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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

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Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Pammer, M. (1994). Modeling religion: bureaucratic reform and the transformation of popular piety in the 18th century. *Historical Social Research*, 19(4), 4-25. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.19.1994.4.4-25>

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Modeling Religion: Bureaucratic Reform and the Transformation of Popular Piety in the 18th Century

*Michael Pammer**

Abstract: From 1750 to 1790 the Theresian and the Josephinian governments of Austria tried to transform the religious life in the Habsburg lands from the traditional baroque piety to a Reformed Catholicism. This paper examines the reactions of the population to these administrative reforms and its ideological elements. It is based on testaments, a common source in the research on popular piety since the 1960s. The multivariate analysis shows that there was a far-reaching turning away from the baroque forms of piety in the whole population. The changes in the testaments began gingerly in the 1770s, were fastest in the 1780s, and ended in the 1790s. As these changes in the sources indicate a transformation of the mentality 30-40 years before, the whole development cannot simply be seen as a transfer of attitudes from an enlightened elite to the masses, but rather as an autonomous process of debaroquization in a country where the counter-reformation had been highly successful in the 17th century.

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The model presented in this paper was calculated using data gained originally for my dissertation at the Universität Salzburg (Pammer, *Glaubensabfall und Wahre Andacht*). The results of the dissertation are based on simpler statistical procedures; first reflections on a complex model were presented in the course of the ZHSF-Herbstseminar 1992 on *Structural Relationship Models*, held by Helmut Giegler from the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. I should like to thank also Jürgen Sensch (ZA-ZHSF) for his helpful comments.

1. Introduction: Bureaucratic Reform and Religion

»Wenn hernach der Eifer der Prediger so nützlich, so löblich, und so nothwendig ist, um das Volk in denjenigen Sachen, welche die christliche Sittenlehre betrifft, außer Irrthum zu setzen, und ihnen die Sünden und Laster zu erkennen zu geben: warum soll denn dieser Eifer sich nicht auch dahin und soweit erstrecken dürfen, den Irrthum so vieler eiteln Meynungen, und der falschen Andacht zu entdecken? Da diese dem Christen schädlich sind, und ihn zurückhalten, daß er sich nicht der gründlichen, wesentlichen, und notwendigen Andacht ergiebt, so ist es wohl höchst nöthig, daß man die Glaubigen in ihren Pflichten wohl unterweise, daran ermahne, und ihren Irrthum benehme«.

Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672-1750), writer of the Italian enlightenment, was perhaps one of the most important authors of popular religious literature in the 18th century, and certainly the best known in Austria's philosophical century. His ideas have left their traces in one of the most radical attempts to modernize a country: With respect of church, religion and piety, the great reform programs of Maria Theresa (1740-1780) and Joseph II (1780-1790) bear the signs of Muratori's and his successors' ideas of Reform Catholicism¹.

In this paper I won't discuss the many other elements, included in the reform program of the Habsburg governments after 1750: the centralization of the civil government, the codification of the civil and the penal laws, the reorganization of the trade regulations and of the tax system, the reform of the educational system, the abolishment of bondage, and so forth. The government invested large efforts into such great and really decisive problems, and in a lot of small and practically unimportant matters as well.

One of the crucial questions, however, was church reformation². The reform of the ecclesiastical matters gained its importance from connections to other fields of government and public life:

- The ecclesiastical structures were to fulfill a lot of tasks which were attributed to the church only accidentally and for practical reasons.
- Austrian Reform Catholicism is a mirror of the ideology of appropriate behavior and morality which was obligatory for the reforming bureaucracy.

¹ Muratori, *Die Wahre Andacht des Christen*, pp. 299-300.

² For Muratori see Zlabinger, *Lodovico Antonio Muratori*. - Wandruszka, »Die katholische Aufklärung Italiens«.

³ The classical works on Josephinism regarded the relations between the state and the church as the central elements of the Josephinian system (which brought forth long and intense polemics); see Maaß, *Der Josephinismus'*, Valjavec, *Der Josephinismus*; Winter, *Der Josephinismus*. Today the discussion has cooled down; as typical pieces among many others, see Kovács, »Burgundisches und theresianisch-josephinisches Staatskirchensystem«; Frank, »Zum spätmittelalterlichen und josephinischen Kirchenverständnis«.

The first point can be illustrated best by the newly defined role of the church and the clergy in public life. The *ancien regime*, lacking an efficient local administration directed by the prince or his authorities, had to look for possibilities to organize such an administration in the simplest way. Joseph II failed in his attempt to transform the local administration of the cities and the seigneuries, which had worked relatively independently until then, into centrally directed institutions. The attempt to make somewhat similar use of the ecclesiastical institutions was successful, however.

The problem to be solved was to create a really consistent (to use a contemporary term) public ecclesiastical organization'. As some bishops had their seats abroad, the government created new, purely domestic dioceses, and the foreign bishops (like the bishop of Passau) lost their authority in the Habsburg lands. The bishops were nominated by the prince, anyway - the Pope could only confirm the act. The territorial division of the church was changed on a lower level, too: The Josephinian government divided large parishes into two or even more new parishes with smaller area and smaller population, and many parishes were endowed with additional priests. The means necessary to finance these measures were taken from many monasteries which were dissolved in that time (most of them in the seventeen-eighties)⁴. All these reforms were intended to strengthen the relationship between the Catholic population and the clergy. This relationship was not to be only of a spiritual nature: The priests had to care for the physical welfare of their parishioners as well as for their souls, they had to preach new laws as well as the Bible and the Early Fathers, and their sermons included not only the essence of the new piety, but also information about new methods of agriculture and of health care. The parishes became the base of a rudimentary social system: The old confraternities⁵ were transformed into *Armeninstitute* (*Institutes for the Poor* which distributed small reliefs among the poorest part of the population), which were located in the parishes⁶. The education of the priests was regulated by the government, too: Candidates for ordination had to go to seminaries which were created and upheld by the government; monasteries which had educated their priests on their own until then, were forbidden to continue doing so.

⁴ For the case of Upper Austria discussed here, see Ferihumer, *Die kirchliche Gliederung des Landes ob der Enns*, passim.

⁵ The confraternities were associations of laics which had primarily liturgical functions, among others in the care for strangers in the form of charity or by providing a good interment and prayers for them; organizations of that type had been created from the 13th century on. *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, Vol. 2, col. 720. - The confraternities were rejected by Reform Catholics because of their assumed uselessness; their property was transferred to the *Armeninstitut*. For further details see Pammer, *Glaubensabfall und Wahre Andacht*, pp. 202-204.

⁶ In some respects the parishes were used as a base for the primary school system, too. See Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung*, pp. 42-61.

In part these administrative reforms were linked to the new religious preferences of the most important bureaucrats and many eminent figures in the clergy. The dominant parts of these groups left the way of baroque piety, a way built by the Catholic reform in the 16th century and maintained by the counter-reformation of the Habsburg governments in the 17th century. The hallmarks of baroque piety⁷ were the importance of strong sensuous experiences in religious life, and the enforcement of pious emotions, and the internalization of religious truths by theatrical elements in the religious performance: The baroque was the time of the veneration of the saints, of pilgrimage, of impressive success of the religious orders, and of a rich repertoire of pious spectacles on the great holidays of the year. It was a time of contrast, ostentation and expressionism.

The new Reform Catholicism regarded many of these elements as shallow and accidental. Reason, morality and spiritualization should be the leading principles of a purified Catholicism. The inner experience of religion should not be obtained by ecstatic and spectacular exercises, but by quiet emotion, careful reflection and restriction to the essential parts of the gospel. While baroque piety addressed the five senses, Reform Catholicism was directed to the heart. Reform Catholics distinguished between true devotion (*Wahre Andacht*) and pseudo-devotion (*Anddchteley*), as they distinguished between the true poor and audacious beggars, between venerable parsons and lazy monks.

2. Elites and Popular Piety

The conjunctures of religious attitudes in the elite can be described as follows: Until the 1750s baroque piety dominated among bureaucrats and the clergy. From the fifties on, the Theresian government introduced a series of reforms which can be classified as Reform Catholic. An important school of thought among the more prominent Catholics in the Habsburg lands was Jansenism which can be regarded as the most uncompromising anti-Jesuit movement in Catholicism in that time⁸: Antimolinistic⁹, morally rigorous, restricted to the Bible and the patristic works, with emphasis on the sacraments (i.e., on rare and fearful Eucharist, but on frequent confession), ascetic in everyday life as well as in artistic taste - Jansenism gained much weight in the sixties and the seventies. In the Josephinian decade (1780-90) Jansenism stepped back in favour of a friendlier kind of reform-orientated Catholicism, which stressed love

⁷ A classical book on that subject and still worth reading is Veit/Lenhart, *Kirche und Volksfrömmigkeit*.

⁸ Peter Hersche has done a lot of detailed research on the Austrian Jansenism, e.g., in *Der Spätjansenismus in Österreich*; see also Wagner, »Der Einfluß von Gallikanismus und Jansenismus«.

⁹ Molinistic thought (after Luis de Molina, 1535-1600) conceded man to a certain degree the possibility to obtain the mercy of God by his own efforts.

of God instead of fear of Him, had a certain religious-sensitive feeling for nature, and rejected dogmatic subtleties and quarrels¹⁰; those Reform Catholics preferred an approach to the truths of faith which was conducted by way of comprehension and persuasion, and they were propagators of religious toleration. The hectic Josephinian decade was the period in which the fever of reform rose to its peak also *in publico-ecclesiasticis*. The new religious attitudes seem to have survived at least in the first decades of Franz II/I who, however reactionary in matters of political participation, continued the way of his predecessors with respect to many concrete matters and upheld most of their regulations *in publico ecclesiasticis*. Thus the course of religious policy and of the behavior of the elites can be shown approximately in a dualistic scheme (Graph 1). How did these changes in the mentality of an elite correspond with the contemporary mass piety¹¹?

It is a fact that the Josephinian authorities issued a flood of decrees concerning religious matters and questions of everyday piety; undoubtedly they tried to alter certain attitudes of the people. Considering the most extensive theories on popular culture in Early Modern History, we have to doubt whether they were successful: Peter Burke, e.g., states that the reforms initiated in many countries and in many fields of culture in the 18th century addressed the whole population, but they influenced the educated minority faster and more radical than the rest, and separated the two groups from each other¹². Robert Muchembled, little disturbed by problems of empirical verification, believes that an independent and characteristic tradition of pre-tridentine popular culture persisted (more or less hidden, according to the extent of political pressure) until the 19th century; according to Muchembled, it comprised a great part of the population, whereas up to one third had internalized the post-tridentine reforms, and only a very thin layer was attached to the culture of enlightenment¹³. Wolfgang Kaschuba presumes a strong, although hidden, ambiguous, and non-quantifiable resistance of the population against the broad range of bureaucratic reforms in Germany¹⁴. For the religious reformation in the 18th century, Christof Dipper states that the efforts of the authorities amounted to nothing with respect to the mentality of the masses¹⁵. And Richard van Dülmen thinks that the Catholic reform movement in the second half of the 18th century had not even been convincing for the leading representatives of society and the state (!) and, above all, not for the masses either¹⁶.

¹⁰ Wangermann, *Aufklärung und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung*, p. 12.

¹¹ For a good overview on problems of the research on popular piety see Schreiner, »Laienfrömmigkeit«.

¹² Burke, *Helden, Schurken und Narren*, p. 256 and passim.

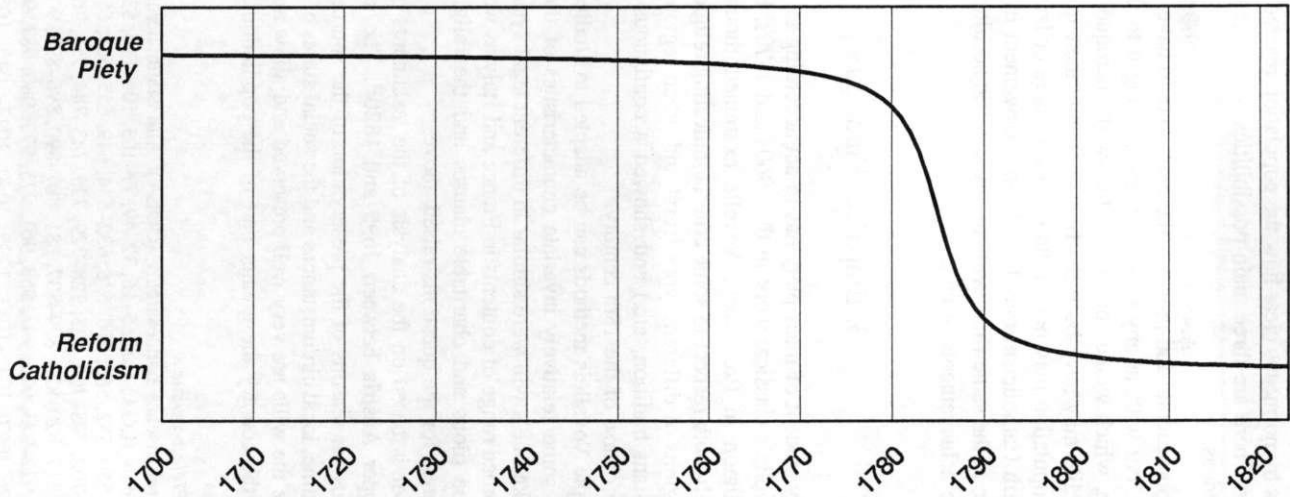
¹³ Muchembled, *Kultur des Volkes*, pp. 296-298. A readable comment on some basic assumptions of Muchembled and other authors is Wirth, »Against the Acculturation Thesis«.

¹⁴ Kaschuba, *Volkskultur*, p. 102.

¹⁵ Dipper, »Volksreligiosität und Obrigkeit«, p. 92.

¹⁶ Van Dülmen, »Antijesuitismus«, p. 158.

Graph 1



Thus it is by no means clear how the population reacted to the efforts of the government. There are three main possibilities for a spreading of the Reform Catholics' ideas:

- (i) The bureaucrats and priests - the elite - could have found a new way of piety, but without any success in transferring it to the rest of the population, which would continue to follow the baroque practice.
- (ii) The elite may have been the first to change their minds, and the rest of the population may have followed them more or less hesitantly.
- (iii) Reform Catholicism may have been a movement in the population as a whole at the same time, without any specific acculturation of the masses to the achievements of an elite.

3. Empirical Findings

Today every student of mass piety has to act according to the standards set by Michel Vovelle's classical work in the 1960s and 1970s. In his great book on popular religion in Provence¹⁷, Vovelle examined thousands of testaments quantitatively with respect to some criteria indicating religion. He distinguished between regions of different types (rural and urban regions, regions with specific Protestant tradition, etc.) and showed a continuous decline of baroque piety in the course of the 18th century.

In principle Vovelle's methods can be adapted to studies on other countries because of some relatively invariable characteristics of the wills: The formal rules to make one's will were similar in different legal systems, and testaments showed a broad range of contents in France and Italy as well as in Bavaria and Austria. The pious and charitable clauses and the religious rhetoric are of special interest for the questions raised above.

This paper is based on the analysis of the testaments of 2828 people who died in Upper Austria between 1695 and 1820¹⁸. The sample is somewhat heterogenous for reasons of the preservation of the sources, which differs according to time, local circumstances and the social status of the deceased: In the city of Linz the wills are very well preserved and allow analyses for all social classes; in the country the greater part of the population is documented only

¹⁷ Vovelle, *Piété baroque*.

¹⁸ Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv (OÖLA): Alte Statthaltereifasz. 1-17; Landesgerichtsarchiv (LGA) Fasz. 5-16, 32r-49, 77-103, 106-110, 530, 532, 533-535, 540, 543_544, 550-552, 565, 606, 626, 632-634, 649, 655, 663, 667, 673, 683, 685-686, 697-698, 702, 708-709, 725, 728-729, 735, 743-744, 751, 769-771, 796-797, 800, 802, 812, 817, 820, 823, 829-837, 881, 887-890, 896-897, 905-906, 908, 911-912, 917-918, 922^923, 925, 947, 958, 961, 973, 977, 980, 987, 993, 1006-1007, 1015, 1020, 1026-1027, 1032-1033, 1035, 1040, 1043-1045, 1050-1058, 1074, 1082, 1084, 1092, 1102, 1116, 1128, 1130, 1140, 1150, 1152, 1156, 1167, 1173.

from 1780 on; the testaments of persons of nobility, priests, and officials of all ranks are preserved, regardless of their residence¹⁹.

The testaments contain two main groups of indicators of the religious disposition of their authors:

- Rhetorical declarations about religious subjects, for instance about God, the hereafter, the angels and the saints;
- monetary dispositions, i.e. pious legacies concerning Masses for the dead²⁰, prayers²¹, works of charity²², confraternities, religious orders and parishes.

The sometimes very detailed wishes concerning funerals are interesting in the religious context, too, because they show the preferences for ostentation or discretion and for pomp or modesty, respectively.

Neither rhetorical declarations nor monetary dispositions can simply be interpreted as unequivocal expressions of the kind of piety that the testators had internalized - religious behavior is as well an answer to the demands of one's social status and self-representation. That need not be a drawback: A society, too, is characterized by its conventions and by what determines the status of its members. We should only be aware that the acts being observed in the testaments cannot be interpreted as individual acts, but only as expressions of collective attitudes.

To test the above hypotheses (i)-(iii), we have to observe the general pattern of changes in the indicators over time. As we cannot expect a uniform change *a priori* in the whole population, we will have to examine the significance of social and economic factors; some of these factors are reflected by the sources examined, i.e., by the testaments and by the probate inventories which

¹⁹ The reason for this difference is the different jurisdiction for the last three groups: While all other inhabitants were subject to a local jurisdiction, the cases of persons of nobility, priests, and officials were administered in a central court which preserved its acts better than most local authorities.

²⁰ Masses for the dead are Masses said for certain defuncts to shorten their time to pass with purgatory. This view was common among Catholics with the exception of Jansenists, who refused private Masses and thus the normal form of Masses for the dead in that time (Hersche, »Der österreichische Spätjansenismus«, pp. 189-190). Other Reform Catholics accepted Masses for the dead on principle, but refused the excessive practices which were typical for the baroque type - in the case of the most enthusiastic testators of Upper Austria, e.g., the amount of legacies dedicated for that purpose rose up to an equivalent of nearly 20.000 Masses for one person. OÖLA LGA 10 (Landeshauptmannschaft), A I 229; OÖLA LGA 32 (Landrecht), A I 27.

²¹ Prayers were the second way to help a person in purgatory. Prayers could be (and were, in most cases) voluntary, but in many cases the testators prepared for organized prayers said by poor people who were paid for that service.

²² Works of charity were an important and integrative part of piety for all Catholics. The differences lay in the question of who should be the receiver of the pious gift: Traditional charity based on private distribution and on poorhouses, whereas the Josephinian bureaucracy and Reform Catholic authors preferred centrally directed institutions, like the *Armeninstitut* or the new hospitals erected from the 1740s on.

were produced on occasion of the distribution of the deceased's property²³: The inventories show his patrimonial status, and in the course of the procedure some other interesting items were mentioned and recorded. Thus we dispose of data about the residences, the professions, the education and the marital status in many cases.

In this paper I won't present all the basic analyses of univariate distributions and pairwise relations which normally precede die tests of more complex models²⁴, but rather turn to such a complex model immediately.

The model was estimated using the LISREL (*Linear Structural Relationships*) computer program which was designed to handle a problem which is very common in the social sciences: Many theories in the social sciences are formulated in terms of theoretical concepts which are not directly measurable or observable. Baroque piety or Reform Catholicism, e.g., are constructs which cannot be observed directly - they are latent variables which are to be measured by observed indicator variables.

Thus the LISREL model, in its most general form, consists of two parts: the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model specifies how the latent variables are measured in terms of the observed variables, and it describes the measurement properties (validities and reliabilities) of the observed variables. The structural equation model specifies the causal relationships among the latent variables and describes the causal effects and the amount of unexplained variance.

The general LISREL model covers a great variety of models, including confirmatory factor analyses and recursive as well as nonrecursive path models in very flexible forms. A structural equation can include a »latent« variable which is identical with a single observed variable, as well as a latent variable which is based on a set of observed variables. The model presented here is an example for this constellation: The dependent and independent variables in the structural equation are identical with single observed variables, respectively, except one dependent variable which is measured by ten observed variables.

First, I shall discuss the relations between the dependent variables, then the relations between the independent and the dependent variables.

3.1 Data to Be Explained

There are six dependent variables to be explained in the model, one of them latent and five directly observed:

²³ In most cases the probate inventories and the respective testaments were archived together, in other cases the testaments were stored apart. In some cases the inventories were lost.

²⁴ Some results of that kind are presented in Pammer, *Glaubensabfall und Wahre Andacht*.

Table 1: Factor loadings of the variables to be explained on the observed variables (standardized solution) (values in parentheses: standard errors)

Observed Variables	Variables to be explained in the model					
	(a) Baroque Mentality	(b) Orders/ Parishes	(c) Mass Costs	(d) Profane Rhetoric	(e) Costs of Funeral	(f) Grave in the Church
God	.816 (.000)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Saints	.613 (.023)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Mary	.731 (.022)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Angels	.430 (.023)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Hereafter	.746 (.020)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Repentance	.388 (.022)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Mass Program	.597 (.022)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Charity	.546 (.022)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Baroque Funeral	.454 (.022)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Vanity	.597 (.020)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Orders/Parishes	. . .	1.000 (.000)	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Mass Costs	. . .	. . .	1.000 (.000)	. . .	. . .	. . .
Profane Rhetoric	. . .	. . .	. . .	1.000 (.000)	. . .	. . .
Costs of Funeral	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	1.000 (.000)	. . .
Grave in the Church	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	1.000 (.000)

- a. The most important variable for our question of the persistence of baroque attitudes is *baroque mentality*. It is not directly observed, but a common factor in a lot of indicators (*Table 7, col a*). Seven of them are concerning the religious rhetoric of the wills: *God* means the differentiation of the idea of God, i.e., the number of the attributes given to God (e.g., *Father, merciful, punishing God* etc.); *saints, Mary, angels* and *hereafter* correspond to the respective differentiation of the ideas which people had of those inhabitants of heaven, and of the conception of heaven itself; *repentance* means the different declarations of remorse at the sins committed in life; and *vanity* is a collection of statements of weariness and disgust of the world.

Mass program is connected to the procedure in the examination of the wills: A testator could order Masses for his salvation, fixing a certain sum to be paid and leaving the details to his heirs; or, he could fix the sum, the churches, the altars and the days, where and when the Masses should be said; he could nominate the priests who should take over this office, and so on. In the recording of the data every legacy of that kind, showing any difference to other Mass legacies was recorded separately; *Mass program* is the total number of those legacies.

Charity concerns the legacies for special traditional institutions for sick and poor people and for orphans: Poorhouses, orphanages, hospitals and traditional public funds for poor people were four kinds of institutions which could receive legacies and which were drawn into attention here. *Charity* is the number of the categories for which we have positive answers.

Baroque funeral is similar to *Mass program* in the way that it measures the number of special orders concerning the funeral, e.g. instructions for the music to be played, or the desire for things like palls or funeral wreaths.

Theoretically there are no upper limits for the values of *God, saints, Mary, angels, hereafter, repentance, vanity, Mass program* and *baroque funeral*, *charity* has a range from 0 to 4. It should be stressed that all these variables do not measure the amount of expenses fixed by the testators: As a testator could introduce specific instructions for every single Mass, a differentiated Mass program could be quite cheap; and *charity* does not measure the amount of the sum donated to the institutions named above, but the number of institutions named.

As we can see, all these variables are closely related, reaching values from 0.39 to 0.82 in the measurement model (*Table 1, col a*). The common factor inherent in these indicators can be interpreted as the tendency to baroque rituals and forms: Excessive rhetoric, extravagant Mass programs, pre-modern forms of charity, and spectacular funerals were typical of the baroque culture and were rejected by Reform Catholics.

- b. Perhaps the best indicator of the specific reaction of the population to the administrative reforms is the attitude towards parishes and orders. The pre-

ference for either of them can be shown in some indicators, the best of which are the legacies for Masses for the dead. *Order si parishes* indicates the portion of Masses in monasteries (on the basis of all Masses, allocated either in parishes or in monasteries) (*Table 7, col b*). Thus this variable has a range of 0 to 1, with missing values for all testaments without any legacies for that purpose.

- c. As I have remarked above, the variable *Mass program* does not measure the costs of the Masses desired by the testators. But, of course, there were differences in the costs (i.e. the number) of Masses fixed in the testaments. *Mass costs* measures these costs, expressed in the Austrian currency of that time, the gulden (*Table 7, col c*).
- d. *Profane rhetoric* shall be a corrective for a fundamental mis-interpretation of the testaments as sources of religious history (*Table 1, col d*). We cannot exclude *a priori* the possibility of a change in the testament as such in the course of the 18th century: There might have been a turning away from the baroque exuberance in the formulation of wills, a change which would have had nothing to do with religious matters. It would be highly probable that religious expressions would suffer from such a formal juristic change, too. To test the importance of those effects, I have introduced the variable *profane rhetoric* which measures the number of profane and juristic formulae appearing in the texts; these formulae were very common in spite of their limited relevance²⁵.
- e. The costs of the funeral which are not expressed in *baroque funeral* appear in a separate variable (*Table 1, col e*).
- f. There were some alternatives to choose one's grave site. The typical baroque site was inside the church, which was not entirely reserved for rich people. The Josephinian government tried to limit the possibilities of graves in churches and allowed them only under special conditions. Thus the desire to find one's burial site in the church, expressed by the testators, indicates a backward-orientated mentality, and is measured by the variable *grave in the church* (*Table 1, col f*).

Not surprisingly, there are some significant relations between these six variables. *Baroque mentality* has direct effects on the costs of Masses and funerals, and on the burial site (*Table 2*): The diminishing importance of baroque attitudes lowered not only the variety of Mass programs, but the amount of Mass costs, too. Baroque funerals were more expensive than the modest Reform Catholic funerals; and the desire for graves in churches grew uncommonly in

²⁵ These formulae state obvious things, like the testator's reservation to alter his will, and are unnecessary under juristic aspects. An exception are some formulae in oral testaments which were recorded by witnesses afterwards (for instance the formula »*The testator is of sound mind*«).

the time of the baroque decline. Besides this common influence exercised by *baroque mentality*, the choice of one's burial site and the costs of the funerals are connected to each other autonomously; this correlation of 17% is relatively small and leads to complementary explanations of the indicators concerning the funerals.

*Table 2: Causal effects of baroque mentality
on the other dependent variables
(standardized solution)
(values in parentheses: standard errors)*

	Baroque Mentality	
Orders/Parishes	.	.
Mass Costs	.267	(.022)
Profane Rhetoric	.	.
Costs of Funeral	.240	(.019)
Grave in the Church	.314	(.020)

3.2 The Independent Variables

A somewhat changed model which shall not be presented here in detail shows a common factor in the two indicators *costs of funeral* and *grave in the church*. But in that model there appear relatively large residuals in the calculation of the relation between one's property and one's tendency to a certain form of the funeral. Thus the culture of the funerals is only to a limited degree an integrative part of the baroque culture. The intervening factors are a specific culture of the nobility and the property: Persons of nobility tended to spend more for their funerals than common people, and it was more likely that they were buried in a church instead of a churchyard; the two effects are not of much impact (*Table 3, col b*). The patrimonial status (*Table 3, col c*) had a stronger effect (0.44) on the costs of the funerals: Richer people spent more for their burial; but property had no effect at all on the grave site - people who were just rich, lay where everybody lay²⁶. Thus it is preferable to treat the funerals separately from the rest of the baroque culture observable in the wills.

²⁶ The choice of one's burial site is determined by the baroque culture and the culture of the nobility to an extent of 24%; the costs of the funerals are determined by the same two variables, combined with the patrimonial status, to 43%.

Table 3: Effects of the independent variables (a) to (e) on the variables to be explained (standardized solution) (values in parentheses: standard errors)

Variables to be explained	(a) Time _r	(b) Nobility	(c) Property	(d) Oral Will	(e) Holographic Will
Baroque Mentality	-.662 (.014)	. .	.156 (.012)	-.247 (.015)	. .
Orders/Parishes	-.647 (.019)	. .	. .	. .	. .
Mass Costs	. .	. .	.277 (.021)	. .	. .
Profane Rhetoric	-.297 (.019)	. .	. .	-.205 (.019)	-.143 (.019)
Costs of Funeral	. .	.217 (.018)	.437 (.019)	. .	. .
Grave in the Church	. .	.301 (.019)	. .	. .	. .

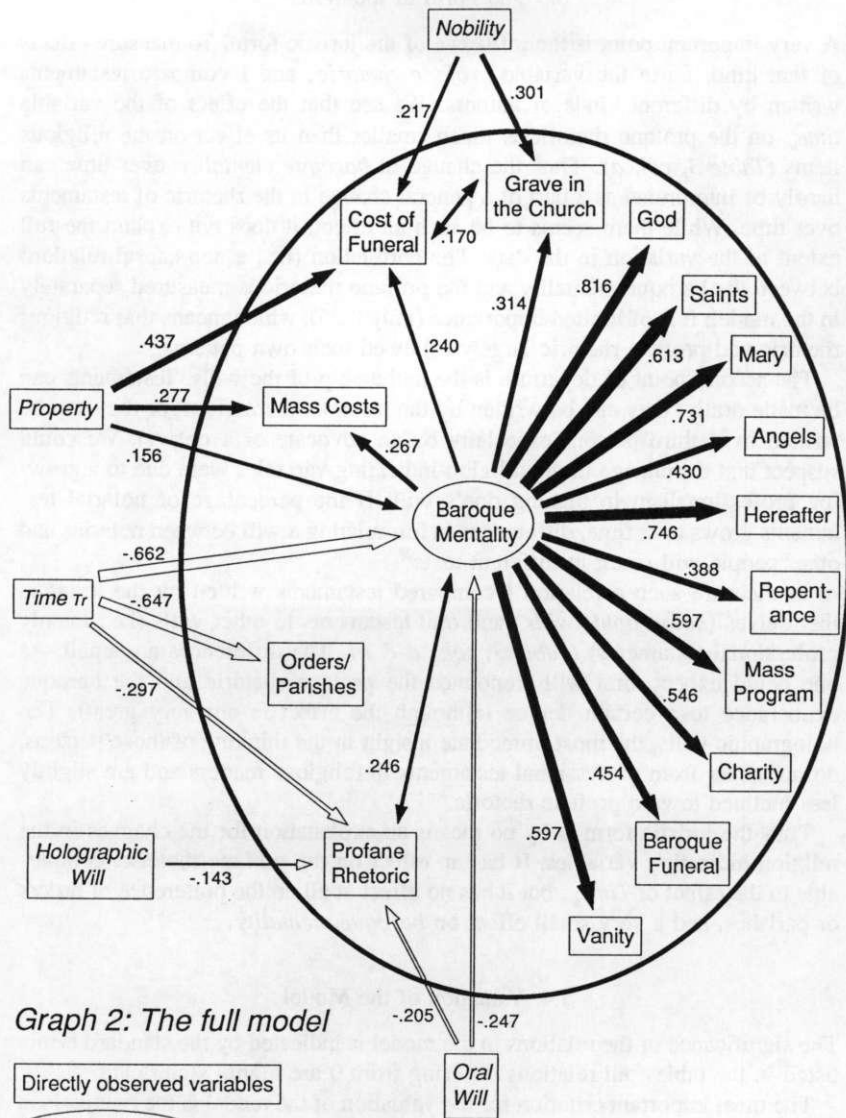
We can identify one factor which determines the change in baroque mentality to a large extent. The factor *time*, transformed according to the conjunctures of religious attitudes²⁷, has by far the strongest effect on the variable *baroque mentality* (Table 3, col a). The impact of *property* on the same variable is very small (though significant) (Table 3, col c), and the effect of the juristic form of the will is small and will be discussed below. The preference for orders or parishes depends on *time*, to a similar extent (Table 3, col a). Thus the baroque mentality and the attitude towards crucial points of the administrative reform are determined by *time*, to an extent of 44% and 42%, respectively; drawing the other independent variables into consideration, too, *baroque mentality* is determined to 59% (the coefficient of determination for *orders/parishes* in the whole model remains 42% because *time* is the only variable influencing it).

Mass costs, a variable which is influenced by *baroque mentality* (Table 2), is influenced to the same degree by the patrimonial status (Table 3, col c) - a result, not unexpected at all, though this effect (0.28) is not very large. It should be stressed that there are a lot of parameters which are interesting, not for the large values of the effects they describe, but rather for the small or non-existing relations they show. Some of the variables concerned are not represented in the tables because they are of no relevance at all in the model (i.e., all their effects on the dependent variables are assumed to be 0, without any unfavourable implication for the fit of the model): *Sex* and *age* were part of the model discussed here; all possible effects on the dependent variables were fixed as 0. Thus it is of no importance for the result whether a testator was a man or a woman, and the age had no independent effect either.

²⁷ Normally time has no linear relationship to historical phenomena. In our case we cannot assume that the baroque mentality diminished at a constant rate. Following hypotheses (i) to (iii), we should expect a fast change in the 1780s, and a slow change before and afterwards. Approximately this process, graphically expressed in *Graph 1*, can be numerically specified by the following transformation of the time axis:

$$\text{Time}_t = \arctan \left[\frac{33 * (1785 - t)}{100} \right]$$

where *t* is the year of death and 1785 represents the center of the period of fastest change. The exact value of the gradient, here 33/100, is of minor importance for the result, and could be 25/100 as well as 50/100 or any value between (33 would have pleased Roman Catholics of the 18th century for symbolic reasons, so I decided for it). For the transformation of the time axis I am indebted to Roland Takacs of the Department of Mathematics of the Johannes Kepler Universität Linz.



Graph 2: The full model

3.3 The Form of the Wills

A very important point is the influence of the juristic form. To measure effects of that kind, I use the variable *profane rhetoric*, and I compare testaments written by different kinds of authors: We see that the effect of the variable *time_n* on the profane rhetoric is much smaller than its effect on the religious items (*Table 3, col a*). Thus the change in *baroque mentality* over time can hardly be interpreted as a part of a general change in the rhetoric of testaments over time. While there seems to be such an effect, it does not explain the full extent of the variation in the data: The correlation (i.e., a non-causal relation) between the baroque mentality and the profane rhetoric is measured separately in the model; it is of limited importance (only 0.25), which means that religious rhetoric and profane rhetoric largely followed their own patterns.

The second point of departure is the authorship of the wills. Testaments can be made orally, they can be written by the testators themselves, or they can be written by a third person (especially by an advocate or a notary). We could suspect that the change in the religion-indicating variables were due to a growing professionalism in making one's will: If the percentage of notarial testaments grows over time, differences in formulating a will between notaries and other people will result in different texts²⁸.

To measure such a relation I compared testaments written by the testators themselves (*holographic wills*) and oral testaments to other wills (i.e., mainly professional testaments) (*Table 3, cols, d & e*). The differences are small: As one could expect, oral wills renounce the profane rhetoric and the baroque exuberance to a certain degree (although the effect is not very great). The holographic wills, the most immediate insight in the thinking of those persons, do not differ from professional testaments in religious matters and are slightly less inclined toward profane rhetoric.

Thus the juristic form is by no means an explanation for the changes in the religion-indicating variables. It has an effect on the profane rhetoric, comparable to the effect of *Time_n*, but it has no effect at all on the preference of orders or parishes, and a very small effect on *baroque mentality*.

3.4. Valuation of the Model

The significance of the relations in the model is indicated by the standard errors listed in the tables; all relations differing from 0 are highly significant.

The most important criterion for the valuation of the model is the comparison of the original correlation matrix, to a matrix, calculated on the basis of the estimated values in the model. The correlation matrix contains about 250 values; due to the large sample, we find a number of significant residuals: Six of

²⁸ This explanation was suggested by Professor G. Walter-Klingenstein from the Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz.

them are larger than 10% (the correlation between *vanity* and *profane rhetoric*, being 47.7% in the original matrix, is calculated as being 29.3% - the largest residual); most of the significant residuals are lying in the range of a difference of 2 - 7% to the matrix to be analyzed, and by far the most residuals are not even significant. As these residuals are not very large compared to the strength of the relations in the model, and as there is no clear pattern in the occurrence of the residuals (which could suggest a modification of the model), we attach no theoretical implications to them²⁹.

4. Conclusions

Now, what was that *time*, that changed the religious preferences of the people in Upper Austria in the 18th century? It was certainly a factor which has nothing to do with hypothesis (i) above: There has been a change in the mentalities of the people, and the baroque practice was not followed in the traditional way at the end of the time considered.

Thus we can abandon hypothesis (i) and decide between hypotheses (ii) and (iii). Was the change in the mentalities the result of an acculturation to the achievements of an elite, or was it reached autonomously? To find an answer, we have to consider chronological circumstances and the possibilities of the mediation of new ideas in the 18th century.

The transformation of the time axis in the model presented here was based on assumptions about the religious conjunctures in Austria in the second half of the 18th century. *Table 4* confirms the identification of the 1780s as the decade of the fastest change in the data. I have chosen six kinds of religious behavior which were a common part of baroque piety, to measure the inclination to religious variation and the preference for baroque rituals: The use of religious rhetoric, the desire for Masses, legacies for orders, legacies for confraternities, legacies for the poor, and legacies for churches. The combination of these activities shows the stronger or weaker preference for baroque piety and Reform Catholicism, respectively. A testator who shows all kinds of religious behavior (i.e., uses the religious rhetoric, and gives legacies for all purposes mentioned) gets the value 6; a testator who shows none gets the value 0. As we see, the mean lay between 3 and 4 until the 1770s, the decade when it slid below 3 for the first time (*Table 4*). The 1780s is the decade which lies halfway to the new era: From the 1790s on the values are only half of the best times before³⁰.

²⁹ This seems to be even more justifiable when we consider the overall fit of the model: The two measures for that purpose, offered by LISREL, the goodness-of-fit index and the adjusted goodness-of-fit index, are independent of the sample size (with a maximum value of 1.00); for the model presented here, GFI is 0.981, and AGFI 0.974, which is a satisfying result.

³⁰ The analysis of the deviations shows that within all decades the values are relatively

Table 4: Realized possibilities of devotion*, mean, by years of death^b (2828 cases)

<i>Year of Death</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Sum</i>
1695-1709	3.22	85
1710-1719	3.61	67
1720-1729	3.31	80
1730-1739	3.46	99
1740-1749	3.28	98
1750-1759	3.06	135
1760-1769	3.08	102
1770-1779	2.96	110
1780-1789	2.17	145
1790-1799	1.70	368
1800-1809	1.72	591
1810-1823	1.33	597
<i>Sum</i>	2.12	2477

* *Possibilities of devotion = Religious rhetoric, Masses for the dead, legacies for orders, legacies for confraternities, legacies for poors, legacies for churches*

^b *Eta = .50852 (Sig. = .0000); missing values: 351*

So we can say that the changes in the testamentary declarations happened at the same time when the administrative reforms were introduced. Does this mean that the changes in the mentality of the people reflected in the wills happened in the same years? Certainly not: Although we do not dispose of data about age in many cases, we can say that more than one third of the persons drawn into the examination were over 70 years old, two thirds were over 60, and less than one fifth were below 50³¹. It is not very likely that persons of 50, 60 or 70 years change their religious preferences in the way described above:

close together: Within every decade 63-81% of the testators are not farther apart than 2 points. Pammer, *Glaubensabfall und Wahre Andacht*, p. 258-261.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45, 262.

According to studies in the psychology of religion, we can presume that normally one's religious formation is completed at an age of 25 to 30 years; this age marks the beginning of a phase of a stable religious creed, which lasts until an age of 65-70 years³². Aged persons tend rather toward an enforced ritualization of piety (e.g., to an enforcement of the baroque practice) than to a deritualized and rationalized religion of the Reform Catholic manner³³. Thus we can conclude that the changes in the data extracted from the testaments indicate in fact a change in the mentalities which happened 30-40 years before, i.e., around 1750.

It is easier to exclude some possible factors which might have caused these changes than to find a clear positive explanation of that process:

- We can exclude more or less all social factors, like professions, property, sex, and the juristic characteristics of the wills, as intervening factors. Religious behavior and piety at a given moment was a highly uniform matter in the whole population of Upper Austria in the 18th century.
- We can exclude the administrative reform as the decisive factor to arouse alterations of mass piety. It cannot be plausibly assumed that the bureaucratic measures of the Theresian and Josephinian governments altered the religious standards of people at the evening of their lives uniformly and without any time lag. The 1780s are more probably the decade when a generation began to die off which had been socialized in religion around 1750, i.e., a long time before the reform-process began to work; at the same time the generation before died out.
- Though we cannot strictly exclude a propagation of Reform Catholic ideas by Jansenistic or other Reform Catholic priests or by enlightened personages, such a process does not gain much probability. The informal means of propagation for new ideas were limited before the 1770s: As a result of the widespread illiteracy in the population, the importance of printed media was by far smaller than the effect of oral forms like sermons. Reform Catholic priests appeared in Upper Austria not before the 1760s (a time when some Jansenistic priests held parishes and Jansenism was encouraged by the bishop of Passau); from that time on Jansenism and the advanced Reform Catholicism were very successful among priests in Upper Austria, however.

It would be too simple to see the whole process as a result of autonomous decisions in the population. But, regarding the common view of popular culture

³² Oser/Gmünder, *Der Mensch*, p. 193-201. - These assumptions seem to be quite common among historians of piety; Hoffman, *Church and Community*, p. 172, e.g., presumes that older testators have kept aloof from recent shifts in religious preferences.

³³ Considering the irrelevance of age as an independent variable, mentioned above, I would suppose that even those possible changes in the old age are very limited.

as a history of increasing regulation by the elites and of self-defense of the people, it should be stressed that religion in the second half of the 18th century was a field of growing pluralism and freer choice of one's way to salvation. The larger the room to move, the higher the probability of motion: It sufficed to end the obligation to baroque piety, to make the people search and find their own ways to other forms of religion¹⁴.

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¹⁴ To simplify matters, I have not stressed the difference between Reform Catholicism and laicism in this paper. Both were possible ways used by the Roman Catholics in Upper Austria who turned away from baroque piety in the space of time considered. For further arguments on this point, see Pammer, *Glaubensabfall und Wahre Andacht*, pp. 273-275.

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HSR was composed by the program *Satz* of *TU STEP* (Tü hingen System of Textprocessing Programs). HSR was printed by **Hundt Druck GmbH (Cologne)**.