

Catholic Sponsorship of Art in Baroque Period and Its Enlightenment to Modern Art Investors

—Take Pope Urban VIII and His Family and Close Friends

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ABSTRACT

Art sponsorship plays an essential role in the development of art. Based on the research on the field of religious art sponsorship in the Baroque period, and referring to the art sponsorship of Pope Urban VIII and his family and friends, this paper explores the advantages and disadvantages of this form of art sponsorship and excavates the significance of religious art sponsorship in the Baroque period for modern art investors.

Keywords: *Baroque, Art Investment, Modern Art Investors*

1. INTRODUCTION

Catholic patronage of the arts during the Baroque period could inspire modern art investors. This period of social stability, economic prosperity, people's pursuit for skill and enthusiasm rising, artists get a steady stream of art sponsorship bring artist's reputation, social status and good art environment sponsored the diversity of sources, provides a more creative artist, art to be able to play their value.

Pope Urban VIII's patronage of the arts is particularly significant in the field of modern art investment. His monopolistic patronage of Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, a master of Baroque architecture, sculpture, and painting, enabled Bernini to create many stunning and magnificent works and fully demonstrated the glory of the art investor, Pope Urban VIII. Bernini's artistic genius illustrates the importance of an art investor's eye for an artist. At the same time, this form of mutual trust and mutual benefit between the patron and the artist is very worthy of reference. In modern times, the investment in an artist is not necessarily from individuals or a single organization but also groups or multiple forces. However, the ideas of the influential art sponsors are almost autocratic in art, making it difficult for artists to display their pictures and become artisans freely. Undeniably, this form of sponsorship will significantly restrict artists' creative subjects and creative freedom.

2. RELIGIOUS PATRONAGE OF ART IN THE BAROQUE PERIOD

2.1 The concept of a patron of the arts

In his book *Painting and experience in fifteenth century Italy: a primer in the social history of pictorial style*, the Western art historian Michael Baxandall(1972) describes it this way: "The person who invites, finances and ascertains the use of the painting is called a patron.[1]"He put forward the "patron" and the employer synonymous, from the narrow sense of the interpretation of the "patron of the arts."In fact, with the progress of the times and the development of society, the meaning of "art patron" has become broader and broader. Patrons have always played a memorable role in the development of Western art. For example, in the Middle Ages, only religious patrons supported the arts; By the Renaissance, there were private patrons like the Medici family; in the 17th century, the ranks of patrons were further expanded, and ordinary merchants and citizens became the biggest customers of artworks. After entering modern times, the groups of art patrons were more abundant. The emergence of museums, art galleries, exhibition halls, art centres, and other public welfare institutions provided exhibition space for works of art. Many individuals or organizations love and collect art; the general public also actively participates in art activities and watch art exhibitions. So, those who provide funds for an art career, to provide job opportunities for artists, provide a forum for artistic creation and art show and give the support and

help, actively participate in art propaganda activities and art practice, art career of management, purchase, collection, or watching the appreciation art of individuals and groups can be called art sponsors[2].

Therefore, it can be known that art patrons are groups or individuals who benefit from artworks as investment products. The patronage behaviour of art patrons is a kind of behaviour with an interest exchange relationship.

2.2 Religion and Baroque art

Baroque art first appeared in the second half of the 16th century, the 17th century is its heyday, and the 18th century gradually declined[3]. The 17th century was a historical period of internal troubles and foreign invasion for Italy, the power centre of the European church. On the outside, it was the Spanish invasion; on the inside, it was the Reformation. The urgent need to rebuild homes and recover the economy became the driving force of Rome's revival. Catholicism does not hesitate to use various forms and means to strengthen religious propaganda, and one of the most important means is art[4].

At that time, the medieval art form had lost its appeal to a new generation of popes and churches. They needed to support a new state of the art, one that was mysterious and luxurious, to highlight the holiness and grandeur of the church, re-establish the reputation and prestige of the old church rule, and satisfy the pleasure demands of the church's upper clergy and nobles. Thus a magnificent, gorgeous, highly dynamic and hallucinatory art form in 17th century Italy, this art style is later known as "Baroque" art[5].

2.3 Major patronage by the Pope and the denomination

Before the 14th century, religious art activities mainly relied on the strength of various organizations and institutions. The theme of art was carried out around religion, assumed the function of education, and preached the will of God. By the second half of the 15th century, patronage organizations or institutions were increasingly replaced by individuals and aristocratic dictators, the arts became a means these people consolidated their position and power.

Especially in 17th century Rome, the Pope gained an unexpected increase in power during the counter-reformation, who had previously been subject to the Religious council, now became the Pope's power over the board. The Pope and his entourage became the backbone of the patronage of religious art[6].

2.3.1 Pope Urban VIII's interests and patronage motives

Pope Urban VIII was appointed a cardinal in 1606 and

elected Pope on 6 August 1632. Art could satisfy his vanity and ambition. His patronage of the arts has not only brought him excellent glory, has cemented his position in power.

Urban VIII used art to emphasize traditional religious ideas during his reign, and for this, he needed a lot of money. The Roman Church was very rich at the time. To use this wealth, Urban VIII weakened the senate and strengthened his privileges[7]. The ensuing confusion of property between the Pope and the Church provided a solid financial guarantee for urban VIII's subsequent patronage of the arts.

Urban VIII often interfered with other family members in their art sponsorship, not allowing them to sponsor art that was too shabby. For example, his nephew Antonio was a Franciscan monk who liked simplicity. In 1626, he wanted to build a church for their denomination. An architect accepted the task and made a simple plan. But Urban VIII couldn't stand his nephew's shoddily run, intervened and eventually had the church built to his will. It can be seen that's the display of wealth and family glory and personal aesthetic is the main drivers of his patronage of the arts.

2.3.2 The patronage of Pope Urban VIII

As soon as Urban VIII became Pope, he invited Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini to work for him and his Curia. During his papacy, his patronage of Bernini could be said to be monopolistic. Between 1632 and 1644, Bernini hardly received any other vital works except the works commissioned by the Pope. There are two reasons for this. One is that the works commissioned by the Pope are vast and numerous and must be completed within a specified period. The other is that the Pope does not want the artists he sponsors to bring glory to others.

In July 1624, Bernini began to work on a large bronze canopy. Urban VIII played an essential role in the design of this bronze canopy. This work symbolizes the supremacy of religious authority and domination of everything, fully showing the glory of Urban VIII and shows Bernini's thoughts of serving religion. Bernini later designed the square colonnade in front of St. Peter's Basilica for the Holy See. The Pope gave Bernini enough credit to let him design and build it himself. The method proved to be a great success. Its grandeur, it's dynamic, echoed Michelangelo's cathedral dome, making St. Peter's later the most magnificent sight in Rome. It must be admitted that, if it were not for urban VIII's patronage, Bernini would not have had the opportunity to create such magnificent works of art.

Regional issues were also an essential factor influencing art patrons of the time. When choosing artists for some important works, the Pope and his relatives have a strong sense of homeland. They will give as many opportunities as possible to the painters, architects and

sculptors from their hometown who come to Make a living in Rome. Pope Urban VIII is a case in point who gives special treatment to artists from his hometown of Florence. Bernini, for example, was born in Naples his mother was Neapolitan. But he has always emphasized that his father's ancestral roots are Florentine, which attracted Urban VIII to sponsor him[8]. This choice and attraction will, in turn, cause a particular style of art to prevail over some time will also affect the local painters in Rome to gather and disperse and the number of increase or decrease.

2.3.3 Sponsored by members of the Urban VIII family and their friends

To satisfy his ambitions, Urban VIII also vigorously promoted his relatives for more extensive family power. His younger brother, cousin, nephew, etc., soon became bishops with his help, thus establishing a powerful family group. Most of these relatives and friends are the same as he have a strong interest in art, but due to their different temperaments, hobbies and interests, the objects of art sponsorship are also other. All these played an important role in reaching the peak of the Roman art patronage system.

Urban VIII's nephew Francisco Ciu was a learned man who became a cardinal at 26. Bishop Francesco bought two more poussin paintings, Samson and The Death of Jimanikou, for his private collection. He then turned his patronage to the French artists Simon Vouet and Moise Valentine. Simon Vouet and Moise Valentine, under the patronage of Francesco, achieved great success, culminating in the altar-painting of St. Peter's Basilica.

Like his brother, Francisco's younger brother, Antonio became a cardinal with the help of his uncle, Urban VIII. He is equally passionate about knowledge and the arts, and he is also a patron of Andrew Sakey.

Pope Clement IX was a friend of Urban VIII, whom he was influenced by and a great fan of poetry and painting. His reign lasted only two years, but he made outstanding contributions to the arts. In the era of baroque art, Clement IX's artistic interest was particular[9]. He was lonely among Roman art sponsors; he liked Claude's brooding poem and liked poussin's severe and classical. It also shows that, despite being Pope, leader of the church and owner of wealth, he does not have the same preference for artistic styles. There is no denying that this is the best explanation for the coexistence of various creative types at that time brought an excellent mechanism for the prosperity of art.

Urban VIII's ruling system brought a massive increase in patronage and close relations among the rulers. Urban VIII and his followers of the interest of the tide directly pushed the Italian Baroque art to a climax. If there is no absolute advocate and support, baroque art

style cannot be in front of history in front of the present people presented such a spectacular scene.

3. INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN ART

3.1 Magnificent forms of artistic expression were produced

L Rozelle said in a Brief History of Western Art, "The aesthetic view of the century can be expressed in the following four concepts: light, realism, psychology and illusion, which are also the characteristics of Baroque art.[10]" The light here is not natural light but an atmosphere created by light, a spirit. The artist uses realism to show the things around him, reflecting the upper and middle class and reflecting the life of the lower people, to make more people accept, to achieve the purpose of bringing Christianity back to the world.

The art of the 17th century expresses a spiritual temperament and represents a particular ideology, character, and psychology. As an employer and supporter of the art tradition, the church, due to the impact of the Reformation movement, had to change the compulsory ascetic preaching to a more beautiful and spiritual realistic art to resist the faith crisis brought by the reformation. That's why baroque architecture, paintings and sculptures are so spectacular and luxurious.

For example, the square colonnade in front of St. Peter's Basilica built for the Pope, Bennini designed the addition of the oval square and arcade with a strange imagination. He used four rows of 280 modified Doric columns to encircle the court, the colonnade stretched out from the church to embrace the square like a mother hugging her child. In a religious sense, these two colonnades are like the two outstretched hands of the Pope to embrace the faithful in his mercy[11].

3.2 It provides good conditions for the formation and growth of art nouveau style

Urban VIII's family did more for the arts during the century than any other group. As previously stated, The Pope's personal preferences and choice of artists had a significant influence on the artistic style of the time and the architecture and decoration of the cities of the future. Religious sponsors, headed by the Pope, give great trust to artists, giving artists freedom in their creation. Hence the very personal, great Baroque artists such as Bernini and Palomino. The artists hired by the Pope and the Church come from all over the country and even abroad, and their arrival brings new styles from all over the country. This allowed artists to communicate and complement each other and facilitated the formation of contemporary styles.

3.3 The social status of artists has been significantly improved

Art received unprecedented attention during the Baroque period, and artists received significant attention and support from the surrounding society. The top artists earned a good income for their artistic talent. These incomes make the lives of artists more comfortable and have an essential marking function, dramatically improves the status of art in the eyes of the world, thus attracting more people to join the ranks of art.

In addition, Roman society often accepted artists on their own merits. Some artists were even appointed by popes and Dukes to specific religious or political positions in social life and given certain titles. For example, Giuseppe Ghezzi, for his excellent breeding, Pope Clement XI gave him an ordination in St. Peter's Church. The practice of bestowing titles on artists began in the last years of the 16th century. By the middle of the 17th century, it was widespread[12].

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR MODERN ART INVESTORS

4.1 The advantages and disadvantages of art patronage in the Baroque period

Baroque art patrons, especially religious ones, were often willing to spend large sums of money on promising artists[13]. This allowed the artists who were sponsored and favoured by the upper class to devote more time to artistic creation without caring about the cost of composition and the pressure of life. As a result, the artists left more works behind. For art sponsors, through art sponsorship, they can obtain artworks in line with their aesthetics and get fame and prestige. The artist and the artwork created by the artist become the name card of the patron of the arts, and the quality of the painting becomes synonymous with the patron's reputation and honour. During this period, the relationship between art patrons and artists was unbreakable and mutually beneficial. At the same time, the strong support of art sponsors to artists has also attracted more people to the arts and promoted the development of the arts industry.

However, religious sponsorship of art from the Baroque period is undoubtedly a significant limitation to artists. The idea that the art patron wants to express will be displayed in the artwork, which significantly occupies the space that the artist himself thinks to show. When artists lose their inspiration, they become artisans who produce works of art. In terms of art, art and the artist's status, before the opening of the art market and art patron artists and artisans ordinary are usually regarded as manual labourers, they often only pay attention to the subject and content of art, despise even artists, and to a great extent, limits the originality and individuality of the artistic creation of artists, the artist's status and personal

value Not yet recognized and valued. If the arts become a hall of art patrons, it is undoubtedly stifling the creativity of artists. And it has led to more commodification of art.

To sum up, to obtain long-term and stable artistic sponsorship, some artists will complete their works according to the requirements of their sponsors, but it is undeniable that artists do get great help from it.

4.2 Implications for art investors

The form of art sponsorship has also changed since the Baroque period. Although large authoritative organizations like the Catholic Church sponsor the arts, small groups that use crowdfunding are also essential for the arts sponsorship field. Even in the face of such a patronage group where more than one person has the right to speak, such as between Pope Urban VIII and Bernini in the Baroque period, the mutually beneficial art patronage form between artists and art patrons still has a vital reference significance.

The rapid development of the Internet and real-time entertainment models have opened up more possibilities for arts sponsorship. As people move into a fast-paced life, the art investment sector faces the challenge of finding new directions and strategies for the post-digital world[14]. In modern times, with the amount of information everyone receives every day increasing dramatically, it is often difficult to concentrate on a single work of art for long periods. Therefore, in addition to the aesthetic significance, the economic importance of artworks has become particularly important. An expensive piece of art often attracts the attention of art patrons more than a cheap one, and high-minded works of art gradually fade out of people's lives. Thus, it can be seen that it is not only art sponsors that influence artists' creation, but also audiences of artworks gradually play an essential role.

To obtain higher returns from art investment, modern art investors gradually fade from the role of the dominant art, and they invest in art through the mastery of the market and the cognition of the general aesthetic[15]. The most significant difference between the Catholic patronage of art in the Baroque period and the patronage of modern art patrons is that art has changed from one person to many, and the authoritarian nature of art patronage has declined. Therefore, the influence of art sponsors on the content of artworks gradually weakens. Modern art sponsors no longer have an environment for artistic creation centred on an individual's artistic aesthetics, and artists gain more creative freedom.

Despite this, patrons of the arts still play an essential role in the arts. Through the Catholic sponsorship of art in the Baroque period, we can get the following four inspirations: First, the artistic aesthetics of art investors have a significant influence on the creation of artworks,

and top art investors often lead the trend of artistic aesthetics in the whole era. Secondly, effective promotion and good art publicity can bring higher feedback to art investors. Third, excavating artists in their hometown can support the art in their hometown and promote the exchange and development of trans-regional art. Finally, the art sponsorship mechanism should be improved to prevent the art sponsorship monopoly by enhancing the art sponsorship system and strengthening the market management. Thus mobilizing the creative enthusiasm of artists and maintaining the stability of the art market.

5. CONCLUSION

The art sponsorship in the Baroque period provided a suitable environment for artists to create. Although patrons and artistic creation restricted artists were no longer centred on the artist, art was better developed. In the face of the development of the Internet industry and the new challenges it brings to patrons of the arts, reference has become an excellent solution to the problem. People can often learn from the experience of their predecessors to deal with possible problems in the future. The patronage of the arts by past patrons is a lesson for modern investors. The religious sponsorship of art in the Baroque period, especially the unique way centred on the Pope and his relatives and friends, has a good reference value for modern art sponsors and organizations. It is hoped that the study and reference of religious art sponsorship in the Baroque period can promote the development of art to a better level and better promote the mutual benefit of art sponsors and artists.

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