

Thus the baroque attempted to guide human beings who were grouped together in masses, acting upon their will, psychologically motivating [*moviendo con resortes*] them by means of a technique of attraction that, as such, effectively exhibited a mass character. From there emerged the very function of prudence — the predominance of which we have dealt with above. With prudence, said Juan de Salazar, “psyches and wills are attracted and captured.”¹⁰³ It was practiced in this way by everyone from the architect and painter to the politician and moralist. In the middle of this scale, and in relation to a sphere that is of great interest to us because it represents a very important area in the application of baroque culture, Suárez de Figueroa tells us that it is “in the government where prudence is more concerned with wills than with understandings.”¹⁰⁴

Chapter 3

A Mass Culture

With regard to the seventeenth-century crisis, it is not immediately obvious that the dominant class (in the broadest sense of the term) was attempting to arrive at a faithful reestablishment of the model of knightly society, conducting itself according to prototypes of a medievalizing seignorialism. From the outset, the seigniors made no effort to retain their military functions. Far from having their influence and prestige hinge on the monopoly of bearing arms, they looked for other reasons to regain their privileges. In a few cases, they reestablished their economic situation by improving administration, in others either by raising rents, employing coercive means for being given the best lands in the division of communal property, or succeeding in making part of their patrimony lands to which they had only juridical right, thus giving them an economic content. As a rule, then, they tried to increase their patrimony, frequently making recourse to obtaining new royal gifts as the most secure means. Therefore the powers of the privileged groups, which had declined but little, were gaining in strength; at the end of the seventeenth century they were stronger than a century before. Certainly the pyramid of social stratification was maintained, although it was partly ordered according to other criteria, which in itself did not mean that it would not be strongly eroded in the long term.

Thus we are, to some extent, faced with a new society, whatever may be the restored traditional element present in it. Consciousness of that newness is found in innumerable writings from the epoch, which did not specifically criticize the individuals of one or another group who were not fulfilling their obligations so much as the shift that these groups had undergone in terms of the whole. In part

that corresponded to the fact that society was presenting other characteristics, was finding itself to be of a different makeup. Without taking this change into account, without noting everything that had become new, it is impossible to understand the baroque phenomenon. A new society — even though we can only speak of it in relative terms — needs a new culture to give shape to the new modes of behavior and the new ideological bases that must occur within it: a new culture is manipulated as an instrument of integration — such is the fate of every cultural system — in the new state of things. With this culture, those who propagate it hope to dominate better the tensions threatening society from within, although they may never come to be eliminated. This is the point of view from which we must consider what we are calling baroque culture, a culture developed to bring under control not only religious disquiet (as has so often been said), but all the insecurity produced as a consequence of the long period of changes that the western European societies had been undergoing for centuries.

Baroque culture emerged from an epoch that had known a noticeable increase in population. This demographic imbalance, even at its highest points in the sixteenth century, stayed within the limits of a population movement that, although favorable, did not go beyond the same growth rates of traditional society — even if at some point it was on the verge of doing so. When this growth gave way and the tendency reversed itself, a consciousness of the masses of population being very numerous remained until much later (it is humorous what the town of Ocaña said in response to the 1578 questionnaire: "It is understood that there have never been as many [inhabitants] as at present, but one thing may be more noteworthy than others: this settlement must be one of the towns most full of people in the world, because we have seen many [people] who have traveled far and wide become amazed with regard to this particular").¹ But above all there remained, for a long time, the belief that the people in the world abounded in greater numbers than ever and that the consumption of goods was much greater.

The memory of a demographic boom in the preceding period, which was considered over and had to be reestablished in order to come out of the crisis that its disappearance engendered, turned almost all seventeenth-century writers on economic matters into "populationists" (i.e., advocates of the idea that societies with a great population mass are richer and more powerful). As González de Cellorigo maintained, "The greatest wealth of the realm is many people";² or Sancho de Moncada, who wrote an entire discourse on "Population and the Increase in Number of the Spanish Nation";³ or Álvarez Ossorio, according to whom "the multitude of vassals enriches the monarchies."⁴ The abundance of individuals constituted a stimulus for production. It was noted early on that an entire series of political, economic, and social phenomena were related to one another, and everyone in the baroque believed with satisfaction that they were going to find themselves living in societies that in a short period of time

would be overflowing with people and, consequently, with property, power, and prestige.⁵

Before the beginning of the baroque century, everybody in Spain knew that serious losses of population were taking place in the country. Cellorigo considered that of all the ills afflicting the monarchy — wars, famines, plagues, mass death, negligence — the greatest was "the lack of people that here has been making itself known for some years."⁶ The seriousness of the matter was recognized in official documents of Philip III and Philip IV,⁷ and Pedro de Valencia applied a rudimentary statistical criterion to determine or, rather, to calculate what this loss was.⁸ There were debates about the causes of the phenomenon, which some blithely attributed to wars and emigration, whereas others, reaching a more profound level in their analysis, looked internally and deemed them to be a consequence of certain aspects of the social structure or of the government's economic policies. All wished for great masses of population. Of course this does not imply that they anticipated mass phenomena, nor, in the event that the country became abundantly populated, that such phenomena would occur. To a certain extent, it was a precondition that would be at the origin of the new phenomena. When a burgeoning population was desired or obtained, formulations of a mass type were already being made.

Yet the two things did not coincide. If we take note of the years when it occurred, this is shown by the well-known decline in the population index in Spain. Phenomena of a mass type would appear precisely at the conjunctural moment when the demographic development took a downward turn. But already that aspiration to overcome such a negative situation would remain to a certain extent as an echo of the tendency to formulate the aspects of state and social existence — i.e., military, alimentary, urban aspects, even (as we shall soon see) those referring to school curriculum and study⁹ — on a gigantic mass scale. The original cause of mass forms was the populationist tendencies, which were held in common by all seventeenth-century Spanish and non-Spanish writers, and not at all the effective attainment of an abundant population in a given country (France, for example), although they were nonetheless necessarily bound up with one another beforehand. When the seventeenth-century state — the early modern State — wanted to count on a large population, although it didn't always achieve it, this owed to the fact that it was already a political form with mass culture characteristics.

In the seventeenth century, however, the population became relatively more concentrated in certain areas even as it declined in absolute terms. The demographic alterations, accompanied by changes in the interrelations among groups — changes in mores, beliefs, and modes of living — signified a profound transformation of culture, apart from the structural changes studied by economic historians. In his famous study of kitsch, Greenburg wrote:

The peasants who settled in the cities as proletariat and petty bourgeoisie learned to read and write for the sake of efficiency, but they did not win the leisure and comfort necessary for the enjoyment of the city's traditional culture. Losing, nevertheless, their taste for the folk culture whose background was the countryside, and discovering a new capacity for boredom at the same time, the new urban masses set up a pressure on society to provide them with a kind of culture fit for their own consumption. To fill the demand of the new market a new commodity was devised: ersatz culture, kitsch¹⁰

It was a culture — an art, a literature, distractions and social games — produced by the requirements of a new situation of society and translated into the new relations between the market and the position of the consumer population in it that had at its disposal certain commercialized products. (Clearly, no matter how far back we antedate the fact that the exodus of rural multitudes to the city led to new forms of popular culture, the examples offered us by the cultural commerce of kitsch in this incipient moment could never be the same as those that social researchers are concerned with today. But this difference cannot prove an obstacle since, in terms of the baroque, we are not speaking about the process of social massification implied by kitsch: at that time there would have been no radio or widely circulated newspapers that the public could make use of; they didn't exist in 1830, much less in 1700, yet this concept has been applied to the sociocultural situation of both time periods. I shall try to show that its beginning — always emphasizing that it is a question of incipient forms — can already be discovered in the baroque.)

In the seventeenth century, the peasant population's invasion of the cities was already taking place to a considerable degree, and this is why the early manifestations of kitsch have to be set in this century. Until now these subproducts of high culture have not been studied; at most, an art or literary textbook has, in bringing each epoch to a close, dedicated a small chapter to authors of lesser quality. Now a great interest has arisen in the study of those levels of socialized culture, but since it has emerged specifically in researchers from countries that in the last thirty years have known a more spectacular level of development, along with an invasion of the means of mass communication and a fabulous increment in the mass consumers of standardized cultural products, the phenomenon has tended to be seen as a novelty, as something that had never before occurred. That is understandable because the circumstances of industrial development of the last decades have also never been known before. In addition, those specialists who are today studying the phenomenon throughout the countries where they live (the United States, Germany, etc.), have not been inclined to see more than direct economic reasons in the theme that has so recently become

an object of study. The great manufacturing firms, applying themselves to the realm of cultural production, would have given rise to kitsch for market reasons.

I am not convinced by either argument. The diversification of cultural levels — which have always existed — and the appearance of popular and mediocre culture in its specifically modern form, although developed to a greater or lesser degree, are phenomena that have to be antedated to the time of the social crisis constituting the beginning of modernity. Although, as D. Macdonald claimed, there is no good or bad Gothic painting¹¹ (to my understanding, it would be better to say that there is no painting whose good or bad quality is determined on social grounds), there is good and bad baroque painting and theater, and every sort of cultural manifestation — from architecture to the novel — is either good or bad because of the influence of social conditioning. In saying *bad* we are tying this unfavorable qualifier to the conditions giving rise to kitsch: a popular culture characterized by the establishment of types with a standardized repetition of genres representing a tendency toward social conservatism and corresponding to a manipulated consumption. We are establishing these characteristics by basing ourselves largely on those that P. F. Lazarsfeld and R. K. Merton attributed to modern-day kitsch.¹² Naturally, if the means of mass communication are of a different nature today than those we can consider as such in another epoch (there was no radio or television in the seventeenth century, but there were books, commercialized theatrical representations, painting in abundance, songs in vogue, posters, programs, lampoons, etc.); if it is easy to comprehend that such media, according to their nature and their possibilities of influencing, are always, both in the present and in the past, relatively dependent on the structure of property and on its forms of expression; and if that gives rise to the fact that even today, given the structural differences existing between one country and another, one cannot even speak of the Soviet Union and the United States having the same aspects of mass communication; then the aspects characterizing the possible kitsch products in the seventeenth century would have to be even more different than what was seen later. An accumulating population and a culture industry at its service is revealed by the fact that organized companies were provided with an apparatus for assembling scenarios, which was perhaps more or less primitive or complicated: that halls were constructed expressly for the comedia, so that its representation had become an occupation, and the acting occupation was put forth as a form of employment (let us recall the anonymous *loa* in praise of this job, which figures among those collected by Cotarelo), i.e., as an activity of economic production: that cartloads of books were sent from Lyon and other European cities in "absolute hordes," as Saavedra Fajardo hyperbolically described it.¹³

We have often discussed the seventeenth-century rural exodus to the cities, which is not to be confused with a necessary abandonment of the agrarian

profession: the economic difficulties of the time thrust sizable groups of day laborers into urban milieus where they drastically changed their forms of life and their character. Diego de Colmenares described the arguing and quarrelsome habits that led toward confrontation and street disputes.¹⁴ On the other hand, in smaller but still appreciable numbers, there was an increase in the number of merchants and in diverse types of professions; there was also an increase in the number of nobles and in their employees and servants who came to inhabit the city, passing through its streets and gathering at its meeting places. This growth implied the necessity of seeking in this urban milieu a cultural sustenance for all this jumbled-together population; most were content with works of a "middle" or "low" type, and in some cases creations of the highest cultural level were required, so that the urban growth of the baroque epoch ran parallel to the demand for cultural growth in all social layers.

The seventeenth-century cultural expansion probably had a positive side: individuals who learned to see, listen to, read, and assimilate works of great culture (Porreño's well-known reference to the popular reading of the *Quijote*, of Malón de Chaide, and of Montemayor's *Diana* is significant) arose from among those who were incorporated into the urban milieu, those who were close to personages already a part of the urban cultured group, and, besides those, from the many more who attended the university lecture halls — whose total capacity, with the creation of universities and professors' chairs in the Renaissance, had increased considerably. But that expansion also had a negative side: the numerous displaced population lost its connection with its traditional milieu where what I will call popular culture [*cultura popular*] was being secularly preserved and renewed, cut its contacts with Church and family members, with people of other professions, perhaps with certain institutions, and even with persons of prestige that in the rural ambient could be related to as neighbors and friends. This situation made necessary a culture to replace what was lost, a culture derived as a sub-product of high culture: kitsch. This cannot be taken as a dissemination of limited amounts of cultured knowledge, of small doses of high culture transmitted more or less crudely to other layers. No: even then it was a question of producing a popular culture [*cultura vulgar*] for the urban masses, probably — this could be studied today with computers — according to a level corresponding to that of the middle classes, which knew how to read and practiced this cultural activity more assiduously because they had enough leisure time to dedicate themselves to reading and similar activities. (Although in the novel and theater — and if we take note of its iconographic elements, also in painting — cultured elements appear that seem to correspond to a "high" formation, in general they are products that would be equivalent to what one sociologist has called *midcult*: in many cases — ribald ballads, farces and other kinds of theatrical representations — one must accept that it is a question of pure and simple *masscult*.)¹⁵ In any case we are encountering manifestations of kitsch, to which belongs the greater part of

seventeenth-century theatrical and, especially, novelistic production. The thousands of comedies published for the epoch's consumption cannot signify anything else.

Will this aid in explaining, on sociohistorical grounds, why in studying the baroque we must study or at least take into account the presence of bad taste, of the ugly, of the work of low style? In previous epochs we might be able to dispense with this component; in the baroque, that would be impossible. Until a short time ago, every so-called baroque style was identified with a style of bad taste. But it was simply that, for a series of social reasons, kitsch emerged, and then even work of high quality was produced simultaneously and in competition with works of those other levels of culture for the common people [*vulgo*]. Sometimes the same author was responsible for works of more than one level — let us recall Lope and Calderón. But to the extent that it was necessary to produce more culture because there was more consumption, there was also a greater lack of individuals to produce that culture. This resulted in the phenomenal increase, which can be measured statistically, of writers and artists who in the seventeenth century appeared everywhere; among them, as a new element, one would have to include the popular [*adocenados*] writers and artists who were enjoyed by the public of a mediocre level. As the kitsch of our time, the popular [*vulgo*] baroque was not a counterculture of a popular [*popular*] tradition (it could not be farther from it), nor properly speaking a substitute for culture; however, this expression can be used in market terms, keeping in mind its consumption possibilities. It was rather a culture of low quality that might become a pseudoculture or a pseudoart. It might even be called a bad culture, but always sufficiently similar to high culture for it to be designated with the same word: they fulfilled, ultimately, the same or similar function because they responded to a demand of the same nature.¹⁶

But how does the mass character of baroque culture come about, and how is it explained? Although at different degrees of evolution, the dominant social and economic forms — which were directly dependent on sixteenth-century demographic growth that continued in the cities in the seventeenth century, even if by then the population factor was arrested or being reversed — have by some been characterized as mass production. In the epoch itself, the printing industry came to be considered as such. Since the middle of the sixteenth century, the books produced by printing were said to be so numerous and inexpensive that no one, no matter how tight one's budget, found it necessary to do without any book one might want. Mechanical printing was capable of providing the market with great quantities of books: "Because of this, books, which used to be rare and high-priced, have become more commonly available and affordable," according to one appraisal that we can easily verify.¹⁷ Relying on this and other devices, which could achieve an inexpensive and mass production and were capable of reaching a large public (specifically in the area of cultural dissemination), the

baroque can be presented as a phenomenon of kitsch. The seventeenth century experienced an expansion that lay the groundwork: printing was judged as an industry of culture that worked for a great quantity of consumers.

Although only in its incipient stages, painting also exhibited the first hint of a tendency that would later consolidate itself along the same lines. Every production of this type sought to pay attention to demand, of course, but did not subordinate itself directly and individually to previous orders; instead, to a certain extent, it prepared and shaped the demand. Such would come to be the case for Giorgione and Titian, who worked for the market and not for prior individual requests.¹⁸ It has been said that Rubens applied "methods of industrial manufacture to the organization of artistic work" and that in Amberg a great number of painting and engraving masters — more numerous than those employed in certain food industries — followed similar methods: all that proclaims a mode of production of the manufacturing type.¹⁹ Something similar could be maintained about Alonso Cano, Murillo, and others. Some painting treatises of the epoch, and especially Francisco Pacheco's,²⁰ are for the most part instruction books for serial production. These are closely linked aspects of the economy, the culture, and seventeenth-century society. As a typical case of a system of prefabrication that proposed — and practically imposed, at least to a certain extent — models of premade products, the baroque city was acquainted with shops selling ready-made clothing. In one of his novels, Lope introduced a gentleman who, upon arriving in Madrid, "buys his servants gallant clothes from that miraculous street where so many are clothed without taking measurements."²¹

Not all European societies reached the same level of development; regardless, the baroque was formed and matured alongside the development of labor in shops of the manufacturing type — as an example, Max Weber cited a Velázquez painting, *Las hilanderas*. Of course, much time would pass before manufacturing production reached an appreciable level, except in England (in Spain, one would even observe a retrogression). Nevertheless, that the epoch's mentality appraised industrial activity in a different way was revealed by the fact that the terms *factory* and *manufacturing* became widespread to designate, in Spanish, the epoch's means of industrial production, as can be verified in the lexicon of the economists — Sancho de Moncada, Martínez de Mata, and others. Naturally, there was no factory organization of production, and the fact that those two words and the word *workshop* were used without differentiation informs us of the incipient level of the changes.²² On the other hand, let us observe that there is taking place today a mass production and consumption of contemporary science, despite which we are discovering that the mentality corresponding to this diffused, hybrid genre is being communicated and absorbed. In a similar way, the seventeenth century contemplated the development of a mentality and modes of life having a mass character, along with the development of manufac-

turing, even where industry scarcely reached such a level. But, in addition, given that this initial mass character had a general projection, it can clearly be considered prior to its more full-blown appearance in the economic realm and independently from economic determinations, although always in relation with conditions operating upon the economy itself.

It has been said that the Industrial Revolution produced the masses. It uprooted people from agrarian communities and crowded them into the cities growing up around the factories.²³ The Industrial Revolution, however, is not something that suddenly appeared and immediately transformed things. Many alterations that were underway since the Renaissance reached an appreciable level in the seventeenth century and underwent a greater expansion in the eighteenth. When the large factory superseded the manufacturing workshop, kitsch art and culture encountered two conditions that until then had not been present: a "standardized industrial production" for a "prototypical consumer." Since mass society developed in historical complexes taking place successively and over long periods of time, I believe that the first appearances of mass society came about in the seventeenth century in a manner correlative not to serial production (as this concept is used in the regimen of the large factory) but to production based on short-term repetition, such as takes place in manufacturing. When these conditions of production occurred in the realm of culture — the book, the engraving, etc. — they were brought to bear on the fact that work was being done for a "public" already having an impersonal character, at least within the possibilities of the time. In this way, the masterworks of the baroque epoch were in all areas accompanied by masses of low and mediocre works, by *midcult* and *masscult* works that motivated kitsch's popular inspiration. Factory and industrial production had not reached the same level in all countries, but all the baroque countries were acquainted with manufacturing and consumed manufactured products; consequently, kitsch appeared in all of them as a necessary companion to baroque culture. But regarding the change in the modes of production, the appearance of kitsch above all depended on social causes (behind which, in turn, there could be economic factors) rather than on a direct economic motivation; in this case, it was a question of the concentration of population masses (partly of a nonproductive character) in urban centers.

If baroque culture was bound up with a restored seignorial society having an agrarian base, this interpretation does not contradict its having been a direct manifestation of the manufacturing epoch, or rather, stemming from the development of the consumption of manufactured products. The economic conditions emerging from this fact must be taken into account — although the manufactured products may have been manufactured outside of the country (as often happened in Spain), arriving through legal importation or smuggling. But the great changes of the time depended largely on the social conditions of the great European monarchies. Let us not speak, then, about industrial production in series as

something fully developed, but rather about the early mass phase of an early modern society that assembled an abundant population or perhaps a population incorporated and made present as never before. Nourishing and managing this population demanded mass means that had never been used until then and entailed new proposals for governing society.

Undoubtedly the level of manufacturing for the public at large required a series of economic and material conditions that, even in the nineteenth century, only some European countries had succeeded in attaining: a great concentration of manual labor, special buildings where machinery and workers could be brought together, a high degree of development of the division of labor, an elevated rate of capitalist investment, technical inventions, commercialization practices, and expansive consumer markets. None of this was present in the seventeenth century (except for a serious beginning in England), but the first glimpses of the later development were appearing everywhere. It was certainly not a question of a powerful, dominant class going about excluding the broad masses from superior cultural and aesthetic enjoyment. Although not everybody (nor even most individuals or the majority of any social group) could participate in this cultural enjoyment, precisely because of the inferior social conditions of poverty and subjection, it would never have occurred to the dominant social group to use the products of popular culture so that in consuming them the public at large would stay at a low level of development. That could not happen until it began to be realized that there existed an accumulation of human beings who were acting as a mass, as a public, and that correlatively there were appropriate means of production available to increase the manufacturing rates of items — furniture or paintings, comedies, novels or church images — destined for such a public, so that they could be shaped in a predetermined way. Thus before the economic conditions extensively imposed the kitsch cultural industry, political and social conditions were already encountering new possibilities for group interests, possibilities consisting in making use of the incipient manifestations of what we might at the least call *cultural manufacturing*, which was capable of producing in quantities greater than those necessary for maintaining a critical, creative, and original culture (because here quantity fundamentally enters into account).²⁴

The problem, then, concerned the way to form an opinion that the masses would receive or that would be suitable for mass reception. Kitsch in the baroque correlated to what there was of the technique of manipulation: the same thing, therefore, that made it a “guided culture.”

In relation to mass culture, the problem has always been formulated as to whether the public is given what it desires or whether one succeeds in making it desire what is offered. There is no doubt that the public is conditioned by the offer confronting it and that everything hinges on that offer being presented in such a way that certain feelings are provoked to which the public seems to respond. Whoever undertakes the production of kitsch culture is directly interested

in that process and has placed himself or herself in the service of the interests served by that culture. Opinions are manipulated in the service of determinate interests. Since the scholars who have studied the social phenomenon of popular culture in our time belong to the larger countries their research has focused on the printing firms of greatest circulation, the largest department stores, and the biggest organizations of radio and television; as a consequence, it has been easy for them to discover, behind all these complexes, commercial interests on a grand scale. When in the seventeenth century, however, the first productions appeared that were oriented toward a “public” proper (or, more rigorously, to a public sociologically defined as such) kitsch was used as the effective expedient to shape types, form mentalities, and group masses together ideologically. Thus there were individuals whose opinions were extrarationally based, in the service of the epoch’s economic, political, and social organization — in the interests of the monarchy and the seignorial group. To applaud Lope in his *Fuenteovejuna* was to be on the side of the monarchy with its vassals, freemen, and plebs. To applaud Quevedo was the same, although there could arise cases of disagreement among those who formed the ruling group; the same goes for deriving enjoyment from Góngora, Villamediana, and Arquijo. In none of these cases — in those I have cited and many others — were the works praised because something in the text, on the canvas, or in the scenario proposed adherence to the system; rather it is because they helped to prepare the mentality that was to serve as its base.

The seventeenth-century culture industry — the thousands of paintings and sonnets and theatrical works, but also clothing, lampoons and placards, ways and occasions to converse, stroll, be entertained — anchored its manipulation in the centers where taste was imposed. Was it happenstance that there were centers — and even disputes about them (recall the preceptist Carballo and many others) — where it was established that one had to form whatever taste proved acceptable, centers that were always coextensive with those upon whom power acted? Of course this doesn’t mean that rejections of what was proposed did not frequently occur: one must keep in mind the conflictive nature of the seventeenth century. And undoubtedly the many creations conceived by Spanish baroque writers and artists — creations that highly cultured individuals took pleasure in — produced no less often a full and direct aesthetic enjoyment on a level above conflict and disagreement.

Macdonald observed that for political and not commercial reasons masscult in the Soviet Union is imposed from above and aims more toward propaganda and pedagogy than entertainment. Even without knowing the Russian world from within, whoever has observed the masses of visitors passing through the rooms of the Tretyakov Museum in Moscow will understand this distinction. Similarly, the seventeenth-century absolute monarchies first showed the necessity of attracting and moving the masses in their opinions: there already existed many different incipient and incomparably small mass groups, and their adherence was decisive

in the epoch's conflicts and more so in its wars. These same monarchies comprehended that they had to use cultural resources that allowed for influencing not the differences between individuals but "the reflections that one individual shares with any other." Thus the predilection for using techniques — or perhaps simply procedures — of reproduction; all kitsch technology, from printing to television, tends in itself and from its first moment toward repetitive production.²⁵ Applying it to contemporary times, Giesz wrote: "Kitsch and mass psychology have the same structure. Today's producers of kitsch are not naive thinkers but astute mass psychologists, that is, persons who undoubtedly possess a consciousness of kitsch, who even go so far as to investigate systematically the techniques to produce the specific lived experiences of kitsch."²⁶ Today this is beyond question. Did Richelieu and the Count-Duke conceive of it in this way? Did Lope and Molière know about it? Undoubtedly so. If we take into account the infinite storehouse of notions about individuals' mass reactions that can be found among the disorderly pages of the Tacitists, we become convinced that many were trying to disseminate a type of culture — without failing to cultivate works of a higher level — based on reiteration, sentimentalism, easy passions that valorize the self, subordination to a recipe book of known solutions, and literary poverty. Furthermore (and perhaps this helps to explain why it is so difficult to discover what the baroque was, specifically in terms of the greatness of its cultural works), there is scarcely a baroque work of high quality — from Bernini's *Santa Teresa* to Poussin's *Pastoral*, to Calderón's *La vida es sueño* — that escapes being touched by kitsch elements. Everything that belongs to the baroque emerges from the necessities of manipulating opinions and feelings on a broad public scale.

As the sixteenth century advanced, those concerned with religion showed themselves to be more interested in the problems of its preservation or dissemination among the popular masses than in anything else. Those in charge of affirming and consolidating the monarchical governments or, in general, the princes of each country relied more on the necessity of their reception among the peoples and the problems deriving therefrom. Those who wrote, painted, sculpted, and instructed seemed to act before more numerous publics, so that the problem of acceptance or rejection by one or another single individual disappeared, and in its place was posed the complex problematic of mass adherence or rejection.

But the public's incorporation into society and the formation of communal or public opinion did not mean that those masses of population individually obeyed uniform criteria. Precisely the shaping techniques used to make the baroque secure reveal the intention of forming unanimous opinions in favor of one or another position, but concretely it turned out to be in favor of the ruling minority of society governing by virtue of its traditional power. Let us recall that as the baroque was on its way out, La Bruyère, seemingly recording an aspect of the baroque inheritance, defined the automaton: "The automaton is a fool, he is a

machine, a jack-in-the-box [*ressort*]; the counterweight takes him away, makes him move, makes him turn, always in the same direction and with the same regularity; he is uniform . . . What appears least in him is his soul; it does not act, does not perform, it rests."²⁷ In its final results, the baroque engendered a certain measure of automatism as a product of the "culture industry" we have already mentioned. But then, as at any other time, the masses did not eliminate disagreement among themselves, and their activity merged and was even unified above the differences. Therein resided the tension that in baroque society, no less than in any modern society, characterized the vacillating discord, opposition, and struggle. In a report to Philip IV about Hurtado de Alcocer's *Discursos* (22 July 1621), López de Madera observed that among people there are individuals who are always wanting to introduce new things, whereas others want to stop everything to interrogate and criticize it; some agree only with the freest imagination, others consider everything impractical that "comes from the diversity of human ingenuity, some being inclined to invent and others to doubt and dissent."²⁸

During the baroque's stage of uneasy concern, of violent tensions; this old topos of the incalculable variety of opinions was forcefully and lively expressed in Saavedra Fajardo; moreover, in grasping this fact he came to formulate the first theory about the ideological conditionings of the milieu: Saavedra brought to the fore

such disagreeing opinions and ways of thinking as there are in men, each one differently understanding things in which we find the same incertitude and variation, because if they are placed here or there they change their colors and forms, either because of the distance, the nearness, or because no thing is perfectly simple, or because of the natural mixtures and varieties that are offered between the senses and sensible things, so that we cannot affirm that they are, but only say that they seem to be, forming an opinion and not knowledge [*ciencia*].²⁹

But precisely because of their multiform, changeable, and shifting character, the established disagreements and dissents proved an obstacle to arriving at a positive, univocal course; yet they facilitated a momentary fusion, as by way of irruption, in whatever might be the negative action. In terms of mass psychology (according to Freud), the individual reveals that "his ability to affect becomes extraordinarily intensified, while his intellectual activity is markedly reduced . . ." ³⁰ In such circumstances the diversity of opinions proves ineffective and even comes to be a resource for their annihilation, while all the affective expedients become strengthened.

We still have to formulate an interesting aspect acquired by the restoring or conservative tendency of the baroque, precisely because the period already exhibited those characteristics of massified behavior. It was a society that underwent

a seignorial restoration, which, in principle, does not mesh well with the mass character we are attributing to it. Nevertheless, that is an evident manifestation of the conditions of novelty: we are faced with a society whose traditional elements were encouraged, but also one in new circumstances. The Church, the monarchy, and the seignorial preeminence were not simply imposed, as in feudal society — for this reason, the unqualified use of the word *feudalism* to refer to these times is lamentably antihistorical. Now, in fact, the restored tradition was debated or, at least, put into question. That tradition felt the need for acceptance by the masses and made use of means to address them. Baroque culture, in all of its aspects, required a way to approach the popular masses; thus, without taking away from the variety offered by the resources, those manipulating them always attempted to spread them beyond the circle of the aristocratic minority — whatever may have been the principle of selection — to “get to the motivations [*resortes*] of popular emotion.”³¹ Tapié, following what M. Raymond and others have said, foregrounds the tendency of the baroque to address the masses so as to bring them together and integrate them, prompting their admiration by means of pomp and splendor.³²

“Popular” and “mass” are not equivalent concepts, but whatever may be the nuances differentiating them, what interests us here is what they have in common. The “bold” painter (*a lo ‘valiente’* as he was then described), or the cruel preacher, or the king dressed in his regalia — the first in decorating a church, the second in declaiming a sermon, the third in displaying his majesty — counted on the fact that the expedient [*resorte*] they mobilized would set loose a statistically equivalent reaction in the individuals of the multitude. In the seventeenth century, we are viewing an early phase in meaning displacement in the concept of a *people* [*pueblo*]; now it was equivalent to a crowd or a sum of indistinct, nondifferentiated individuals, to an anonymous mass, a meaning that in the texts of the time was more than once represented by the word *vulgo* (i.e., the common people). In the seventeenth century the *vulgo* was always present, whether one was speaking about literature, dealing with theatrical representations, or commenting on the war, economic difficulties, or politics. “The common people is a body of many heads that is content with nothing,” Cellerigo said.³³ The volumes of the *Cartas de jesuitas* probably do not mention a protagonist more often; we may hear very bitter sentences against them, but that constitutes no more than a recognition of their force.³⁴ The *avisos* of the epoch also frequently refer to them, saying that they are abusive and feared, and advising that they be pacified and calmed.³⁵

In the excessive and distorted cultisms of the epoch (and not only in poetry), it was not a question of the author yielding to the elite group or to those who were truly learned, but to those who, because of their frequent contact with the upper groups, had come to hold certain notions or simple learned references and liked displaying their knowledge. The factor of the “common people” was

everywhere in baroque society. “Góngora’s language mixes the illustrious and the common . . . this alloy between the literary and the common breaks with the Renaissance tradition and complicates Gongoran language.” This penetrating observation by L. Rosales regarding the most striking example can be applied to all baroque products.³⁶ Since the end of the sixteenth century, it was also manifest in the social forms of piety as spectacle. It happened in such a way (as in other areas) that a new taste appeared, as L. Febvre has observed, for the collective, for anonymity: a taste for “the slow shuffling of feet by those in the ranks of the entourage” so that these processions could be seen from every direction.³⁷ At this moment, contrary to what Febvre so quickly assumed, there is no reason to conceive of these manifestations as an instance of the Hispanization of western Europe; in Spain they would remain as an externally imposed form and as “common” expedients of religion.

“The common people reason as common people ultimately, like plebs,” noted Pellicer. It was not that they reasoned well or ill, in truth or in error; it was something else, a question of their form of thinking in itself — it was plebeian, not elite, it belonged to everyone else and consequently was appropriate for the concentrations of people when they occurred.³⁸ Nevertheless, the attitude of the baroque writer had been qualified as against the common people [*antivulgo*]. Mopurgo-Tagliabue was thinking of this when he wrote that the baroque writer “incites an impulse toward the new, the unique, the difficult, as a system of privileged conventions.”³⁹ However, he failed to note that in proceeding in such a manner one is seeking to distinguish oneself from those without privileges. The theme is more complex than it appears. What is sought? A scholar of the theme, A. Collard, tells us that in invoking the word *culto* — a word that develops so much from Herrera to Góngora — Herrera “translated his ideal of an aristocratic idealism, his disdain for the ignorance of the common people, a true antithesis of the *culto* [learned] understood in this way. It is clear that to be a learned poet is equivalent to being a polished, erudite poet and, we should say, an exclusivist one, for minorities.”⁴⁰

But it does not suffice to stop there. These minorities were new, alien to any hereditary system; they distinguished themselves precisely by acquiring a good that was at the reach of all if the decision was made to enter on the free course of study. They were not a group apart; they were those who had come to be the few among the many. Their presence demanded the base of the common people, hence the word *culto* would come to be an object of satire and irony in being applied to those with less instruction — that is, it drifted toward a form of kitsch. Today we can see an extreme case that is similar in the problem of the culture of crossword puzzles, which are cultivated by those without learning [*los no cultos*] or, rather, by the consumers of what D. Macdonald calls *midcult* (nor can we fail to see it in masscult). Thus in the seventeenth century the diatribe against the common people became aggravated precisely in those works destined

for widespread (within that epoch's proportions) consumption and written by individuals in the service of a public with such characteristics. In *La gran Cenobia*, one of his works directed toward the middle level, Calderón spoke of the "novellesque common people." María de Zayas spoke of "commoner novel-mongering," when what she herself did was write novels of "commoner." i.e., popular culture. Apart from the overworked example of Lope, who confessed to speaking in the common idiom to impose his kitsch products, let us recall the example of Agustín de Rojas in the prologue to *El entretenido*,⁴¹ which contains the harshest diatribe against the commoner public, in a book that can only be written for them.

A passage from López Pinciano prompts us to further reflection: "Notice that the princes and grand seigniors speak with gravity and the utmost simplicity; and notice that lesser people are so witty in their conceits and sayings that in their biting wit they pierce one's skin, pierce one's eardrum."⁴² That was certainly one way to arrive at "distinguishing," to make the qualities of this group stand out in distinction. The mass without distinction here appears as participating in literary values. Therefore it is very fitting that the characters of the picaresque novel are admirers of "conceits." Also in 1617, when the baroque was in full bloom, Suárez de Figueroa said that the literary works that mainly manifested artifice and wit — two values that Gracián has taught us to be baroque at its best — were appropriately only about and for common persons, which the author made equivalent to persons from the city.⁴³ These persons in turn in their social conduct made up the anonymous sum of the urban mass. In the rural milieu, the massification phenomenon proper did not take place.

In all of seventeenth-century Europe, demographic growth came to a standstill or the population declined — and in Spain this recession was manifestly serious; but the large cities generally increased in population, both those that were already consistently acting as the state capital and those that increasingly play an important role as a market or artesan center of a given region. They were in fact the site where the first symptoms of proletarianization took place.⁴⁴ They were also where the professional activity of the popular groups was represented in art; in their occupations, revolts, and fiestas a multiplicity of behavioral modes occurred, making evident that the baroque explicitly relied on the presence of these groups. Therefore, and without detracting from the fact that baroque culture was mounted as a response to the phenomenon, an attempt was also made to deal with it by another means: to relieve the large city's overcrowding, to cut off this process of massification. As the reaction behind it was inspired in forms of traditional agrarian society, whose restoration was at stake — at least to whatever extent possible, although it was more and more realized to be less viable — the proposed solution, with its evident simplicity, was to reestablish the populations in the countryside.

On 1 February 1619, the Royal Council told Philip III that to empty out the

court he should mandate that people return to their lands; the council observed that although the court, as the homeland they held in common, was beneficial, it followed that each one's land of origin must not be any less beneficial. But the council prudently warned that to achieve such ends one must begin with the rich and powerful and not with the common and low-class people. The poor were present at court not because of its amenities but they were drawn there by the presence of those who are to maintain them: it would be wickedness to throw out the miserable people "to some place where they will have no work nor any way to earn something to eat." The council realized that a countryside without seigniors was not a society like the one they imagined restoring. With the rich and the seigniors established in their villages, the farmers would see their products consumed, the lands would be populated, there would be work and prosperity. "Although the Court, the Chanceries and Universities are always glowing with people because money comes from outside and is spent there, if spent in each one's native place, the villages would be more glowing, more populated, and more at ease, and the Court more calmed." (The Royal Council repeated this advice on 4 March 1621; on 23 May 1621 the Junta de Reformación under Philip IV gave him the same advice in very broad terms; the junta repeated it again on 23 August of the same year.)

At the beginning of his reign (28 October 1622), Philip IV's letter to the cities having a vote in the Cortes admitted the advantage of having the grandees and those with titles return to their villages, with the poor and working common people following. To achieve this he announced that indirect measures would be taken to encourage them to abandon the court and to establish themselves in the small settlements in the countryside. These measures were decreed in the *Capítulos de reformación* of Philip IV (10 February 1623), where certain benefits were instituted along with other favorable measures that might indirectly lead the grandees, seigniors, and those with titles who possessed villas with vassals to establish themselves there and personally administer them, at the same time that restrictions were placed on immigration to the large urban centers (Madrid, Seville, Granada). The interest in dissolving the anonymous world concentrated there was already clearly observable in this letter from Philip IV to the cities: "the increase in this Court's population and the many people congregating here, are in every way held to be great disadvantages because in the court there is an excess of danger in leisure, waste in government, and expense in maintaining the living arrangements, since the circumstances and obligations are greater." Measures were announced to overcome these difficulties; but the matter already stood out most prominently, with no pretense, in the *Capítulos de reformación*: it explicitly stated that measures were taken to preserve the court's good government and avoid the overflow of people "so that the court has no more than the necessary people and the congregating of so many is avoided and everybody knows who everybody else is, what they are doing, the reason for their presence

and how long they have been present, thereby avoiding all the confusion until now."⁴⁵ In fact, however, nothing could arrest the tide of urban concentration, for pleasure was found even in the common people's immense anonymity. Jáuregui called it: "This mundane common people, without number / and different in their inclinations."⁴⁶

We can now offer some support that will allow us to comprehend how baroque culture made use of media that were tailor-made for the masses and the mass effects that were problematically put into operation. For example, the cultivation and widespread interest in the biographical genre is significant. In today's literary world, we know that biographies serve as educating models, based on the figures they present — exemplary or at least suggestive figures, whether positively or negatively; they are used as devices to introduce or preserve, on a mass scale, a general human type or certain behavioral values whose socialization is sought. Lowenthal has studied biographies used to such an end in contemporary North American magazines.⁴⁷ By looking at contemporary publishers' catalogues, we can see that publishers who produce for a large public issue many books of this type. The baroque epoch coincidentally discovered the value of biographies as a vehicle of political and moral education (or, rather, of political and moral "shaping") when this latter, whose object is social integration, was directed to a number of people who, compared with previous epochs, could be taken as a multitude of insuperable anonymity. In any case, the dissemination of the genre and its quality reveal tastes belonging to groups of such circumstances. Let us recall the large number of political biographies written by a representative baroque author, Juan Pablo Mártir Rizo,⁴⁸ who, well aware that the genre was widely consumed by his contemporary public, also translated some biographies from a French baroque writer, Pierre Mathieu. Seventeenth-century Tacitists and moralists seldom failed to write works of this type, which also found considerable dissemination in the theater.

Few things have such an eloquent mass character as the Spanish comedia. Perhaps because of this it advanced certain traits that are comparable to products of the present time. R. Menéndez Pidal maintained years ago that Lope's works could be qualified as "cinedramas";⁴⁹ with analogous criteria, A. Hauser has said that the dramatic creations of Shakespeare have their own continuation in the cinema.⁵⁰ Rousset, who has made such fine morphological analyses of baroque works, has compared the production of comedias in that epoch to the current production of films.⁵¹ For N. Salomon, the Spanish baroque comedia, in the greatest phase of its unfolding, developed in social and economic conditions that were uniquely similar to those of contemporary cinematographic production.⁵² Without our making a study of the structure of baroque dramatic literature, these references are sufficient for us to accept the relationship of the comedia to forms of art obviously belonging to an epoch with a mass characterization.

It is symptomatic that a writer of novels and, moreover, of some picaresque

novels, Salas Barbadillo, hit upon the significance of the Lopesque revolution: what it offered were new precepts that Lope had "better based on reason and adapted to taste."⁵³ The precepts that were to be followed changed because the addressee of the work changed and the means of the former had to be adapted to the latter. And who was this addressee? The followers of the same school give us the answer. Guillén de Castro tells us that of the comedias in Spain, "their object is striving / to make an entire people hear them, / giving the scholar and the ill-bred / something to laugh and cry about."⁵⁴ But perhaps nobody would formulate it as did Ricardo del Turia: "Those who write do so with the object of satisfying the taste of those they write for"; well, the Spanish writers were engaged in "satisfying the many" and they must be praised for that, since instead of always following the same pattern — which would be appropriate for a conservative mentality, for persons based on the high privilege of the traditional estates — they were obligated to "follow new guidelines and precepts every fifteen days." A curious and revealing anecdote tells us the same thing: Lope used to attend the representations of comedias, both his own and others, focusing on the passages evoking the greatest applause from the public so as to keep them in mind when he wrote.⁵⁵ Recording the experience of the Spanish comedia, Bances Candamo said that the theater was not for enjoying in solitude nor for superior minds "but to be recited to the people." Its multitudinous character, where the addressee was anonymous, came to be understood — such had been its function in the decades he was examining — when it made manifest this significant social fact: "What worker, no matter how low, does not for mere pennies constitute its judge and lawyer at the same time?"⁵⁶ From this multitudinous, nameless, and ownerless circumstance that derived simply from having purchased a ticket — a cheap one that anyone could afford⁵⁷ — one obtained the right to become the theater's collective addressee, a very relevant manifestation of baroque culture.

Let us also take note of the indisputable fact regarding the baroque artists' and writers' utilization of symbolist and allegorical procedures that went beyond the boundaries of learned production and occurred in urban fiestas, religious ceremonies, and political spectacles. This technique, utilized as a psychological means to impress people directly and dynamically, was no less characteristic of periods of mass mobilization of opinion. Below we will focus on this question from another angle: its status as a visual medium; but now let us pause to make explicit the significance of referring to public opinion, in terms of the seventeenth century and baroque society.

When, several years ago, I wrote my first book on this epoch, I already called attention to the theme of public opinion.⁵⁸ The importance the political writers attributed to it, the warnings directed to the rulers regarding its force, its variability, and the means of channeling and dominating it were all worthy of note. Saavedra Fajardo went so far as to maintain that it was the sole basis for holding

moral reason. Such is the meaning of the aphorism "vox populi, vox Dei." But when after the sixteenth century these words appeared more and more rarely and instead phrases with an opposite meaning were repeated over and over, it arose from the fact that in place of the traditional, medieval image of the people, there now appeared the image of the common populace as an anonymous mass whose way of thinking did not translate exactly into a natural order of reasonableness. This formulation reflected an inherited opposition, one from the medieval and Aristotelian tradition: only now, in the early modern centuries, its meaning was altered. In effect, the traditional moralists had distinguished between reason and opinion, recognizing in the first the ordered and constant transcription of truth and in the second a disordered, whimsical, and unstable way of thinking that was ordinarily liable to error. In *La Celestina*, Fernando de Rojas had his characters attribute to the common people the trait of being awash in opinion, contrary to the truths of reason.⁷³ But baroque writers contemplated the experience of the invincible force evident in mass ways of thinking. They were even aware of the revolutionary energy instilled in some cases, and the disquiet that always proved disruptive vis-à-vis the established state of things: the people, wrote a Jesuit, "are always perturbed in their very nature."⁷⁴ The figure of the agitator of opinion had its origin in the Tacitists.⁷⁵ They explained that it was thought impossible to oppose them head on, just as one could not go against the current of a flooding river (the image of the "current of opinion" would appear at once). Opinion, which was perhaps fickle yet overwhelming, was the mass way of thinking. "The people have a booming voice, with a sentence and decree that is terrible and frightening," notes Céspedes.⁷⁶ It could not be contained: "The popular voice runs with great freedom," as it was said in *Guzmán de Alfarache*.⁷⁷ These writers who affirmed the force of opinion in the world never asked themselves — at least during this early stage — about its justice, truth, or rationality; they only noted that it must be taken into account and that means adequate to its nature must be used to guide and dominate it.

We saw how culture has grown on all levels since the incipient moments of modernity, although in later times its growth has been more accentuated. There was evidently a great surge in the seventeenth century, as there has been an incomparably greater one in more recent times. But this growth was not equal, nor did it follow an arithmetic ratio, in the three levels that sociologists — some of them cited in the preceding pages — have come to distinguish: refined culture, midcult, and masscult. The two latter expanded considerably, and especially the third. I venture to maintain that this was linked to a (specifically modern) phenomenon: since the seventeenth century, the upper groups paid more attention to the opinion of the lower groups. They did not hold them in a higher esteem intellectually — nor was there reason it should have been otherwise. But we know that the lower groups became accustomed to seeing, hearing, being informed, and forming criteria about many subjects that had been completely foreign to

them, giving rise to a public opinion that constantly became broader and expressed itself more forcefully. Before this, says Shils (although he would postpone the fact until a relatively recent time, I would antedate it to the seventeenth century), "the cultural life of the consumers of a mediocre and brutal culture was relatively silent, unseen by the intellectuals. The immense advances in audibility and visibility of the the lower levels of culture is one of the most noticeable traits of mass society. This is, in turn, intensified by another trait of mass society, i.e. the enhanced mutual awareness of different sectors of the society."⁷⁸ It is precisely these phenomena, obviously to a lesser degree of development than later, that we have attempted to indicate in the seventeenth century.

The opinions of the multitude of common people were presented — by those dealing with it at that time — in terms of a concept that underwent an important alteration during the baroque: taste. The anonymous mass of people act according to their taste, whether they are applauding a theatrical play or exalting the figure of a personage. Taste is an opinion that, distinct from judgment, does not derive from a mental elaboration; it is rather a valorizing inclination that arrives by extrarational means. R. Klein has studied and distinguished the concepts of *giudizio* [judgment] and *gusto* [taste] in the Renaissance and has pointed out the change in the latter term during the baroque. But Klein limited his study to an individual plane; accordingly, taste comes to be the criterion of valorization with which a person intuitively and immediately ascertains the value of the contemplated object, whether by his or her spontaneous and natural exquisite qualities or because of the excellent sedimentation that is internalized through the cultivation of sensibility and intelligence. Thus, according to Klein's study, taste rapidly acquires a normative character that is revealed in the frequent expression of "good taste."⁷⁹ The cultivated, learned individual is said to have taste, which implies that this individual accepts an entire system of norms that, although not possessed by rational means, are adhered to on deeper levels. In this way there occurs an approximation between taste and judgment that keeps both on a level of upper-class values.⁸⁰

But in addition to this, the baroque knew another meaning of the word "taste" in which it was not referred to the solitary individual, nor was it characterized as making a choice; on the extrarational side, it was stressed to the point that it turned out to be incompatible with the very idea of qualitative norms.⁸¹ In this sense, taste was the disordered, irrational, confused criterion of value (which was free only to the extent that it was such) with which the unlearned common people establish their preferences; that is, not the individuals that singularly made up the people and whose personal quality didn't enter in, but the popular mass as a whole that let themselves get carried away by their passions, without reason, without a mentally elaborated and objective norm. In both senses, the concept of taste projected into the sphere of morality and subsequently into that of politics.⁸² This led to the efforts of the ruling groups to impose themselves on

the plane of mass taste. Lope — exuding privileged culture — eagerly served the flighty taste of the common people, which means that he was eagerly trying to control it. In this light one must see the presence of the *public* that the Lopists counted on for their comedias;⁸³ the *multitude* that was involved in as many rebellions as occurred in the epoch, and whose image was outlined by the Tacitist politicians; the *common people*, whose esteem elevated or humiliated, and whom Gracián and so many others who cultivated morality tried to influence by writing an infinite number of maxims; the *mass*, whose force, in any case, was terrible and had to be channeled; or, finally, the *people* [*pueblo*], who, far from being innocent, unanimous, and offering a noteworthy resistance to any moral recommendation, were a blind force that had to be contained with an ailing apparatus. Prudence, wrote friar Juan de Salazar, uses “loving deceptions with the people, beneficial and useful to teach them and obligate them to do what they should.”⁸⁴

The seventeenth century was an epoch of masses, undoubtedly the first in modern history, and the baroque was the first culture to make use of expedients to produce mass effects. This is attested to by the character of the theater, in its texts and scenario procedures; by the mechanized and external piety of post-Tridentine religion; by the politics of attraction and repression that the states began to use; by innovations in the warring arts. Might not printing, which since the mid-sixteenth century became the fundamental instrument of culture, also be considered the first known example of anything close to mass communication?

I have taken into account several characteristics in making use of the concept of mass in these pages. First is the heterogeneity of the components of the mass in regard to their estate of origin or with respect to any other criterion of social group formation: individuals act outside the limits of the traditional group to which they in each case belong, and they are united in functional and impersonal forms of behavior extending beyond differences in profession, age, wealth, and beliefs. Some have said that within the open-air comedia theater, one could be without class distinction, “democratically”; but this adverb is out of place: it was not a democratic effect; it was a mass effect. Second, there takes place a situation of anonymity that, on the one hand, stems from this estrangement from one’s personal background where one is more or less known and, on the other hand, from the great number of juxtaposed existences where it is possible for an individual to be inserted into a mass milieu without being able to take into account the singular circumstances of each one. Third, one’s inclusion in the mass is always partial, in terms of time and of the totality of the individual, who can continue being and appearing as a fundamental and irreplaceable singularity in other activities of existence. Fourth (and contrary to what some passages from Le Bon and other sociologists seem to say), although the mass does not presuppose physical proximity, its individuals can find themselves personally isolated from each other, united only in the identity of their response and in the shaping factors acting upon them. Let us recall the examples of the Church and of the army that

Freud cited as mass formations. Protonational bonds that linked members of baroque societies also had a mass aspect. Its individuals, unknown to each other and spread over a broad territory, felt united by an emotional inclination toward the community and toward their prince, who was presented by ad hoc propaganda as the example of those values which had socialized within the group.

In the city of the baroque century, those characteristics began to emerge in close relation to the conditions of its peculiar urban ambit. Now we are going to deal with this new aspect that is typical of baroque culture.