

**THE POPE, THE KING AND THE FAMILY. TRIPLE LOYALTY AND DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS OF THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO ANTONIO CAETANI AT THE COURT OF MADRID (1611-1618)**

by Paolo Periatì  
(Ph.D. Università degli Studi Roma Tre)

**Introduction**

At the beginning of the Seventeenth Century, the finances of the Roman aristocratic family of the Caetanis was in troubles. The outlay was rising rapidly: firstly because of the purchase of the high office of *camerlengo* of the Catholic Church for the cardinal Enrico Caetani (1587),<sup>1</sup> and then because of two extraordinary costly diplomatic missions<sup>2</sup> to Paris (1589-1590) and Warsaw (1596-1597), where he was sent as a papal delegate. To further weigh on this financial situation, were other items of expenditure which were necessary to keep the family's aristocratic *status*. As a consequence, the Caetanis were forced to ask the pope the erection of a fund – called *Monte Caetano*<sup>3</sup> – as well as to sell domains<sup>4</sup> and to seek ecclesiastical benefices to contrast the indebtedness.<sup>5</sup> As a matter of fact, according to the studies by Mario Rosa on the funding system of the Roman Curia, the drainage of the ecclesiastical benefices and pensions were the practice through which the strengthening of the social-economic *status* of the pastoral cadre was made possible, along with the whole multitude of ecclesiastical and secular people that gravitated around the Apostolic See.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, these concessions, which came from the pope's wishes, were fundamental contributions to the building of the patron-clients

---

<sup>1</sup> Camillo Manfroni, "La legazione del card. Caetani in Francia 1589-1590," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 10 (1893): 193-270; Jan Władysław Woś, "Contributo per la pubblicazione del «Diario» del viaggio in Polonia (1596-1597) di Giovanni Paolo Mucante," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria* 73-75 (1966-1968): 252-277.

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Caetani to Camillo Caetani, Vienna, 1 June 1596, AC, Misc. 4874.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Antonietta Visceglia, "«Non si ha da equiparare l'utile quando vi fosse l'honore». Scelte economiche e reputazione: intorno alla vendita dello stato feudale dei Caetani (1627)," in *La nobiltà romana in età moderna*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia, (Rome: Carocci, 2001), 203-223.

<sup>4</sup> For example, the sale of Maenza to the Aldobrandinis in 1606. See David Armando, "Assetto territoriale e dinamiche dei poteri nel Ducato di Sermoneta (1586–1817)," in *Bonifacio VIII, i Caetani e la storia del Lazio*, ed. Luigi Fiorani (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 147-148 (143-174).

<sup>5</sup> See various letters by Antonio Caetani to his uncle Camillo in the 1594-1597 period (AC, Misc. 4816, 4874, 8841 n.n., 75303 n.n.). On the indebtedness: Jean Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: De Boccard, 1957), 469-485; Fausto Piola Caselli, "Una montagna di debiti. I monti baronali dell'aristocrazia romana nel Seicento," *Roma Moderna e Contemporanea* 1, 2 (1993): 21-56.

<sup>6</sup> Mario Rosa, *La Curia romana in età moderna* (Rome: Viella, 2013), 57-99. For example see Antonio Caetani's benefices under Pope Clement VIII: monastery S. Mary of Griptis, parish priest of S. Vincent of Capua, monastery S. Mary of Patano; priorate of S. Andrew of Turin, S. Leonard Abbey of S. Mary of the Teutonic (AC, Prg. 2502). About this topic: Id., "Curia romana e pensioni ecclesiastiche: fiscalità pontificia nel Mezzogiorno (secoli XVI-XVII)," *Quaderni Storici* 14 (1979): 1015-1055; Maria Antonietta Visceglia, "Burocrazia, mobilità sociale e patronage alla corte di Roma tra Cinque e Seicento," *Roma moderna e contemporanea* 3 (1995): 11-55; Massimo Carlo Giannini, *L'oro e la tiara: la costruzione dello spazio fiscale italiano della Santa Sede, 1560-1620* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003).

relations, aiming at consolidating the position of the papal family and at developing loyal “friends”. As clearly revealed by Wolfgang Reinhard, clientelism was a political model already acknowledged by the early modern society.<sup>7</sup> In a different way from the rest of Europe, the papacy clientelar system was based on spiritual resources, and was tended towards to the creation of groups of power that supported the affirmation of the reigning papal family. But the relationships between the papal family and the nobility were more of interdependence rather than supremacy,<sup>8</sup> and were strongly subjected to the physiological transience of the papal power, because of the celibacy and the specific features of an elective monarchy. The members of the papal family were *de facto* part of the reigning dynasty during the pontificate, but after the death of the pope, they returned to be simple members of the nobility. As Reinhard explained, the composition of the groups of power within the court, reflected the transience of the papal power,<sup>9</sup> therefore the alliances had to conform to this particular configuration, showing their volatile and blurred boundaries.<sup>10</sup>

When Camillo Borghese (Paul V) was elected pope, the aims, the strategies and the choices of the family changed in order to consolidate their dominance.<sup>11</sup> At

---

<sup>7</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, *Freunde und Kreaturen, “Verflechtung” als Konzept zur Erforschung historischer Führungsgruppen, Römische Oligarchie um 1600* (München: Ernst Vögel, 1979). Also Jeremy Boissevain, *Friends of friends. Networks, manipulators and coalitions* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974); Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury, eds., *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies* (London: Duckworth, 1977); Steffen Schmidt et alii, eds., *Friends, Followers and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, eds., *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Antoni Maczak and Marzio Achille Romani, eds., “Padrini e clienti nell’Europa moderna: secoli XV-XIX,” *Cheiron* 5 (1986); Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, brokers, and clients in seventeenth-century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Id., “The Historical Development of Political Clientelism,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1988): 419-447.

<sup>8</sup> Renata Ago, “Sovrano pontefice e società di corte. Competizioni cerimoniali e politica nella seconda metà del XVII secolo,” in *Cérémonial et rituel à Rome (XVIe-XIXe siècle)*, Publications de l’École française de Rome, 231 (1997): 225-226 (223-228), [www.persee.fr/doc/efr\\_0223-5099\\_1997\\_ant\\_231\\_1\\_5720](http://www.persee.fr/doc/efr_0223-5099_1997_ant_231_1_5720) (consulted 24 January 2016). Also Id., *Carriere e clientele nella Roma barocca* (Rome: Laterza, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, “Amici e creature. Micropolitica della curia romana nel XVII secolo,” *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2 (2001): 59-78, <http://dev.dsmc.uniroma1.it/dprs/sites/default/files/339.html> (consulted 27 February 2016), 16. See Irene Fosi, *All’ombra dei Barberini: fedeltà e servizio nella Roma barocca* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1997); Id., “Amici, creature, parenti: la corte romana osservata da storici tedeschi,” *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2 (2002): 53-58;

<sup>10</sup> Francesco Benigno, “Politica e fazioni,” *Storica* 15 (1999): 125-134; Id., “Conflitto politico e conflitto sociale,” in *Nel sistema imperiale. L’Italia spagnola*, ed. Aurelio Musi (Naples: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1994), 115-146; Maria Antonietta Visceglia, “Fazioni e lotta politica nel Sacro Collegio nella prima metà del Seicento,” in *La corte di Roma tra Cinque e Seicento “teatro” della politica europea*, eds. Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Rome: Bulzoni, 1998), 37-91; IULCE, eds., “Los secretos mecanismos de las cortes: facciones en la Europa Moderna,” *Librosdelacorte.es*, monográfico 2, 7 (2015).

<sup>11</sup> Volker Reinhardt, “Paolo V,” in *Enciclopedia dei papi*, vol. 3, ed. Antonio Menniti Ippolito (Rome: Treccani, 2000), 277-292; Wolfgang Reinhard, *Papstfinanz und Nepotismus unter Paul V (1605-1621). Studien und Quellen zur Struktur und zu quantitativen Aspekten des päpstlichen Herrschaftssystems* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1974); Id., “Ämterlaufbahn und Familienstatus. Der Aufstieg des Hauses Borghese 1537-1621,” *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 54 (1974): 328-427. Also Birgit Emich, *Bürokratie und Nepotismus unter Paul V (1606-1621). Studien zur frühneuzeitlichen Mikropolitik in Rom* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2001).

the same time, the resentment toward the heirs of the deceased Pope Ippolito Aldobrandini (Clement VIII) was revealed. This mutation had a great impact on the clientelar system, showing the volatility of the fidelity<sup>12</sup> of the clients toward the patrons. For example, being a creature of the Aldobrandinis, Antonio Caetani gave his loyalty to the new cardinal nephew, Scipione Borghese, who became his new patron. In 1611 and after several offices in service to the Church, the Caetani's profile was judged the most appropriate to establish a good relationship with the court of Madrid, thanks to the closeness of his family to the crown of Castile.<sup>13</sup> Antonio Caetani thus became servant of three causes. Firstly, he pledged obedience to the Pope and, as a consequence, to the Borgheses; secondly, he was vassal of the Spanish crown; and thirdly, he had to serve his own noble House. These loyalties will be clearly proved during his Nunciature of Spain (1611-1618), and had repercussions on his diplomatic role.

The topic of the double loyalty,<sup>14</sup> triple even, as in the case of Caetani, could be considered as a starting point to understand the interference of the secular to the spiritual and viceversa. It could be a useful instrument to understand the political relations among States, as well as to analyse how individuals or groups of power were able to influence international politics, thus highlighting some aspects of diplomacy in early modern Europe. With this paper, I will try to demonstrate how the nuncio's relationships with some figures in the court of Madrid strengthened his qualification and his efficacy in negotiation, and how he managed to overcome many difficulties.

---

<sup>12</sup> See Angelantonio Spagnoletti, "Stato, aristocrazia e ordine di Malta nell'Italia moderna," Publications de l'École française de Rome 11 (1988).

<sup>13</sup> See Gianvittorio Signorotto, "Aristocrazie italiane e monarchia cattolica nel XVII secolo. Il destino spagnolo del duca di Sermoneta," *Annali di storia moderna e contemporanea* 2 (1996): 57-77; Adriano Amendola, *I Caetani di Sermoneta: storia artistica di un antico casato tra Roma e l'Europa nel Seicento* (Rome: Campisano, 2010); Laura Gori, "Una famiglia filospagnola tra Cinquecento e Seicento: i Caetani di Sermoneta. Dinamiche politiche e aspetti culturali," in *I rapporti tra Roma e Madrid nei secoli XVI e XVII: arte, diplomazia e politica*, ed. Alessandra Anselmi (Rome: Gangemi, 2015), 176-192.

<sup>14</sup> Renata Ago, *La feudalità in età moderna* (Rome: Laterza, 1994), 138-145; Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, "Españoles e italianos. Nación y lealtad en el Reino de Nápoles durante las Guerras de Italia," in *La Monarquía de las Naciones. Patria, nación y naturaleza en la monarquía de España*, eds. Antonio Álvarez Ossorio and Bernardo José García García (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2004), 423-482; Alessandro Serio, "Servitore di due padroni: Jerónimo Vich e le diplomazie spagnole a Roma," in *Diplomazia e politica della Spagna a Roma: figure di ambasciatori*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Roma moderna e contemporanea* 15, 1-3 (2007): 29-62; Megan K. Williams, "Dui Fratelli... Con Dui Principi: Family and Fidelity on a Failed Diplomatic Mission," *Journal Of Early Modern History* 14, no. 6 (2010): 579-611. Some considerations in: Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria A. Visceglia, eds., *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Guido Metzler, "Clienti del papa, ministri del re. Le relazioni tra il cardinal nepote e ufficiali napoletani nel primo Seicento," *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 1 (2004): 83-108; Marika Keblusek and Badeloch Vera Noldus, eds., *Double Agents. Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 1-9; Manfredi Merluzzi, "Considerazioni su Cesare Baronio e la Spagna, tra controversia politica e ricezione erudita," in *Cesare Baronio tra santità e scrittura storica*, eds. Giuseppe Antonio Guazzelli et alii (Rome: Viella, 2012), 341-365.

In the 1624 manuscript entitled *Life of the Cardinal Antonio Caetani*, written by Cristoforo Caetani (bishop of Laodicea and Foligno),<sup>15</sup> some sections are dedicated in praise of the traditional bond of this Roman aristocratic family to the crown of Castile. The author underlined the satisfaction of the Madrid's court for the assignment of the nunciature to Antonio Caetani (archbishop of Capua)<sup>16</sup> in 1611. The assignment glorified the family name and renewed the historical connection to the Kingdoms of Spain. This bond, according to Cristoforo Caetani's eulogy, was formed since the Pope Boniface VIII (Benedetto Caetani) had invested James II of Aragon (Jaime el Justo) of the Kingdoms of Corsica and Sardinia.<sup>17</sup>

The strategic location of the Caetanis' feud, the Duchy of Sermoneta, had contributed to their approach to Spain. Their extensive domain was located inside the Papal States in the southern province of Marittima and Campagna at the border of the Spanish Viceroyalty of Naples.<sup>18</sup> But actually, only from the middle of the Sixteenth century the family had started a policy «in total agreement with Spain».<sup>19</sup> The aim was the political reinforcement of their position within the Roman context and the stabilization of their local domain. On the Spanish side, the strategy allowed the expansion of the crown's power in Italy.<sup>20</sup> The convergence was possible thanks to a series of arranged marriages that led to a closer relation with the more important Neapolitan families, and consequently with the main representatives of the Spanish nobility.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the services of several members of the Caetanis to the Spanish Habsburgs, as well as the dedication and loyalty of the house to the crown, were known by everyone.<sup>22</sup> The military placement of Pietro III (Duke of Sermoneta) and his brother Ruggero, who were employed under the flag of the *Austrias* during the Flanders' Revolt, are an example of this. To be more precise about the Caetanis' conception of their affiliation, we have to refer to a letter sent by Cardinal Bonifacio Caetani<sup>23</sup> to Philip III in the spring of 1615. In his letter, the nuncio's brother highlights

<sup>15</sup> BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030: Cristoforo Caetani, *Vita del sig. Cardinale Antonio Caetani*, fols. 1r-77v.

<sup>16</sup> Georg Lutz, "Antonio Caetani," in *DBI*, 16 (1973): 120-125; Paolo Periatì, "Antonio Caetani: l'ascesa politica e le nunziature apostoliche (1607-1618)" (Doctoral Thesis, Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Rome: Roma TrE-Press 2015), <http://dspace-roma3.caspur.it/handle/2307/4778>.

<sup>17</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 57v.

<sup>18</sup> The Duchy of Sermoneta included communities such as Sermoneta, Bassiano, Ninfa, San Felice, Cisterna and San Donato. See Pietro Pantanelli, *Notizie storiche della terra di Sermoneta* (Rome: Bardi, 1972); Luigi Fiorani, ed., *Sermoneta e i Caetani. Dinamiche politiche, sociali e culturali di un territorio tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1999); Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Una regione virtuale: il Lazio da Martino V a Pio VI," in *Atlante storico-politico del Lazio* (Rome: Laterza, 1996), 63-87; Paolo Periatì, *Feudo e comunità. I Caetani a Bassiano: signoria fondiaria, governo della giustizia e rapporti sociali nel XVIII secolo* (Rome: Aracne, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Roma papale e Spagna: diplomatici, nobili e religiosi tra due corti* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2010), 56.

<sup>20</sup> David Armando and Adriano Ruggeri, "Geografia feudale del Lazio alla fine del Settecento," in *La nobiltà*, 404-410.

<sup>21</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fols. 58r-59v. See Gelasio Caetani, *Caetanorum Genealogia* (Perugia: Unione tipografica cooperativa, 1920); Gaspare De Caro, ed., "Caetani," in *DBI* 16 (1973): 111-127.

<sup>22</sup> «[...] stante la dipendenza assai notoria della Casa mia da questa Corona». Antonio Caetani to Scipione Borghese, Madrid, 14 December 1614, ASV, SS, Spagna 60 B, fol. 513r-v. (From now, only Caetani to Borghese, *nda*.)

<sup>23</sup> Gaspare De Caro, "Bonifacio Caetani," in *DBI* 16 (1973): 134-135.

how the family was not linked to the crown as vassals, but by election,<sup>24</sup> i. e. they were subjects not because of the circumstances or because they were forced, but they were specifically chosen. It was the nunciature of Camillo Caetani (Patriarch of Alexandria) that had great importance for the development of the family's Spanish affairs. Indeed, he resided at the court of Madrid permanently in the 1593-1600 period.<sup>25</sup>

It is not a casualty that the young Antonio, when he was still waiting to receive assignments in service to the Pope, turned to his uncle Camillo to gain rewards and wages from the Spanish crown. Moreover he hoped to be supported by Pietro Aldobrandini, Cardinal Nephew of Pope Clement VIII, to act as his master.<sup>26</sup> According to Caetani's words, the Cardinal could have promoted the request by presenting him «as his own thing»,<sup>27</sup> i. e. as his own creation. In this case, Caetani was looking for a «naturalezza»<sup>28</sup> worth two thousands ducats. A negotiation had already been carried out for the abbot Benedetto, the Antonio's younger brother who died in Madrid, where he lived with their uncle.<sup>29</sup>

About six years later, Camillo Borghese was elevated as Pope with the name of Paul V. For Antonio Caetani this event marked his transition from the Aldobrandini's patronage system to that of the Borghese family. Thus, Scipione Borghese,<sup>30</sup> the new powerful Cardinal Nephew, took the role of Pietro Aldobrandini within the Curia, as well as of new master of Antonio Caetani.

In the summer of the same year, the latter was elected archbishop of Capua.<sup>31</sup> This archdiocese might be defined as a "private ownership" for the family, if we consider that the Cardinal Niccolò Caetani had already taken the title during the 1546-1585 period, and after Antonio, the title would have been given to his nephew Luigi until 1627.<sup>32</sup> Besides, the archdiocese's borders were not so far from the Caetanians' feud. At the same time, the assignment had strengthened the connection to the Spanish majesty: the city was in the Neapolitan Viceroyalty. That being so, the archbishop immediately declares his submission and requests the royal protection, being a man:

---

<sup>24</sup> «[...] soggetti per obbligo di elezione e non di vassallaggio». Bonifacio Caetani to Philip III, Capua, 16 April 1615, AGS, Estado, leg. 1001, fols. 258r-259r.

<sup>25</sup> Visceglia, *Roma papale*, 49-92.

<sup>26</sup> Elena Fasano Guarini, "Pietro Aldobrandini," in *DBI* 2 (1960): 107-112.

<sup>27</sup> «[...] che il signor Cardinale Aldobrandino sia promotor del negotio e mi porti innanzi come cosa sua». Antonio Caetani to Camillo Caetani, Rome, 13 September 1599, AC, Misc. 50608.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*. See Angelantonio Spagnoletti, "El concepto de naturáeza, nación y patria en Itália y el Reino de Nápoles con respecto a la Monarquía de los Austrias," in *La Monarquía*, 483-504.

<sup>29</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 57v.

<sup>30</sup> See Valerio Castronovo, "Scipione Borghese Caffarelli," in *DBI* 12 (1971): 620-624; Volker Reinhardt, "Kardinal Scipione Borghese (1605-1633). Vermögen, Finanzen und sozialer Aufstieg eines Papstnepoten," *Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom* 58 (1984).

<sup>31</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fols. 19v-20r; ASV, Secreteria Breviarum, Reg. 399, fols. 289r-290r; AC, Prg. 2772, 2695, Misc. 687.

<sup>32</sup> Francesco Granata, *Storia sacra della chiesa metropolitana di Capua*, t. 1 (Naples: nella Stamperia Simoniana, 1766), 185-189, 196, 219.

*born into a family totally committed at His Majesty. A family which has benefited from him and from his glorious ancestors. A family that is and will forever be totally devoted and loyal.*<sup>33</sup>

Antonio Caetani became archbishop just one month after the election of Paul V and, one year later, he finally obtained his first assignment in service to the Pope: he was nominated Apostolic Nuncio – with the faculty of *legato a latere* – at the court of the Emperor Rudolph II. He left Rome in May 1607 to stay in Prague until January 1611.<sup>34</sup> During the mission at the Imperial court, Caetani had met several difficult issues to negotiate, without earning great success. The two most important reasons that had precluded the success of the nunciature were: firstly, the lack of affinity between the nuncio and the courtiers – this is the main difference compared to his Spanish experience – and secondly, as the Archduke Leopold of Habsburg had criticized Caetani, the latter had not fought sufficiently in those years to overcome the suspiciousness of Rudolph II and gain his confidence.<sup>35</sup>

All things considered, the Curia had positively judged his political action. The Roman ministers were aware of how arduous it was to make their wishes accepted in such a multi-confessional area. Similarly, they were familiar with the hidden obstacles of the courtiers, as well as with those posed by the Emperor, who defended his decision-making and independence.<sup>36</sup>

Despite everything, Antonio Caetani was nominated as nuncio to Spain in 1611. The main reason for this choice was due not so much to the political abilities of the archbishop or due to gratitude for his last services, but rather, to the fact that the closeness of the Caetanis with the crown of Castile could promote the relationships between the papal House and the centre of the Hispanic power. On October 27th he

---

<sup>33</sup> «[...] nato di famiglia a Vostra Maestà deditissima e da lei e dai suoi gloriosissimi antecessori grandemente beneficiata et che l'è, e sarà sempre devotissima fidelissima». Caetani to Philip III, Capua, 1605, n.d., AC, Misc. 65347. The family was defined «mas española que Romana» by the Spanish ambassador in Rome: Francisco de Castro to Philip III, Rome, 27 July 1612, AGS, Estado, leg. 997, n.n.

<sup>34</sup> Milena Linhartova, “Epistulae et Acta Antonii Caetani, 1607-1611,” in *Epistulae et acta nuntiorum apostolicorum apud imperatorem, 1592-1628* (Prague: sumptibus Ministerii Scholarum et Instructionis Publicae, 1932); Silvano Giordano, ed., *Le istruzioni generali di Paolo V ai diplomatici pontifici: 1605-1621* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2003), vol. 1, 517-538; Tomáš Černušák, “Epistulae et Acta Antonii Caetani 1607-1611. Pars IV. September 1608-Juinius 1609,” in *Epistulae* (Prague: Academia, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Accusation without any reason according to the nuncio's mind. See Caetani to Borghese, Prague, 10 January 1611, BAV, Barb. Lat 6910, fols. 20r-22v. About this period: Tomáš Černušák, “Nuncio Caetani and his defence of Catholic interests in the time before the Letter of Majesty of Rudolf II (1608-1609),” *Časopis Matice Moravské* 128, no. 1 (2009): 35-46; Id., “The papal policy in the Bohemian lands during Antonius Caetani's nunciature (1607-1609),” *Folia Historica Bohemica* 25, no. 1 (2010): 7-22; Id., “Main stereotypes in the correspondence of the papal nuncio Caetani from the years 1608-1609 and their transformation,” *Studia Historica Brunensia* 58, no. 1 (2011): 11-23; Id., “The papal diplomats' tactics of achieving their political aims in Bohemia in 1608-1609,” *Časopis Matice Moravské* 130, no. 1 (2011): 29-40. E anche: Periatì, *Antonio Caetani*, pp. 1-120.

<sup>36</sup> See Robert John W. Evans, *Rudolf II and his world. A study in intellectual history, 1576-1612* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Tomáš Černušák, “Un pazzo sul trono o un sovrano con una visione? Personalità e politica dell'imperatore Rodolfo II alla luce delle relazioni dei nunzi apostolici degli anni 1608-1609,” *Bollettino dell'Istituto Storico Ceco di Roma* 9 (2014): 61-74.

left Rome «with plaudits of the Roman court and the entire Spanish nation».<sup>37</sup> He went to the court of King Philip III, where he remained for seven years in company of two nephews: Francesco and Gregorio. They both lived at court with the role of Pages of the King.

During the Modern Age the relationships between the Catholic Church and the Spanish monarchy were essentially based on a jurisdictional dialectic. The aim was to subordinate the interests of an institution to that of another's.<sup>38</sup> «Many individuals and groups of power acted to support one or the other because of ideology or interests. Sometimes, the result was a double loyalty».<sup>39</sup> According to the English historian John Lynch, this situation encouraged the Spanish crown to intervene within the Roman Curia by exercising influence on its policies or simply acting as supervisor.<sup>40</sup> They did so, for instance, using the members of the clergy, as well as counting on the Spanish nation in Rome<sup>41</sup> and on the loyalty of various Italian noble families.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 50v. See Giordano, *Le istruzioni*, vol. 2, 783-812. Also: BAV, Vat. Lat. 13460, *Istruzione a mons(ignor) arcivescovo di Capua destinato nuntio al re Cattolico dalla Santità di Nostro Signore papa Paolo Quinto*, fols. 21v-55v.

<sup>38</sup> Quentin Aldea, "Iglesia y Estado en la España del siglo XVII (Ideario político-eclesiástico)," *Miscelánea Comillas* 36 (1961): 143-540; Paolo Broggio, *La teologia e la politica. Controversie dottrinali, Curia romana e Monarchia spagnola tra Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Aracne, 2009); Id., "Più papisti del papa. Le definizioni dogmatiche e lo spettro dello scisma nei rapporti ispano-pontifici (1594-1625)," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 126, no. 2 (2014), <http://mefrim.revues.org/1927> (consulted 28 November 2015).

<sup>39</sup> IULCE, ed., *Introduction*, in "La doble lealtad: entre el servicio al Rey y la obligación a la Iglesia," *Librosdelacorte.es*, monográfico 1, no. 6 (2014): 5.

<sup>40</sup> John Lynch, "Philip II and the Papacy," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11 (1961): 23-42.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Dandeleit, "Spanish Conquest and Colonization at the Center of the Old World: The Spanish Nation in Rome 1555-1625," *The Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 3 (1997): 479-511; Id., *Spanish Rome 1500-1700* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Maximiliano Barrio Gozalo, "La Embajada de España ante la corte de Roma en el siglo XVII: ceremonial y práctica del buen gobierno," *Studia historica* 31 (2009): 237-273; Id., "El "quartiere" o barrio de la embajada de España en Roma durante el siglo XVIII," *Revista de historia moderna: Anales de la Universidad de Alicante* 29 (2011): 229-258. On the relations between Rome and Madrid there are various studies. In addition to those mentioned here and into other notes, just look the works in José Martínez Millán and María A. Visceglia, eds., *La Monarquía de Felipe III* (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2008), vols. 1, 4. Also José M. Millán, "El triunfo de Roma. Las relaciones entre el Papado y la Monarquía Católica durante el siglo XVII," in *Centros de poder italianos en la Monarquía Hispánica (siglos XV-XVIII)*, 3 vol., eds. José M. Millán and Manuel Rivero Rodríguez (Madrid: Polifemo, 2010), vol. 1, 549-682.

<sup>42</sup> José Antonio Maravall, "Élite y poder político en el siglo XVII," *Annuario dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea* 29-30 (1977-78): 25-54; Gianvittorio Signorotto, ed., "L'Italia degli Austriaci. Monarchia cattolica e domini italiani nei secoli XVI e XVII," *Cheiron* 17-18 (1992); Paolo Pissavino and Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., *Lombardia borromaica, Lombardia spagnola 1554-1659*, 2 vols. (Rome: Bulzoni, 1995); Angelantonio Spagnoletti, *Principi italiani e Spagna nell'età barocca* (Milan: Mondadori, 1996); Luigi Lotti and Rosario Villari, eds., *Filippo II e il Mediterraneo* (Rome: Laterza, 2003); Thomas Dandeleit, *Spain in Italy. Politics, Society, and Religion 1500-1700* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007); Carlos José Hernando Sánchez and Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., "Uomini di governo italiani al servizio della Monarchia spagnola (secoli XVI e XVII)," *Cheiron* 53-54, no. 27 (2010); Cristina Bravo Lozano, Roberto Quirós Rosado, eds., *En tierra de confluencias. Italia y la Monarquía de España, siglos XVI-XVIII* (Valencia: Albatros, 2013); Piers Baker-Bates, Miles Pattenden, eds., *The Spanish Presence in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Images of Iberia* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015).

The nunciature might be summarized as a continuous research of balance because of the nuncio's triple loyalty. As a matter of fact, according to the words of Cardinal Bonifacio Caetani, his brother could have served the Catholic Church and the Spanish crown at the same time. Of course, Bonifacio assures that the nuncio would have proceeded in the footsteps left by their uncle Camillo, and he would have been able to satisfy the will of the crown because of their loyalty.<sup>43</sup>

The Spanish nunciature could have given a great reputation to Antonio Caetani.<sup>44</sup> He might have met the political demands of the King and of his favourite, Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, Duke of Lerma,<sup>45</sup> as well as other influential members of the court, especially those who had a bureaucratic position. The fulfillment of the wishes of the ministers or of the prelates, by supporting their demands of wages and rewards to the Apostolic See, could have won their loyalty, which itself would have been fruitful for the papacy and in favour to the public service.<sup>46</sup> For example, it was useful in order to obtain news and information, to promote diplomatic instances, and to strengthen the clientelar network. Furthermore, it was convenient to the reputation of the nunciature and for the nuncio's own honour.<sup>47</sup> But, at the same time the Pope and the Cardinal Nephew were holding the "sword of Damocles" on Caetani's head. They paid serious attention to the behavior of the archbishop and they were ready to observe all his failures, in addition to the fact that the nuncio was not audacious enough during the diplomatic negotiations, or when he did not satisfy the papal guidelines. Therefore, the connections to the Spanish court supported the political activity of the nuncio, but at the same time they made his role uncomfortable.

Since the middle of the Sixteenth century the ambassadors represented the crowns and acted as «brokers of patronage resources not only for their king, but also for their kin, their clients or patrons and for friends»,<sup>48</sup> in order to satisfy different requests during the negotiations. In the same way the Apostolic Nuncios did not merely embody the Pope, but they were also political subjects within networks of interpersonal relationships and, often, they contributed to built these networks to

---

<sup>43</sup> Bonifacio Caetani to Philip III, Ravenna, 10 September 1611, AGS, Estado, leg. 996, n.n.

<sup>44</sup> Camillo Caetani defined the Spanish nunciature as «the cardinalate of those who cannot be cardinal». Visceglia, *Roma papale*, 55.

<sup>45</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 27 August 1612, BAV, Barb. Lat. 8277, fol. 103r.

<sup>46</sup> Idem, Madrid, 15 May 1614, AC, Misc. 372 LV, I, n.n.

<sup>47</sup> Idem, Madrid, 1 May 1612, BAV, Barb. Lat. 8276, fol. 21r. On the Caetani's experience at the court of Madrid and his relationships with the courtiers, see Paolo Periatì, "Approccio, metodi e canali di reperimento delle informazioni del nunzio Antonio Caetani alla corte di Filippo III - Appunti sul caso della spia Giulio Cesare Santamaura," in *Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)*, in press.

<sup>48</sup> Hillard Von Thiessen, "Switching Roles in Negotiation, Levels of Diplomatic Communication Between Pope Paul V Borghese (1605-1621) and the Ambassadors of Philip III," in *Paroles de négociateurs. L'entretien dans la pratique diplomatique de la fin du Moyen Âge à la fin du XIXe siècle*, ed. Stefano Andretta et alii, Collection de l'École Française de Rome 433 (2010): 156-157. Also: Christian Wieland, *Fürsten, Freunde, Diplomaten. Die römisch-florentinischen Beziehungen unter Paul V. 1605-1621* (Cologne-Weimar-Vienna: Verlag-Böhlau, 2004); Hillard Von Thiessen and Christian Windler, eds., "Nähe in der Ferne. Personale Verflechtung in den Aussenbeziehungen der Frühen Neuzeit," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 36 (2005): 233-265.



practice their diplomatic role, as well as for their own personal affairs.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, a microscopic view reveals that early modern ambassadors were nobles in service to their monarch, but «furthermore, they were and acted as heads of their families, patrons of their clients and friends of their friends».<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the construction of political relationships among States grew up thanks to a thorough texture of personal friendship based on networks that the diplomats were able to create at court, even before the clientelar one.<sup>51</sup> Caetani knew well the Spanish political contest and how to integrate himself within the court to create political and friendship bonds.

The apostolic representative came to Madrid in December 1611.<sup>52</sup> One week after his arrival in the city, he went to the royal residence to meet the King. Antonio Caetani arrived to the Escorial «riding a mule covered by a cloak».<sup>53</sup> The ride was sumptuous, honourable and well organized with all the attentions, thanks to the high cash outlay by the nuncio's Spanish relatives. Several rumors had preceded his arrival at court, where Caetani soon came to be considered as an enemy of Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini, whose rivalry with the Borghese family was well known.<sup>54</sup> Even more, it seemed that it had been the Cardinal himself to have planned the trick, together with the friends of the Lemos family:<sup>55</sup> a group of political power that found its highest representative in Catalina de Zúñiga y Sandoval, Countess of Lemos,<sup>56</sup> First Lady of the Bedchamber of the Queen, sister of the Duke of Lerma. During his nunciature, Antonio Caetani was close to another power group dominated by Lerma himself and whose many representatives were: Rodrigo Calderón (Count of the Oliva and then Marquis of Siete Iglesias), the canon Gabriel de Trejo y Paniagua<sup>57</sup> and the son of Lerma, Cristóbal Gómez de Sandoval (Duke of Uceda), until the inevitable break caused by the succession to the father's office. These power groups, or factions, were characterized by the solidarity of the members, whose relationships

<sup>49</sup> Visceglia, *Roma papale*, 51. See Marzio Achille Romani, ed., «La corte in Europa. Fedeltà, favori, pratiche di governo», *Cheiron* 1 (1983); Ronald Gregor Asch and Adolf Matthias Birke, eds., *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, 1450-1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Mario Rosa, «Nobiltà e carriera nelle "Memorie" di due cardinali della Controriforma: Scipione Gonzaga e Guido Bentivoglio», in *Signori, patrizi e cavalieri nell'età moderna*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Rome: Laterza, 1992), 231-255; Antonio Menniti Ippolito, *Politica e carriere ecclesiastiche nel secolo XVII. I vescovi veneti fra Roma e Venezia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993).

<sup>50</sup> Von Thiessen, *Switching*, 153.

<sup>51</sup> See Daniela Frigo, ed., «Storia della diplomazia e istituzioni: studi in corso e prospettive di ricerca», *Le Carte e la Storia* 2, no. 1 (1996): 143-144. About the diplomats' network see Id., *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>52</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 18 October 1611, BAV, Barb. Lat. 6910, fol. 47r.

<sup>53</sup> Idem, Madrid, 3 January 1612, BAV, Barb. Lat. 8275, fol. 3r.

<sup>54</sup> Visceglia, *Roma papale*, 130-136.

<sup>55</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 3 January 1612, BAV, Barb. Lat. 8275, fol. 2v.

<sup>56</sup> See María Isabel Barbeito Carneiro, «La biblioteca de la VI Condesa de Lemos», in *Varia bibliographica: homenaje a José Simón Díaz* (Zaragoza: Kassel, 1988), 67-85; Id., *Mujeres del Madrid barroco* (Madrid: Horas y Horas, 1992); María Victoria López-Córdon Cortezo, «Entre damas anda el juego: las camereras mayores de Palacio en la edad moderna», in *Monarquía y Corte en la España Moderna*, ed. Carlos María Gómez-Centurión Jiménez, *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* 2 (2003): 123-152; Paolo Periatì, *A feared woman. Family strategy and political authority of Catalina de Zúñiga, Countess of Lemos*, Act of the congress «III Encuentro de Jóvenes Investigadores» (Valladolid, 2-3 July 2015), in press.

<sup>57</sup> He was related to the wife of Rodrigo Calderón.

were cementificated by blood lines or via a strong patronage system to the groups' main representatives, but whose borders were not always well-defined.

The main diplomatic negotiations affected by the multiple loyalties of the nuncio consisted also in the two most intricate political questions concerning direct relations between Rome and Madrid, just as he claimed in his letters. The first issue was related to the demanding, obsessive requests from Paul V and Cardinal Nephew directed to the Duke of Lerma, in order to destitute Francisco de Castro (Count of Castro and Duke of Taurisano),<sup>58</sup> from his role as Spanish ambassador in Rome. The second issue was defined by the nuncio as the «most dangerous hurdle»<sup>59</sup> of the nunciature, and it was the desire of the Duke of Lerma to elect in the same occasion two Spanish cardinals, so that within the College of Cardinals a difference came to be created with those cardinals loyal to the French crown. The bone of contention was the permanence of Francisco de Castro, son of the Countess of Lemos, as ambassador. The friendship between the Spanish representative and former Cardinal Nephew, was strongly opposed by the papal family, because of the obsession of a conspiracy against the Pope plotted by Lemos-Aldobrandinis together. The Count of Castro, according to Cardinal Borghese, was enemy to the papal family and he was close to the Aldobrandini family.<sup>60</sup> Thus he was more interested in taking care of his personal affairs, and his behavior was not in accordance with the government guidelines.

When Paul V came to know about the desire of Lerma to elect his two favourite candidates to the cardinalate (Gabriel de Trejo y Paniagua and Baltasar de Moscoso y Sandoval),<sup>61</sup> he had the chance to stress once again the immediate suspension of Francisco de Castro, who was to be replaced with a loyal ambassador. The nuncio was ordered more than once to convince Lerma to substitute his nephew. The most powerful means used to convince him was a *conditio sine qua non*: until the Count of Castro had remained firm to his role, the creation of Spanish cardinals would have never taken place. And this point had to stay clear in their minds,<sup>62</sup> considering that it didn't seem convenient «to give such kind of favours during the mission of an ambassador who is an enemy and declares it publicly».<sup>63</sup>

According to the Apostolic Nuncio, the main reason why Lerma didn't take the decision of substituting his nephew, even though he was aware of his behaviour, was

<sup>58</sup> See Valentina Favaro, *Carriere in movimento. Francisco Ruiz de Castro e la monarchia di Filippo III* (Palermo: Associazione Mediterranea, 2013); Silvano Giordano, "Istruzioni di Filippo III ai suoi ambasciatori a Roma 1598-1621," in *Politica, fazioni, istituzioni nell' "Italia spagnola" dall'incoronazione di Carlo V (1530) alla pace di Westfalia (1648)*, ed. Elena Fasano Guarini (Rome: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, 2006), LXV-LXVIII. About the obsession, see Paolo Periatì, "Mettere fine al loro «Imperio Napolitano». L'ossessione di Paolo V per la rimozione di Francisco de Castro, ambasciatore spagnolo a Roma (1611-1616)," *Nuova Rivista Storica* (2016) in press.

<sup>59</sup> «Il più pericoloso scoglio». Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 18 April 1614, ASV, FB, serie II, 263, fol. 100r.

<sup>60</sup> Castro to Philip III, Rome, 8 November 1612, AGS, Estado, leg. 997, n.n., cfr. Consejo de Estado, Madrid, 27 December 1612, AGS, Estado, leg. 997, n.n.

<sup>61</sup> He was son of the Countess of Altamira, sister of Lerma.

<sup>62</sup> Borghese to Caetani, Rome, 4 January 1613, ASV, SS, Spagna 60, fol. 13r.

<sup>63</sup> «[...] far grazie simili in tempo d'un ambasciatore che [...] si dichiara nemico pubblicamente». Ivi, fols. 18r-19r.

due to the influence of the Countess of Lemos on his brother. He had tried several times to convince Lerma to call back the ambassador, and move him to the government of Valencia, Zaragoza or Barcelona,<sup>64</sup> but without success. Therefore, the nuncio's attempts were repeatedly impeded by the Countess of Lemos. The Spanish ambassador in Rome was put under pressure by Lerma, because he could not close the negotiation on the promotion of the cardinals and, at the same time, he tried to support a personal candidate as Fernando de Andrade y Sotomayor, who was blood related to the family and was a trusted man of the House of Lemos.<sup>65</sup> Then, in order to justify his failures, the Count of Castro accused the nuncio of having written to the Pope without persuasion, thus obstructing the King's wishes.<sup>66</sup> Caetani answered with a letter to Cardinal Nephew.<sup>67</sup> He clearly wrote that the accusations were an invention of the ambassador, whose goal was to convince Lerma of the Caetani's infidelity. In the same letter, Caetani underlined that he was not afraid of these political attacks. According to him, Rodrigo Calderón, Gabriel de Trejo and Lerma himself would protect him and never allow these kind of defamations to his person in the future.<sup>68</sup> Caetani then reaffirms his closeness to the Lerma-Calderón-Trejo trio. But this closeness was viewed with suspect by Scipione Borghese, because «friendships and kinfolk» of the nuncio at the court made him look as «the most involved person of the world».<sup>69</sup>

The 1612-1613 years were extremely difficult for Antonio Caetani. When his dispute with Francisco de Castro was at its peak, the Pope lost his patience because of the nuncio's behavior: he was guilty for not being audacious enough in the diplomatic negotiations and for being more interested in his private affairs.<sup>70</sup> During those months, the nuncio was dealing to obtain the title of archbishop of Taranto for his brother, the Cardinal Bonifacio,<sup>71</sup> while Scipione Borghese was pressing him in order to get for him the Spanish naturalization and the following income on the decanate of Jaén, the value of which was a thousand ducats.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the Cardinal Nephew was insisting on another income of four hundred ducats on the

<sup>64</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 29 June 1614, ASV, FB, serie II, 263, fol. 157v.

<sup>65</sup> Idem, Madrid, 29 July 1612, ASV, FB, serie II, 266, fols. 126v-127r; Borghese to Caetani, Frascati, 19 June 1614, ASV, FB, serie II, 370, fol. 77r. Before he and his mother tried to push forward friar Diego de Arce, confessor of the Viceroy of Naples. See Francisco Henares Díaz, "El Franciscano Diego de Arce, predicador, calificador del Santo Oficio," *Revista de la Inquisición*, 8 (1999): 219-273.

<sup>66</sup> Castro to Philip III, Rome, 2 January 1613, AGS, Estado, leg. 999, n.n.

<sup>67</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 19 January 1613, ASV, FB, serie II, 264, fols. 13r-15r.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>69</sup> «[...] il più interessato huomo del mondo stante [...] le amicitie et il parentado». Caetani to Porfirio Feliciani, Madrid, 27 July 1614, ASV, FB, serie II, 263, fols. 180r-182r.

<sup>70</sup> See the letters of Feliciani to Caetani, Rome, 2<sup>3</sup> September 1612, ASV, FB, serie II, 343, fols. 100r-101r; Borghese to Caetani, Rome, 6 December 1612, ASV, FB, serie II, 343, fol. 119r-v.

<sup>71</sup> BAV, Urb. Lat. 1081, fol. 39r-v. About Taranto, see Vittorio De Marco, *La diocesi di Taranto nell'età moderna (1560-1713)* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1988); Mario Spedicato, *Il mercato della mitra* (Bari: Cacucci, 1996); Valeria Cocozza, "Chiesa e società a Trivento. Storia di una diocesi di regio patronato in età spagnola" (Doctoral Thesis, Università del Molise, Campobasso 2013), [www.academia.edu/3415363](http://www.academia.edu/3415363). Also, see Mario Rosa, "Diocesi e vescovi del Mezzogiorno durante il vicereame spagnolo. Capitanata, Terra di Bari e Terra d'Otranto dal 1545 al 1714," in *Studi storici in onore di Gabriele Pepe* (Bari: Dedalo, 1969), 531-580.

<sup>72</sup> AGS, Estado, leg. 998, n.n.

archbishopric of Taranto for his Secretary and Master of Chamber Giulio Pavoni,<sup>73</sup> who had been favoured by the nuncio to obtain the cross of the Brotherhood of Knights of Saint Jacob.<sup>74</sup>

The Count of Castro was incessantly disturbing the Borghese's wishes.<sup>75</sup> As a result, nervousness was growing in the papal family. Antonio Caetani was openly accused by the Pope Paul V, who affirmed that his representative was delaying his obligations thus losing sight of the «satisfaction of His Holiness» for having «good relations with everyone because of his House's interests».<sup>76</sup> The controversy about the substitution of the Spanish ambassador and the double cardinalate will continue for two years more until May 1615, when the State Council decided to change the assignments of the Spanish domain. The Duke of Osuna (Viceroy of Sicily), was sent to Naples replacing the Count of Lemos, who was elected President of the Council of Italy and then the Count of Castro was sent to Palermo as new viceroy.<sup>77</sup> Some months later the two favourites of Lerma were elevated as cardinals<sup>78</sup> and the ambassador was replaced. He left Rome at the beginning of March 1616.<sup>79</sup>

In 1617 the nuncio obtained the cross of the Brotherhood of Knights of Saint Jacob for his nephew Gregorio Caetani.<sup>80</sup> But above everything, Scipione Borghese lost his confidence in him especially when the nuncio managed to get the significant title of *Grande de España* for his more important nephew Francesco Caetani, Duke of Sermoneta,<sup>81</sup> after the death of his father. As a matter of fact, the Cardinal Nephew was demanding the same title for Marcantonio Borghese, Prince of Sulmona, the most important secular representative of his family. The nuncio created irritation in Rome because he was dealing with his personal affairs instead of those of the Borghese family, putting himself in direct competition with his patron and the Pope's wishes. The trust of the Cardinal Nephew towards Antonio Caetani was progressively fading away. Clear evidence of this tendency appears after the promotion of the Duke of Lerma to cardinalate.<sup>82</sup> Lerma insisted to be called with both the honorific titles of "Illustrious" and "Excellency" and the nuncio wrote immediately a long letter

<sup>73</sup> BAV, Barb. Lat. 8279, fols. 2r-3v, 18r-19r, 32r-v; BAV, Barb. Lat. 8280, fol. 8r; BAV, Barb. Lat. 8281, fol. 11r-v; AC, Misc. 372 LV, I, n.n.

<sup>74</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 71r; BAV, Barb. Lat. 8278, fols. 4r, 48r-v, 112r.

<sup>75</sup> Castro to Philip III, Rome, 20 June 1612, AGS, Estado, leg. 997, n.n.; Idem, Rome, 23 April 1613, AGS, Estado, leg. 999, n.n.

<sup>76</sup> Feliciani to Caetani, Rome, n. d., ASV, SS, Nunziature Diverse 240, fols. 234r-235r.

<sup>77</sup> Antonio de Aróztegui to Consejo de Estado, Madrid 21 May 1615, AGS, Estado, leg. 1001, fol. 166r; Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 22 May 1615, ASV, SS, Spagna 60 C, fol. 197v; BAV, Urb. Lat. 1117, I, fol. 379v.

<sup>78</sup> Castro to Philip III, Rome, 2 December 1615, AGS, Estado, leg. 1001, fol. 348r. See AGS, Estado, leg. 1001, fol. 336r; ASV, FB, serie II, 262, fol. 251r.

<sup>79</sup> Gaspar de Borja to Philip III, Rome, 19 March 1616, AGS, Estado, leg. 1001, fol. 241r. Also: ASV, FB, serie II, 261, fol. 121r; ASV, SS, Spagna 340, fols. 36r-v, 45r; ASV, FB, serie II, 347, fol. 60r-v.

<sup>80</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 71v.

<sup>81</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 22 October 1616, ASV, FB, serie II, 261, fol. 174r. Cfr. BAV, Urb. Lat. 1117, I, fols. 474v-475r, 477v; ASV, FB, serie II, 416, fols. 160v, 161r; ASV, SS, Spagna 340, fols. 192v-193r; ASV, FB, serie III, 50 A2, fol. 97r. See Angelantonio Spagnoletti, "Principi e Señores Grandes nell'Italia spagnola," *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2 (1993): 112-140. Also: Signorotto, *Aristocrazie italiane*, 57-77.

<sup>82</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 11 April 1618, ASV, SS, Spagna 60 F, fol. 160r. See also AGS, Estado, leg. 1866, fols. 49r, 114r, 115r; BAV, Urb. Lat. 1117, II, fols. 546v-547r.

for dissuading him from the bizarre request, explaining how the use of the title of “Excellency” was inappropriate for an ecclesiastical person.<sup>83</sup> His action was praised by the Pope,<sup>84</sup> but Scipione Borghese, although he knew what the nuncio had written against Lerma, commanded Giovanni Antonio Verdalet (the papal emissary that had to deliver the cardinal hat to Lerma), to investigate with caution which title Antonio Caetani used when addressing the Cardinal-Duke.<sup>85</sup> This letter can be considered as a warning.

In the meantime, at the end of June, Scipione Borghese gave thanks to Caetani «for a nice and curious gift»<sup>86</sup> that the nuncio had sent to his patron as evidence of devotion. We don't know what the gift was, but Borghese reassures him «that no demonstration can increase his knowledge of the love»<sup>87</sup> of the nuncio to him. Less than a month later, the Pope decided to replace Antonio Caetani and to nominate Francesco Cennini (Bishop of Amelia)<sup>88</sup> as new nuncio. He was a loyal servant and «superintendent of the public and personal affairs of the Borghese family».<sup>89</sup>

Immediately, the Cardinal Gaspar de Borja (Spanish ambassador in Rome *ad interim*), explained to the Pope the satisfaction of his King about having Antonio Caetani as Apostolic Nuncio, stating that nobody else could serve the Pope better than him, both for the «service of God and the Kingdom».<sup>90</sup> Lerma himself was displeased because of the decision.<sup>91</sup> Thereafter, Philip III recommended Antonio Caetani to the cardinal purple<sup>92</sup> because he was thankful for his services during the nunciature.<sup>93</sup> He recommended him also because, after the death of Cardinal Bonifacio, the family did not have anyone within the Sacred College. Nonetheless, this would not occur under the Borghese pontificate.

Antonio Caetani left Madrid in November.<sup>94</sup> After his departure, Scipione Borghese wrote to Francesco Cennini regretting Caetani's actions. The Cardinal Nephew was angry because Antonio de Trejo was directed to Rome as extraordinary emissary of the King to negotiate on the doctrinal controversy of the Immaculate

<sup>83</sup> BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 5009: *Discorso di Mons. Antonio Caitano, arcivescovo di Capua, mentre era nunzio in Spagna intorno al titolo di Ill(ustrissimo)mo e Ecc(ellentissimo)mo in persona ecclesiastica*, fols. 109r-114v; Biblioteca Casanatense, Ms. 2371 (copia). See BAV, Barb. Lat. 1189, fols. 28r-30r.

<sup>84</sup> Borghese to Caetani, Rome, 15 May 1618, ASV, FB, serie II, 345, fol. 113r.

<sup>85</sup> Borghese to Giovanni Antonio Verdalet, Rome, 28 May 1618, ASV, FB, serie II, 432, fol. 608v.

<sup>86</sup> «[...] per il bello e curioso regalo». Borghese to Caetani, Rome, 26 June 1618, ASV, FB, serie II, 432, fol. 697v.

<sup>87</sup> «[...] che niuna dimostrazione può far crescere la sicurezza ch'io ho dell'amor suo». Ibidem.

<sup>88</sup> Idem, Rome, 20 July 1618, ASV, FB, serie II, 488, fol. 66r-v. See Gaspare De Caro, “Francesco Cennini,” in *DBI* 23 (1979): 569-571.

<sup>89</sup> «[...] aveva la soprintendenza di molti altri affari pubblici et privati di casa Borghese». BAV, Urb. Lat. 1086: *Avvisi di Roma*, 18 July 1618, fol. 279v. Cfr. Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 73r.

<sup>90</sup> «[...] servicio de Dios y bien de esos Reyno». Borja to Philip III, Rome, 28 June 1618, AGS, Estado, leg. 1866, fol. 140r.

<sup>91</sup> Verdalet to Borghese, Madrid, 19 July 1618, ASV, FB, serie I, 514, fol. 167r.

<sup>92</sup> BAV, Urb. Lat. 1117, II, fol. 564v.

<sup>93</sup> Borja to Philip III, Madrid, 20 September 1618, AGS, Estado, leg. 1866, fol. 172r.

<sup>94</sup> BAV, Urb. Lat. 1086, fols. 479r, 524v.

Conception.<sup>95</sup> According to Scipione Borghese, Caetani was responsible for failing to prevent the resolution as the orders requested, because he was close to the Cardinal Gabriel de Trejo, brother of the emissary. Therefore, Caetani did not want to dissatisfy his friend's family. Furthermore, the Cardinal Nephew continued explaining that Caetani was too eager to please at court «exceedingly because of private purposes».<sup>96</sup>

The archbishop of Capua retired to his pastoral see. After the election of the Pope Gregory XV (Alessandro Ludovisi) in 1621, Antonio Caetani was finally appointed cardinal with the title of Saint Pudenziana. According to the biography written by Cristoforo Caetani, the new Pope was thankful for the services that the former nuncio had rendered for him at the court of Madrid.<sup>97</sup> This situation could demonstrate how Antonio Caetani had probably abandoned the clientelar network of the Borghese family after the end of the nunciature. Two years later, in fact, in the conclave of the summer of 1623, in which Caetani was initially considered as a candidate to become Pope,<sup>98</sup> he supported the party of the former Cardinal Nephew Ludovico Ludovisi and not that of Scipione Borghese. Caetani had an important role in mediating for a compromise between the parties for the election of Pope Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini). Later, the Cardinal Ludovisi himself had revealed his absolute trust towards Caetani, choosing him as his substitute in the curial offices. However, Antonio Caetani died one year later.

The political action of Antonio Caetani before, during, and after the period that he spent at the court of Madrid, shows us how complex the figure of the apostolic nuncio was at the time of the Ancient Regime. The fact that his role was never clearly defined, necessarily puts us in the condition of having to rely on other key factors that allow us to outline these characteristics. Firstly, we must be aware that such characteristics should be framed within the context in which the nuncio operated. Furthermore, they should be analyzed taking into account their changing significance stressed by his role and personal history, as well as the contradictions inherent to his wide activity. The reflection on the Caetani's triple loyalty and on the sequence of events that marked the years that he had spent serving the papacy, gives us the chance to pay attention to the interaction between the three kinds of loyalty discussed above, their duration and their nature. While it is obvious that the familiar kind is clearly structural, and the closeness to the crown of Castile appears strategical, the last one, that is, the obedience to the Pope and to the Cardinal Nephew – i. e. to the Borgheses – appears fluctuating, as well as being most likely moved by political evaluations. Consequently, this shows us how sometimes the relation between these last two subjects becomes conflictual. To conclude, we have seen how each of these characteristics, that were very well-known by his contemporaries, might have fueled arguments against the nuncio and his role: for

---

<sup>95</sup> Paolo Broggio, "Teologia, ordini religiosi e rapporti politici: la questione dell'Immacolata Concezione di Maria tra Roma e Madrid," *Hispania Sacra* 65, no. 1 (2013): 255-281.

<sup>96</sup> «[...] per i suoi privati fini avrà forse ecceduto». Borghese to Francesco Cennini, Rome, 20 December 1618, ASV, FB, serie II, 488, fol. 620r.

<sup>97</sup> Caetani, *Vita*, fol. 73v.

<sup>98</sup> Lutz, *Antonio*, in *DBI*, 124.

instance, when he was called: *Figliol del secolo*,<sup>99</sup> in order to slander the nuncio as a person more interested in secular matters than in ecclesiastical ones. But above all, we have seen how such a state of affairs had been able to strongly influence the most important diplomatic negotiations, and therefore, the relations between the two courts.

RECIBIDO:14 de abril de 2016  
APROBADO:25 de mayo de 2016

---

<sup>99</sup> Caetani to Borghese, Madrid, 14 December 1614, ASV, SS, Spagna 60 B, fol. 514r. The expression is attributed to Pedro de Aguirre, agent of the Cardinal Borja. See Periatì, *Approccio, metodi*, in press.



Fig. 1 – G. Antonini, *Portrait of the Cardinal Antonio Caetani*, (posthumous, 1626), oil on canvas, Garden of Ninfa, “Roffredo Caetani” Foundation, Sermoneta (Latina, Italy).