grand Tourists denounced Catholicism. For example, Hendrik Fagel also saw processions and services from the Pope in St. Peter's:

‘Niets heeft ons soo seer gefrappeerd als de Kerk van St. Pieter, daar men sich in der daad geene idee van kan maaken sonder deselve gesien te hebben. De plaats, dewelke voor deese fameuse Kerk aangelegd is, mag vrij voor schoonste Plaats van de geheele Waereld passeeren. Het binnenste van de kerk is ook van de grootste magnificentie. [...] In de Kerk sijnde hebben wij aldaar den Paus gesien, die er alle dag om twee uren naa de middag naar toe gaat om sijne particuliere devoties te doen voor een beroemd Beeld van den Apostel Petrus.’<sup>147</sup>

It indirectly appears from this text that Fagel was very excited about this occasion, without giving any further comments.

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<sup>146</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

<sup>147</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2641.

Furthermore, Hendrik Fagel admired the Pope's dealing with the ancient heritage. About the statue of Marcus Aurelius, which was for a long time considered as representing Constantine the Great, he is indeed very positive. While most of the inscriptions of the Popes mention the abominations of paganism, and the subsequent purification of these monuments by the Catholic faith, this is not the case with the statue of Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline hill. Instead, in this case a Pope performed justice to the merit of a pagan emperor by placing the statue in the most remarkable place of Rome, in order to preserve the memory of a good ruler. So instead of describing a tension between ancient history and the more recent religious past, Fagel in a very positive way speaks of the reconciliation between pagan and religious heritage. This is one of the merits of the Papal policy in Rome, he believes.<sup>148</sup> In conclusion, we could say that Hendrik Fagel – and probably more Dutch travellers – deviated from the typical (British) image of a Grand Tourist, who generally did experience a religious tension more clearly. Indeed, Britain's theological break with Rome since the Reformation had cultural, as well as religious implications for the Grand Tour.<sup>149</sup> For Dutch travellers, however, religion was apparently less of an issue, since historically seen they were accustomed to dealing with different religious trends. In this way, Dutch travellers more or less transcended the religious tension usually experienced by British Grand Tourists.

### **Geographical 'tension'**

Regarding the geographical situation of Rome, Fagel notices an interesting temporal development, as he compared the ancient Campus Martius compared to the present situation. The most populated area in the eighteenth century was hardly inhabited at all during antiquity. While there were no public buildings in the Campus Martius in ancient times, since it then was the location where Roman legions were based, ' [...] aujourd'hui c'est le quartier de Rome le plus peuplé.'<sup>150</sup>

Furthermore, Rome is contrasted with Naples. Although in Rome there is much more to do and to see, Fagel says, Naples is more beautiful: 'De situatie van Napels is magnifiek. [...] Een van de fraaiste gezichten die er in de hele wereld zijn.'<sup>151</sup> It is the biggest city after London and Paris, and the entire day it is very lively and crowded. In comparison to Rome, there is not much to see in the city, but according to Fagel, one could not imagine something

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<sup>148</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 195.

<sup>149</sup> Wilton & Bignamini, *Grand Tour: the Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, 50.

<sup>150</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 195

<sup>151</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2661.

more magnificent than the city's environs. He very much likes Rome because of its sightseeing and art collections. However, Fagel also really likes nature and beautiful views, which is why he also very much appreciated the surroundings of Naples. About the path in Naples leading to the tomb of Virgil, for example, Fagel wrote with his usual affection for superlatives that it was the most beautiful path in the world. Since Fagel very much appreciated beautiful nature and picturesque views, his descriptions are often accompanied by exclamations about such things as 'grandeur' and 'majesté'.<sup>152</sup>

But the question whether we see a geographical tension in Fagel's descriptions should, except for the contradiction between Rome and Naples, be answered negatively. So, for the remainder of this section, I rather want to stress Fagel's admiration for the nature of Rome's countryside and southern areas (around Naples). In other words, he is often searching for the perfect setting to view ruins or monuments. During his Grand Tour, Fagel thus manifested a more aesthetic approach, with admiring the beauty of nature as one of its most clear expressions. Tivoli, for instance, 'is vermaard door derselves situatie en natuurlijke schoonheden. Het is het oude Tibur daar Horatius so veel van spreekt, en de Beschrijvingen die hij er van maakt zijn tegenwoordig nog van de grootste Waarheid. Deese kleine reis is een van de aangenaamste die ik mij erinnere ooit gedaan te hebben.' The same is true of Paestum, near Naples. Fagel's considered this short trip as almost the highlight of his Grand Tour. On the way to it, he could not stop singing about the landscape. He extensively praised the simple, but primitive Doric style of the temples: grand and robust, but not without 'élégance'. Everything was in perfect harmony. On the route to Paestum, he also visited the small town of Vietri and strolled there along the sea at night: 'Het uitzicht op de baai is het meest pittoresque van de hele wereld', Fagel mused.<sup>153</sup> In Tivoli, moreover, Fagel and his company went to see the ruins of Maecenas' villa, which were remarkable for their 'grandeur' and picturesque situation. But to view the effect of the ruins in the best possible way, they had to descend into the valley and find a pleasurable spot near the waterfall.<sup>154</sup> At this very spot, the most perfect view was to be found. Just admiring the ruins was apparently not enough; it also had to be a picturesque view.

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<sup>152</sup> De Leeuw, *Herinneringen aan Italië*, 118 and 223.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibidem*, 238 and 242.

<sup>154</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 196.

## Descriptions and imagination

One last striking feature of Fagel's writings is his focus on the personal sensory experience. According to him, it is essential to have seen the famous ruins in Rome yourself. About for instance St. Peter's church or the Colosseum, Fagel says: "De Kerk van St. Pieter bij voorbeeld, het Coliseum en eenige andere Ruines van antique Gebouwen, zijn dingen die men sien moet om sich deselve te kunnen voorstellen. [...] Van dit alles sal ik U geen beschrijving maaken dewijl deselve overal te vinden is."<sup>155</sup> Descriptions are after all to be found in the numerous travel guides about Rome. Although prints and drawings can give a good impression of Rome's beauty, one should really have seen the Eternal City oneself. This is why it was of no use to give elaborate descriptions of the most splendid buildings; it could not match the genuine experience of having been there and seen it. One could not imagine how it looks like, unless you have been at that very place. This attitude of Fagel could be considered as part of a new tendency concerning descriptions and imagination, which is already mentioned in the first two chapters. Grand Tourists should not rely solely on their guide(book)s, but rather focus on their own experience and sensation. Only then, being present at the very place, could one imagine how the building was like thousands of years ago. But if one read about, let's say, the Colosseum from home, it was not the proper impression: "Le Coliseum est le monument le plus imposant & le plus entier de la grandeur des Romains qui existe aujourd'hui. Il est un de ces objets dont il est impossible de se faire aucune idée à moins que d'avoir été sur les lieux, et dont il est impossible par la même raison de faire une bonne description."<sup>156</sup> Unfortunately, it is not certain what the purpose of Fagel's journal was. In this regard, it would be important to know if it was meant to be published or if Fagel wrote it just for himself. Appearing from this quote, it is the most likely that the journal was meant to be published, since Fagel implicitly encourages his potential readers to visit Rome themselves, which is why he does not describe of the Colosseum.

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<sup>155</sup> *Brieven*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 2641.

<sup>156</sup> *Journal*, NL-HaNA, Fagel, 1.10.29, inv.nr. 196.

## **Conclusion**

The past weighed heavily on eighteenth-century Rome. It were indeed chiefly the remains of antiquity that attracted travellers on a Grand Tour to Rome. Sometimes even considered as the cradle of entire Europe's civilization, the ancient heritage was undeniably the major feature of the Grand Tour's itinerary. Since Rome in the eighteenth century experienced heavy economic problems, expressed in poverty and decay, many Grand Tourists were disappointed by the sight of the once thriving city. In other words, their expectation of finding Rome's glorious ancient past was not matched by the miserable reality. This is why the present study scrutinized the friction between past and present. Indeed, as a large part of the historiography on the Grand Tour is focused on its preoccupation with Rome's ancient past, a possible contrast with eighteenth century Rome has received too few attention.

Regarding the circumstances in Italy in the eighteenth century, we could say that the relatively peaceful situation in entire Europe made it possible for a lot of Europeans to visit Italy on their Grand Tour. Although Rome was heavily influenced by the economic misery of the Papacy, culturally speaking the city was flourishing. To this contributed archaeological excavations, the foundation of the Vatican museum and the establishment of private art collections by Rome's wealthy families. As further appeared from the first chapter, the aristocratic Grand Tourists, both British and Dutch, often visited Roman aristocrats to refine their taste and admire the art collections. The Grand Tour was indeed a very elitist affair, where enhancing sociability was highly valued.

Furthermore, the second chapter distinguished four different areas of tension, based on the profile of the Grand Tourists and the state of eighteenth-century Italy: historical, social, religious and geographical. The most important tension experienced by Grand Tourists in Rome was the one between past and present. Admiration for the ancient past caused an ardent desire to visit important places of Rome's ancient past. But as we have seen in the first chapter, in the eighteenth century, Rome was a poor city where vice flourished, so many travellers were disappointed and lamented the decaying situation of Rome, which did not match their image of it. This historical friction further consists of a physical aspect of ancient monuments and architecture itself, and otherwise Grand Tourists' focus on nostalgic feelings. Since there was not much left of ancient times, Grand Tourists started to rely on their imagination in order to 'go back' to that period. They read famous classical texts in order to enhance their experience of viewing the ruins. The social tension dealt chiefly with the discrepancy between Italy's elite and the normal people, but there was also a historical

component added to this: being poor and corrupt, nothing of the ancient Roman virtues remained in the Italian character. Thirdly, religious tension expressed itself for instance in the anxiety about the prevailing Catholic faith. In contrast to their British counterparts, Dutch travellers appeared to be relatively tolerant. Finally, the last tension was on the geographical level, mainly dealing with different areas within Rome or the landscape around cities such as Rome and Naples.

The last chapter served as a sort of case study to test the presence of those areas of tension in a Dutch source. This source was selected because British Grand Tourists are already extensively studied; they were after all the most numerous travellers. Studying a Dutch Grand Tour thus goes beyond the British dominance of the scholarly debate. Furthermore, the journal of Hendrik Fagel is relatively unknown, since it is not published and only available in manuscript form. It appeared that Hendrik Fagel's journal of his Grand Tour and the letters he wrote about it to his grandfather, do not show clear areas of tension. He does stress for instance the discontinuity between past and present, but this is appreciated rather than regretted. Fagel fitted in a new development in which this tension was accepted as a mere fact, and was no longer lamented anymore, since the discontinuity between past and present could also be appreciated. Travellers wanted to see things in a picturesque setting, such as the Campagna or Sicily, and Fagel is a good example of this. The beauty of nature was what attracted people to these regions. Travellers who found the antiquarian approach dry and indigestible started to discover beauty in ruins and decay and appreciate the sharp contrast between antiquity and modernity. Antiquities could be admired for their intrinsic aesthetic value rather than simply their historical associations. Thus, a sensitivity to transience and processes of decay that appeared from the ruins grew significantly.

The only point where Fagel did recognize friction, is in the social field, when he stressed the contrast between the nobility and common people. They lived in harsh conditions due to bad government, and this is to be avoided in the Dutch Republic. Furthermore, a religious tension seems to be absent as well. Fagel did not have a negative attitude towards Catholicism, however, it could rather be described as admiration. For instance, Fagel visited a lot of churches to view their art and architecture. Finally, it is hard to recognize a geographical tension in Fagel's writings. The only example may be his statement that he likes Naples' appearance, but in Rome there is much more to do and to see. Nevertheless, from his journal and correspondence does appear an outspoken admiration for beautiful nature and picturesque settings of ruins and monuments. This is why Fagel took so much pleasure from his trips to the surroundings of Rome, like Tivoli and the Alban hills.

It is especially this aesthetic approach that makes Hendrik Fagel unique. At first sight, he appears to be a traditional Grand Tourist, more or less adhering to the common itinerary, as he had indeed visited a substantial number of ancient monuments, museums, palazzi, and so forth. As a typical Grand Tourist, Fagel was broadly interested in the ancient past, contemporary art, and beautiful nature around Rome and Naples. However, Hendrik Fagel differs from the traditional picture in his appreciation of nature and picturesque settings. In short, during his Grand Tour he had an aesthetic approach which was expressed in art, nature and antiquities. Instead of the scholarly attitude, he rather focuses on the aesthetical value of antiquities, i.e. not for the knowledge to be gained from it. Actually, the traditional image is too much focused on the numerous British Grand Tourist and appears to be too narrow. As a matter of fact, Hendrik Fagel goes beyond this standard British image. Instead of a scholarly approach, his interest in art, ancient ruins and nature is rather aesthetically inspired. Furthermore, in contrast to most British travellers, Fagel shows no disdain for or ignorance of Catholicism. Indeed, he visited a lot of churches and even attended a service of the Pope. Therefore, we could say that religion is not very controversial, i.e. that Fagel and perhaps other Dutch Grand Tourists were more tolerant than their British counterparts. This theme should be further analysed through a systematic research of more Dutch unpublished journals. This might yield important new insights, especially when it comes to possible differences between British and Dutch 'Grand Tours'. A thorough comparison between British and Dutch Grand Tours may answer the question to what extent it deviated from the traditional British image. In other words, was Hendrik Fagel unique, or did he fit into a distinct Dutch version of the Grand Tour?

Finally, research on the Grand Tour should not stop in 1800. As we have seen, Fagel's aesthetic focus was quite extraordinary for British standards, but it may have been a tendency towards Romanticism, which focused on the sensory experience and personal feelings. Is this the personal attitude of Fagel, or was he part of a broader development? Romanticism only fully developed in the nineteenth century, but it is plausible that already at the end of the eighteenth century we can see the first signs of this new paradigm. In the case of Hendrik Fagel this means less focus on the antiquities itself, but rather the setting of ruins in a picturesque landscape. This explains why he did not obvious identify a tension, since he could also appreciate the mixing of past and present. Fagel was undoubtedly not the only one in this position, so is this attitude a precursor of Romanticism? Unfortunately, due to the scope of this research, such questions could not be addressed accurately. However, the vast record of

unpublished, and still often unknown, Dutch travel reports is a rich repository where we might find new answers.



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