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## Behind the negotiations: Nuncio Antonio Caetani's experience at the court of Madrid (1611–1618)

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**Abstract:** When the Borghese family's ascent to power in the court of Rome began, the domain of the Sandovals within the court of Madrid was already well-established. Through analysis of the correspondence of Nuncio Antonio Caetani, this article underscores how the papal representative promoted himself as a principal interlocutor between these two groups of power. He had to serve the Apostolic See and to satisfy the Spanish ministers and expectations of the nobility, thus increasing the honour of his noble family. *A perspective on the relations between Rome and Madrid at the beginning of the seventeenth century will be examined, by focusing on a myriad of recommendations, favours, rewards, and benefices as recompense for gratitude and friendship.* The approach purports to deepen the practice of the early modern diplomacy, by considering Caetani's networks and his perceptions as a privileged observer of court life.

**Keywords:** Antonio Caetani – Experience – Court of Madrid – Court of Rome – Early Modern Diplomacy – Networks – Nunciature

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### A privileged observer

In a letter written on November 18, 1617, Apostolic Nuncio Antonio Caetani<sup>1</sup> reported an aphorism circulated through the corridors of the court of Madrid, which read as follows: “*It was prudent to receive the disillusionments ..., but not to administer them*”<sup>2</sup>

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1 Georg LUTZ, *Caetani, Antonio*, in: DBI, vol. XVI, Roma 1973, pp. 120–125; Paolo PERIATI, *Antonio Caetani: l'ascesa politica e le nunziature apostoliche (1607–1618)*, Roma 2015 (= unpublished doctoral thesis, Università degli Studi Roma Tre). Also: Milena LINHARTOVÁ (ed.), *Epistulae et Acta Antonii Caetanii, 1607–1611*, Prague 1932–1946.

2 “*I disinganni ... era prudenza riceverli, ma non darli.*” ASV, SS, Spagna 60, E, fol. 493r. Madrid, 18. 11. 1617. Antonio Caetani to Scipione Borghese. All translations of the sources reported in the text are mine. About Baroque culture and aphorisms: Linda BISELLO, *Medicina della memoria. Aforistica ed esemplarità nella cultura barocca*, Firenze 1998.

Rumours attributed the maxim to Juan de Idiáquez, an esteemed man, with lengthy experience as a minister of the Crown of Castile.<sup>3</sup>

We may suppose that Idiáquez consciously used the word *desengaño* to address the nature of the Spanish Nation. This word is written in the nuncio's letter as *disinganno*, a simple Italian translation; it is meant to point out what kind of virtues were necessary to establish good relations at court. As stated by Christopher Maurer, it is impossible to find an equivalent word in English for *desengaño*, as it means "more than 'disillusionment', it implies the dispelling of deceit and an awakening to truth".<sup>4</sup> To summarize, the wise minister wanted to explain what men should not be doing, as to not destroy the hopes of those who were asking for favours, and instead to meet their expectations.

Along the same line as Idiáquez, Caetani commented on Francisco de Sandoval, Duke de Lerma's desire to be appointed cardinal: "To Gentlemen who, during their whole lives, were not used to anything but successes, it is not easy to cut off the desires when they are young and flourishing, just like when they are dry and aged".<sup>5</sup> For the king's favourite, the biretta would have been the crowning achievement of his career. Therefore, although Lerma's desire was unusual and had political consequences, he knew that he would receive a positive response from the Roman Curia.<sup>6</sup> As also reported by the nuncio, the *valido*

3 ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 256r. Madrid, 23. 10. 1614. Caetani to Borghese. See: Fidel PÉREZ MÍNGUEZ, *Don Juan de Idiáquez: Embajador y Consejero de Felipe II, 1514–1614 (conclusión)*, Revista Internacional de los Estudios Vascos 25, n. 3, 1934, pp. 385–417.

4 See: Christopher MAURER (ed.), *Baltasar Gracián, A Pocket Mirror for Heroes*, New York 1996, p. 1. This topic in Spanish Baroque culture, see: Otis H. GREEN, *Spain and the Western Tradition: The Castilian Mind in Literature from El Cid to Calderón*, vol. IV, Madison 1963, pp. 43–76; Luis ROSALES, *El sentimiento del desengaño en la poesía barroca*, Madrid 1966; Luis S. FERNÁNDEZ – José A. GALLEGU, *La Crisis de la hegemonía española, siglo XVII*, in: Historia general de España y América, VIII, Madrid, 1991, p. 7; José M. G. GARCÍA, *Metáforas e ironías de la identidad barroca*, in: Antonio Ariño Villarroja (ed.), *Las encrucijadas de la diversidad cultural*, Madrid 2005, pp. 139–158; José C. G. BOIXO, *Desengaño barroco en sucesos de fray García Guerra de Mateo Alemán*, Edad de Oro 19, 2010, pp. 85–114.

5 "A Signori non usati in tutta la loro vita ad altro, che a prosperità di fortuna, non è così facil cosa troncar i desiderij quando son verdi, e floridi, come quando son già secchi, e stagionati." ASV, SS, Spagna, 60 E, fol. 494r. Madrid, 18. 11. 1617. Caetani to Borghese. Among others: Francesco BENIGNO, *L'ombra del re. Ministri e lotta politica nella Spagna del Seicento*, Venezia 1992, pp. 3–36; Antonio FEROS, *Kingship and Favouritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598–1621*, New York 2000; IDEM, *El duque de Lerma. Realeza y privanza en la España de Felipe III*, Madrid 2002; Ricardo G. RIVERO, *Lerma y el control de cargos*, Anuario de historia del derecho español 73, 2003, pp. 193–230; Patrick WILLIAMS, *El Gran Valido, el duque de Lerma, la Corte y el gobierno de Felipe III*, Salamanca 2010; Giuseppe MROZEK ELISZEZYNSKI, *Bajo acusación. El valimiento en el reinado de Felipe III. Procesos y discursos*, Madrid 2015.

6 Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Roma papale e Spagna: diplomatici, nobili e religiosi tra due corti*, Roma 2010, pp. 165–169; Bernardo J. GARCÍA GARCÍA, *Honra, desengaño y condena de una privanza. La retirada de la Corte del Cardenal Duque de Lerma*, in: Pablo F. Albaladejo (ed.), *Monarquía, imperio y pueblos en la España Moderna*, I, Alicante 1997, pp. 679–695.

was certain to be supported by the king. Being a man unaccustomed to uncertainty and disillusionment, he would have been very disappointed with a negative answer, so much so as “*to become a lion*”.<sup>7</sup>

Nuncio Caetani was accustomed to the mazes of princely courts. According to an unfinished manuscript version of his biography,<sup>8</sup> Antonio Caetani was well-informed about the political relationships among the European courts. Due to his cultural background, he was able to converse with anyone in any situation or occasion. Furthermore, as the biographer notes, he was aware of the courts’ moods and factional struggles, in addition to the nobles’ aspirations and rivalries in their competition for honours. Caetani’s perceptions of his interlocutors’ dispositions were from a hard-earned wisdom during his ten year position as papal representative, six of which he spent as a diplomat resident in Madrid at the request of Lerma. The court was addressed by the nuncio as a deceptive place where people revealed a “*flattering façade, preserving their private passions secretly*”,<sup>9</sup> and where “*what one desires is hoped, and what one hopes gets done*,”<sup>10</sup> due to the recommendations of those who held the command and had the authority. As a privileged observer with first-hand knowledge of court life,<sup>11</sup> he was aware of how important it was to acquiesce himself to the ministers’ will as much as possible.<sup>12</sup>

As demonstrated by the renewed multidisciplinary approach to the history of diplomacy over the previous two decades, early modern ambassadors were not merely spokespersons in service to the prince, but rather political actors within networks of interpersonal relationships. Diplomats often created and intertwined these networks, using them to exercise their political role and for their own personal affairs. Whilst the ambassadors

7 “*Da diventar un leone.*” ASV, FB, II, 261, fol. 135r. Madrid, 18. 8. 1616. Caetani to Borghese.

8 BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fols. 1r–77v. The author is Cristoforo Caetani (Bishop of Laodicea and Foligno).

9 “*Adulatione nell'esteriore, conservando le private passioni nel secreto*.” ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 238r. Madrid, 11. 10. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

10 “*Quel che si desidera si spera, et quel che si spera si ha per cosa fatta.*” ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 157r. Madrid, 09. 7. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

11 See: Pierre BOURDIEU, *Practical Reason. On the Theory of Action*, Stanford 1998, pp. 1–9. Also Felipe E. RUAN, *Picaro and Cortesano: Identity and the Forms of Capital in Early Modern Spanish Picaresque Narrative and Courtesy Literature*, Lewisburg 2011, pp. 122–124.

12 About the virtues of a perfect ambassador see: Daniela FRIGO, “*Per ben negoziare*” in *Spagna: un memoriale del primo Seicento del mantovano Annibale Iberti*, Cheiron 17–18, 1992, pp. 289–306; EADEM, *Virtù politiche e “pratica delle corti”: l’immagine dell’ambasciatore tra Cinque e Seicento*, in: Chiara Continisio – Cesare Mozzarelli (edd.), *Repubblica e virtù. Pensiero politico e Monarchia Cattolica fra XVI e XVII secolo*, Roma 1995, pp. 355–376; Antonio ÁLVAREZ-OSSORIO, *Proteo en palacio: el arte de la disimulación y la simulación del cortesano*, in: Miguel Morán – Bernardo J. García (edd.), *El Madrid de Velázquez y Calderón. Villa y Corte en el siglo XVII*, vol. I, Madrid 2000, pp. 111–137; Vittorio DINI, *Il governo della prudenza. Virtù dei privati e disciplina dei custodi*, Milano 2000; Stefano ANDRETTA, *L’arte della prudenza*, Roma 2006.

represented the crown, they often also acted as brokers of patronage resources. They were not only working for their king, but for their kin; acting “*as heads of their families, as patrons of their clients and friends of their friends.*”<sup>13</sup> In many cases it has been shown that the ambassadors maintained multiple and volatile political loyalties.<sup>14</sup> On one hand, personal networks and family relationships helped Antonio Caetani strengthen his role at the court of Madrid, while serving the papacy and his noble family at the same time.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, his nunciature may be summarized as continuous research of balance to satisfy both the papal wishes and to fulfil the desires of Lerma and his adherents. In the future, Caetani’s role as papal nuncio in Madrid became rather uncomfortable. As a privilege interlocutor and an exponent of a family fully dedicated to the Spanish crown, it became difficult to accommodate the relationship between the groups of power that dominated the two courts.

## A political decision

When Camillo Borghese was elected Pope Paul V in 1605, the Caetanis entered the orbit of the papal family, even though this noble Roman family had strengthened its own position within the Curia during the last decades of the sixteenth century. The bond with the papal families was fundamental to understand the behaviour of the Roman elites. The papacy clientele system was based on spiritual resources and tended towards creating groups of power that supported the reigning papal family. The relations between the latter and the nobility were more of interdependence rather than supremacy<sup>16</sup> and were strongly subjected

13 Hillard VON THIESEN, *Switching Roles in Negotiation, Levels of Diplomatic Communication Between Pope Paul V Borghese (1605–1621) and the Ambassadors of Philip III*, in: Stefano Andretta – Stéphane Péquignot – Marie-Karine Schaub (edd.), *Paroles de négociateurs. L’entretien dans la pratique diplomatique de la fin du Moyen Âge à la fin du XIXe siècle*, Roma 2010, p. 153.

14 Carlos J. HERNANDO SÁNCHEZ, *Espanoles e italianos. Nación y lealtad en el Reino de Nápoles durante las Guerras de Italia*, in: Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio – Bernardo J. García (edd.), *La Monarquía de las Naciones. Patria, nación y naturaleza en la monarquía de España*, Madrid 2004, pp. 423–482; Megan K. WILLIAMS, *Dui Fratelli... Con Dui Principi: Family and Fidelity on a Failed Diplomatic Mission*, *Journal of Early Modern History* 14, n. 6, 2010, pp. 579–611; Marika KEBLUSEK – Badeloch V. NOLDUS (edd.), *Double Agents. Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden 2011; José MARTÍNEZ MILLÁN and others (edd.), *La doble lealtad: entre el servicio al Rey y la obligación a la Iglesia*, Madrid 2014 (= *Librosdelacorte.es*, monográfico 1); Fabrizio D’AVENIA, *Lealtà alla prova: “Casa”, Monarchia, Chiesa. La carriera politica del cardinale Giannettino Doria (1573–1642)*, *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2, 2015, pp. 45–72.

15 Paolo PERIATI, *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)*, *Librosdelacorte.es* 8, nr. 12, 2016, pp. 7–24.

16 Renata AGO Sovrano *pontefice e società di corte. Competizioni cerimoniali e politica nella seconda metà del XVII secolo*, in: Maria A. Visceglia – Catherine Brice (edd.), *Cérémonial et rituel à Rome (XVIe–XIXe siècle)*, Roma, 1997, pp. 225–226; Eadem, *Carriere e clientele nella Roma barocca*, Roma 1990.

to the physiological transience of papal power.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the alliances had to conform to this particular configuration, showing their volatile and blurred boundaries. As revealed by Wolfgang Reinhard, the networks – based on fidelity and devotion among friends, patrons, and clients – were necessary to give Roman politics the framework to guarantee a functioning system of rules. They were protection in case of changing of personal interests, primarily because self-realization was possible only in and through such networks.<sup>18</sup> Due to this interwoven networks, the clientele system that bound the noble families to each other influenced the political choices within the Roman court.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, as demonstrated by Mario Rosa, the distribution of the ecclesiastical benefices and pensions was fundamental for the consolidation of the social-economic status of the pastoral cadre and for the building of the patron-clients relations.<sup>20</sup> The Spanish high nobility tried to benefit as much as possible from the clientele system based on the relations with the Roman court,<sup>21</sup> while papal families played a primary role, receiving Spanish feudal concessions in Naples as compensation.<sup>22</sup> Maria Antonietta Visceglia stressed this point when she wrote that Spanish policy in Rome “consisted in attracting papal families into the orbit of Spain

- 17 Wolfgang REINHARD, *Amici e creature. Micropolitica della curia romana nel XVII secolo*, Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica 2, 2001, p. 16. Also: Irene FOSI, *All'ombra dei Barberini: fedeltà e servizio nella Roma barocca*, Roma 1997; Eadem, *Amici, creature, parenti: la corte romana osservata da storici tedeschi*, Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica 2, 2002, pp. 53–58.
- 18 Birgit EMICH (ed.), *Wolfgang Reinhard zum 80. Geburtstag am 10. April 2017. Kleinere Schriften zur Rom-Forschung herausgegeben für die “Italien-AG”*, Roma 2017, pp. 114–131; Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Politica internazionale, fazione e partiti nella Curia romana del tardo Cinquecento*, Rivista storica italiana 127, n. 3, 2015, pp. 721–769. On the concepts of “friendship” and “political friendship” as *Opportunitätsstrukturen*, see: Vincenz LEUSCHNER, *Politische Freundschaften*, Baden–Baden, 2011, pp. 11–47.
- 19 Wolfgang REINHARD, *Freunde und Kreaturen, “Verflechtung” als Konzept zur Erforschung historischer Führungsgruppen, Römische Oligarchie um 1600*, München 1979.
- 20 Mario ROSA, *La Curia romana in età moderna*, Roma 2013, pp. 57–99. About this topic: Idem, *Curia romana e pensioni ecclesiastiche: fiscalità pontificia nel Mezzogiorno (secoli XVI–XVII)*, Quaderni Storici 14, 1979, pp. 1015–1055; Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Burocrazia, mobilità sociale e patronage alla corte di Roma tra Cinque e Seicento*, Roma moderna e contemporanea 3, 1995, pp. 11–55; Massimo C. GIANNINI, *Loro e la tiara: la costruzione dello spazio fiscale italiano della Santa Sede, 1560–1620*, Bologna 2003.
- 21 Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Convergencias y conflictos: La monarquía católica y la Santa Sede (siglos XV–XVIII)*, Studia historica. Historia moderna 26, 2004, pp. 155–190; Carlos J. HERNANDO SÁNCHEZ (ed.), *Roma y España un crisol de la cultura europea en la Edad Moderna*, Madrid 2007; José MARTÍNEZ MILLÁN, *El triunfo de Roma. Las relaciones entre el Papado y la Monarquía Católica durante el siglo XVII*, in: José Martínez Millán – Manuel Rivero Rodríguez (edd.), *Centros de poder italianos en la monarquía hispánica (siglos XV–XVIII)*, vol. I, Madrid 2010, pp. 549–682; Elisa NOVI CHAVARRIA, *Servizio regio e dignità ecclesiastiche nel governo della Monarchia Universale. Note introduttive*, Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica 2, 2015, pp. 7–24.
- 22 See: Wolfgang REINHARD, *Ämterlaufbahn und Familienstatus. Der Aufstieg des Hauses Borghese 1537–1621*, Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken 54, 1974, pp. 328–427.

through the concession of Neapolitan estates” with the purpose of consolidating the Spanish faction in Rome, together with “the great and small Roman nobility ... who were divided by profound rivalries based on titles, encomiendas, knightly customs and pensions.”<sup>23</sup> This custom will be revealed as the cement that strengthened the political bonds between the groups of power in the orbits of the courts of Madrid and Rome, essentially a *do ut des* which tended to renew and maintain the political and economic status. The concessions of the ecclesiastical benefices, pensions, and dispensations or the acquisitions of fiefdoms, titles and personal rewards will come back often in the Caetani’s correspondence. They were an essential practice to give him the status of main interlocutor, to obtain favours, and to guarantee prestige and high esteem for the nunciature.

It was during the papacy of Clement VIII that the young Antonio Caetani received several benefices and ecclesiastical titles and took his first steps in service to the Church. In one instance, in 1596, he went along with his uncle, the Cardinal Enrico Caetani, to the court of King Sigismund Vasa to accomplish an extraordinary apostolic mission. Another time, in 1600, he accompanied the Cardinal-Nephew Pietro Aldobrandini to Florence, to observe the celebrations of the marriage of Maria de’ Medici with the King Henry IV of France.

It was the papacy of Paul V that represented a real turning point for the Caetanis.<sup>24</sup> Antonio, from being a creature of the Pope Aldobrandini,<sup>25</sup> gave his loyalty to the new powerful Cardinal-Nephew Scipione Borghese.<sup>26</sup> The “great friendship”<sup>27</sup> of Pope Borghese towards the Caetanis had its roots in the strong relationship with the Patriarch of Alexandria Camillo Caetani. The former had been sent as nuncio to Madrid, where he was received by the ordinary papal legate Camillo Caetani with “all reverences and honours.”<sup>28</sup> In the rooms of the Roman court, a bond and a feeling of congeniality was nurtured due to the satires

23 Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Factions in the Sacred College in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, in: Gianvittorio Signorotto – Maria A. Visceglia (edd.), *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492–1700*, Cambridge 2002, p. 126.

24 Antonio Caetani was nominated Archbishop of Capua (1605), and then sent to the Imperial court as nuncio (1607), while his younger brother Bonifacio Caetani was appointed Cardinal and Governor of Romagna (1606).

25 See: AC, Misc. 50608. Rome, 13. 9. 1599. Antonio Caetani to Camillo Caetani.

26 Valerio CASTRONOVO, *Borghese Caffarelli, Scipione*, in: DBI, vol. XII, Roma 1971, pp. 620–624; Volker REINHARDT, *Kardinal Scipione Borghese (1605–1633). Vermögen, Finanzen und sozialer Aufstieg eines Papstnepoten*, Tübingen 1984; Birgit EMICH, *Bürokratie und Nepotismus unter Paul V. (1605–1621). Studien zur frühneuzeitlichen Mikropolitik in Rom*, Stuttgart 2001; Martin FABER, *Entweder Nepot oder Protektor. Scipione Borghese als Kardinalprotektor von Deutschland (1611–1633)*, in: Richard Bösel – Grete Klingenstein – Alexander Koller (edd.), *Kaiserhof-Papsthof (16.–18. Jahrhundert)*, Wien 2006, pp. 59–65.

27 “Amicissimo”. BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fol. 17v.

28 “Molto honorato, accarezzato, et riverito.” Ibidem.

composed by Bonifacio Caetani, Antonio's younger brother, against Pietro Aldobrandini.<sup>29</sup> This irreverence pleased Pope Borghese because of the well-known hostility between these two papal families,<sup>30</sup> a rivalry based on amassing Neapolitan fiefdoms,<sup>31</sup> and on the marriages among the Italian noble houses. In essence, the marriage alliances and the purchase of the fiefs moved the noble families closer to the Roman court and the papal families. It gave them the opportunity to achieve success and to consolidate their acquired socio-economic status.<sup>32</sup>

It is not a surprise that Antonio Caetani was appointed to the Spanish nunciature when the resident Nuncio Decio Carafa had to be replaced at the end of 1611. In addition to the aforementioned reasons, this choice was further influenced by the long-time closeness of the Caetani family with the Crown of Castile. This would have meant more possibilities to promote the interests of the papal House in Madrid. Furthermore, as Tomáš Černušák revealed in a recent article,<sup>33</sup> Bonifacio Caetani and Pietro Caetani (Duke of Sermoneta) co-ordinated intrigues and personal alliances within the Roman court to beat any other candidates for the position.

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- 29 Gaspare DE CARO, *Caetani, Bonifacio*, in: DBI, vol. XVI, Roma 1973, p. 135; Ludwig von PASTOR, *Storia dei papi*, vol. XII, Roma 1930, p. 64. Also: Elena FASANO GUARINI, *Aldobrandini, Pietro*, in: DBI, vol. II, Roma 1960, pp. 107–112.
  - 30 M. A. VISCEGLIA, *Roma papale*, pp. 110–171. Another point of view: Tracy L. EHRLICH, *Pastoral Landscape and Social Politics in Baroque Rome*, in: Michel Conan (ed.), *Baroque Garden Cultures: Emulation, Sublimation, Subversion*, Washington 2005, pp. 131–181.
  - 31 Giovanni MUTO, *La feudalità meridionale tra crisi economica e ripresa politica*, Studi storici Luigi Simeoni 36, 1986, pp. 29–55; Angelantonio SPAGNOLETTI, *Principi e Señores Grandes nell'Italia spagnola*, Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica 2, 1993, pp. 112–140; Giuseppe GALASSO (ed.), *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo, 1494–1622*, in: Storia di Napoli, vol. II, Napoli 2006, pp. 949–997. Also: Thomas J. DANDELET – John A. MARINO, *Spain in Italy. Politics, Society, and Religion 1500–1700*, Leiden 2007; Isabel E. ALONSO-MUÑUMER, *Nobleza, poder y mecenazgo en tiempos de Felipe III. Nápoles y el conde de Lemos*, Madrid 2007.
  - 32 Christoph WEBER, *Senatus Divinus. Verbogene Strukturen im Kardinalskollegium der frühen Neuzeit (1500–1800)*, Frankfurt am Main 1996; Irene FOSI – Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *Marriage and politics at the papal court in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, in: Trevor Dean – Kate Lowe (edd.), *Marriage in Italy, 1300–1650*, New York 1998, pp. 197–224. On the Borghese: Wolfgang REINHARD, *Papstfinanz und Nepotismus unter Paul V. (1605–1621)*, Stuttgart 1974; Idem, *Papal Power and Family Strategy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, in: Robert G. Asch – Adolf M. Birke (edd.), *Princes, Patronage and Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, Oxford 1991, pp. 329–356; Bertrand FORCLAZ, *Le relazioni complesse tra signore e vassalli. La famiglia Borghese e i suoi feudi nel Seicento*, in: Maria A. Visceglia (ed.), *La nobiltà romana in età moderna. Profili istituzionali e pratiche sociali*, Roma 2001, pp. 165–201; Antonio MENNITI IPPOLITO, *Paolo V e la Curia*, in: Religiosa Archivorum Custodia, IV Centenario della Fondazione dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano (1612–2012), Città del Vaticano 2015, pp. 87–98.
  - 33 Tomáš ČERNUŠÁK, *Služba papeži versus služba vlastní rodině. Příklad pražského nuncia Antonia Caetaniho*, FHB 32, 2017, pp. 129–141.

Being part of a *filospagnola* family was a strong point in favour of Antonio Caetani. It is worthwhile to reference a letter sent by Bonifacio Caetani to the King Philip III of Spain in 1615 to better understand the Caetanis' perception of their loyalty. In this letter, he asserted that the family was not linked to the Crown of Castile as vassals, but by election.<sup>34</sup> They were subjects not because of the circumstances or because they were forced, but they were specifically chosen. The convergence was possible due to a series of arranged marriages, leading to a closer relationship with the other important Neapolitan families, and consequently with the main representatives of the Spanish nobility.<sup>35</sup> It is not a coincidence that the family had been defined "*more Spanish than Roman*"<sup>36</sup> by the Spanish ambassador in Rome.

To summarize, the pope judged Antonio Caetani's profile appropriate to pursue the political agenda of the papacy and to re-establish a good relationship with the court of Madrid. The conclusion was "*to temper shadows and suspects, that ... were spreading between His Holiness and the Spanish Majesty*."<sup>37</sup>

At the time that the Archbishop of Capua received the General Instruction,<sup>38</sup> political relations between Rome and Madrid were not at their best. Rumours about a pope favourable to an anti-Spanish alliance, made by the French crown and the Duchy of Savoy (claiming strategic territories in northern Italy),<sup>39</sup> had persisted from the previous year. During the final months of 1611, this difficult situation was worsened by the hesitations of the Roman Curia to consider the request of Lerma to simultaneously elect two Spanish cardinals within the Sacred College. This issue was defined by Antonio Caetani as the "*most dangerous hurdle*"<sup>40</sup> of his entire nunciature, which came to a favourable end for the Crown of Castile four years later. In addition, a harsh jurisdictional dispute over the assets of the vacant diocese of Zaragoza developed between the Apostolic Camera and the local ecclesiastical authorities.<sup>41</sup> This issue was managed too rigidly by Decio Carafa,

34 AGS, E, leg. 1001, fols. 258r–259r. Capua, 16. 4. 1615. Bonifacio Caetani to Philip III.

35 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, pp. 57–77.

36 "*Mas española que Romana*." AGS, E, leg. 997, s. fol. Roma, 27. 7. 1612. Francisco de Castro to Philip III.

37 "*Diluire insieme quell'ombra et sospetti, che [...] s'andavano seminando tra Sua Beatitudine et quella Maestà*." BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fol. 48r.

38 Silvano GIORDANO (ed.), *Le istruzioni generali di Paolo V ai diplomatici pontifici 1605–1621*, vol. II, Tübingen 2003, pp. 783–812. Also: BAV, Vat. Lat., 13460, fols. 21v–55v.

39 BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fols. 48v–49r. See: Pierpaolo MERLIN – Frédéric IEVA (edd.), *Monferrato 1613. La vigilia di una crisi europea*, Roma 2016, p. 25. On this topic: Pierpaolo MERLIN, *Il trattato di Bruzolo e la politica sabauda negli equilibri europei del primo Seicento*, Segusium 47, 2010, pp. 13–19.

40 "*Il più pericoloso scoglio*." ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 100r. Madrid, 18. 4. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

41 S. GIORDANO, *Le istruzioni generali*, II, pp. 807–808. About: BAV, Barb. Lat., 6910, fols. 47v–48r. Madrid, 18. 12. 1611. Caetani to Borghese.



whose behaviour made him increasingly unpopular in the eyes of the Spanish court. They complained until the request for a replacement,<sup>42</sup> followed by a request for separation of the nuncio's office from the functions of the General Collector,<sup>43</sup> was granted.

As a compensation for their favourable disposition toward the Spanish demands, Paul V and Scipione Borghese asked the replacement of the Spanish ambassador in Rome, Francisco de Castro (Count of Castro and Duke of Taurisano).<sup>44</sup> The pope and the Cardinal-Nephew considered de Castro part of an autonomous group of power within the Spanish Nation in Rome,<sup>45</sup> and they were concerned about the excessive closeness of the ambassador's family (the Lemos) to the former Cardinal-Nephew Pietro Aldobrandini, whom they considered their enemy.<sup>46</sup>

The conflict between the Borghese and the Aldobrandini families was replicated within the group of power<sup>47</sup> that dominated the court of Madrid – the Sandovals. Specifically, this refers to the hostility between those whom Caetani defined as the “*partials*”<sup>48</sup> of the Lemos family and the faction loyal to the king's favourite (and his son, Cristóbal Gómez de Sandoval, Duke of Uceda).<sup>49</sup>

42 Georg LUTZ, *Carafa, Decio*, in: DBI, vol. XIX, Roma 1976, p. 523.

43 AGS, E, leg. 996, fol. 286. Madrid, 1. 10. 1611. Consejo de Estado. Also: ASV, SS, Principi, 56, II, fol. 352r. Tivoli, 2. 11. 1614. Castro to Borghese; Ibidem, fol. 353r. Rome, 1. 11. 1614. Borghese to Castro. See: S. GIORDANO, *Le istruzioni generali*, II, pp. 794–804.

44 Silvano GIORDANO, *Istruzioni di Filippo III ai suoi ambasciatori a Roma 1598–1621*, in: Elena Fasano Guarini (ed.), *Politica, fazioni, istituzioni nell'Italia spagnola dall'incoronazione di Carlo V alla pace di Westfalia (1648)*, Roma 2006, pp. 65–68; Valentina FAVARÒ, *Carriere in movimento. Francisco Ruiz de Castro e la monarchia di Filippo III*, Palermo 2013.

45 Thomas J. DANDELET, *Spanish Conquest and Colonization at the Center of the Old World: The Spanish Nation in Rome 1555–1625*, *The Journal of Modern History* 69, n. 3, 1997, pp. 479–511. Generally: Maria A. VISCEGLIA, *L'ambasciatore spagnolo alla corte di Roma. Linee di lettura di una figura politica*, *Roma moderna e contemporanea* 15, 1–3, 2007, pp. 3–27; EADEM (ed.), *Diplomazia e politica della Spagna a Roma: figure di ambasciatori*, Roma 2008; Maximiliano BARRIO GOZALO, *La Embajada de España ante la corte de Roma en el siglo XVII: ceremonial y práctica del buen gobierno*, *Studia historica. Historia moderna* 31, 2009, pp. 237–273.

46 AGS, E, leg. 997, s. fol. Roma, 8. 11. 1612, Castro to Philip III; Ibidem. Madrid, 27. 12. 1612. Consejo de Estado.

47 Among others: Francesco BENIGNO, *Politica e fazioni*, *Storica* 15, 1999, pp. 125–134; Rubén GONZÁLEZ CUERVA – Valentina CALDARI (edd.), *Los secretos mecanismos de las cortes: Facciones en la Europa moderna*, Madrid 2015 (= *Librosdelacorte.es* monográfico 2); Mathieu CAESAR (ed.), *Factional Struggles: Divided Elites in European Cities and Courts (1400–1750)*, Leiden 2017; Rubén GONZÁLEZ CUERVA – Alexander KOLLER (edd.), *A Europe of Courts, a Europe of Factions. Political Groups at Early Modern Centres of Power (1550–1700)*, Leiden 2017. Also: Luis CABRERA DE CÓRDOBA, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la Corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614*, Madrid 1857; José MARTÍNEZ MILLÁN – Maria A. VISCEGLIA (edd.), *La Monarquía de Felipe III*, Madrid 2008.

48 “*Partiali*.” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 182r. Madrid, 1. 8. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

49 F. BENIGNO, *L'ombra*, pp. 66–94; Regina M. PÉREZ MARCOS, *El Duque de Uceda*, in: Luis Suárez Fernández – José A. Escudero (edd.), *Los validos*, Madrid 2005, pp. 177–242.

The Lemos were close to Pietro Aldobrandini and their main representative was Catalina de Zúñiga y Sandoval (Countess of Lemos and sister of Lerma). The words of the nuncio clarify conflicting relationships among them. He describes the reactions of the court about a possible sudden death of Catalina de Zúñiga: “*It is believed that this death will make the Duke of Uceda happy ... and the Duke of Lerma ... will console himself soon, because it seems that his respect for her was due to reverence rather than affection*.”<sup>50</sup> The entire court was aware of her great influence on Lerma and she never missed a chance to intervene in the political decision-making process to support their sons: the ambassador Francisco de Castro and the Viceroy of Naples, Pedro Fernández de Lemos. According to the Countess of Lemos, her expectation was that the removal of her son from the role he had in Rome could happen only for a similar or more prestigious role in government. She wanted Francisco to succeed his brother in Naples, once Pedro Fernández became the President of the Council of Italy. Thus, she became an insuperable obstacle in the nuncio’s path, as she was frequently busy planning “*unbelievable trickeries for those who do not witness them*.”<sup>51</sup> Antonio Caetani recounted this in an attempt to justify his difficulties in satisfying the pope’s will.

The acrimony towards Francisco de Castro continued for at least five years; it was a growing obsession for the pope.<sup>52</sup> The request for a substitution soon became a *conditio sine qua non*, which strongly affected the diplomatic negotiations during the Caetani’s nunciature and did not help to diffuse the tensions between the two courts. The nuncio was urged to resolve this negotiation, which was strictly dependent on the balance of power within the court of Madrid. Commands from Rome were sent as powerful means to persuade Lerma that the double election of Spanish cardinals would never take place if de Castro kept his role. For Scipione Borghese, it did not seem “*convenient to give such kind of favours in time of an ambassador who is an enemy and declares it publicly*.”<sup>53</sup> These complaints occurred repeatedly during the nunciature, so much so as to have implications in the relationship between the Borgheses and the Nuncio. Caetani was accused of delaying his

50 “*Si crede che questa morte sarà di gran contento al Duca di Uzeda, ... et l’istesso Duca di Lerma ... sia per consolarsene presto, parendo che il rispetto che gli portava nascesse più tosto da riverenza, che da affettione.*” ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 238r. Madrid, 11. 10. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

51 “*Artifitij che non sono credibili a chi non gli vede.*” ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 181v. Madrid, 27. 7. 1614. Caetani to Porfirio Feliciani. See: Paolo PERIATI, *A feared Woman. Family strategy and political authority of Catalina de Zúñiga, Countess of Lemos*, in: Máximo G. Fernández (ed.), *Familia, cultura material y formas de poder en la España moderna*, Valladolid 2015, pp. 1015–1023.

52 Paolo PERIATI, *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* 102, n. 1, 2018, pp. 67–96.

53 “*Conveniente far gratie simili in tempo d’un ambasciatore che fa alla peggio et si dichiara nemico pubblicamente.*” ASV, SS, Spagna 60, fol. 19r. Rome, 4. 1. 1613. Borghese to Caetani.

obligations in order to have good relations with Lerma and his adherents;<sup>54</sup> and managing his private affairs, rather than the interests of the papal family.<sup>55</sup>

## Negotiations and reputation

In Madrid, Antonio Caetani had to serve not only the Cardinal-Nephew “*but even every member of his family and the dependents.*”<sup>56</sup> At the same time, he had to defend the Borghese family’s political choices and their reputation at the Spanish court. He was expected to closely watch and discredit all those who presented at court for personal purposes, especially those that were not well-disposed toward the papal family. In the summer of 1612, Caetani needed to dispel any reports about a possible inclination of Paul V toward the French crown, following the decision to arrange a marriage between Marcantonio Borghese (Prince of Sulmona and main laic representative of the papal family) with Maria Camilla Orsini (daughter of Virginio Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, who had ties with the Queen of France).<sup>57</sup> An inclination that was “*clear to the most reasonable men, but the whole court was suspicious of it*”<sup>58</sup> (as reported by the Duke of Poli), particularly because the Spanish ambassador was also pressing to arrange the nuptials with a daughter of Filippo Colonna, Constable of Naples and servant of the Crown of Castile.<sup>59</sup>

Sometimes, cardinals and their trustworthy persons would embark on the journey to Madrid to handle their interests: this was an occasion for concern to Scipione Borghese.<sup>60</sup> Cardinal Francesco Sforza, among others, reoccurred in the nunciature’s correspondence. The Cardinal-Nephew considered Sforza a restless man, who was “*full of bizarre ideas*”<sup>61</sup> and “*dedicated to slanders.*”<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, he was also considered a close friend of the Spanish ambassador, with whom he was continuously “*fantasizing about unattainable things*

54 ASV, SS, ND, 240, fols. 234r–235r. Rome, s. d. Feliciani to Caetani.

55 P. PERIATI, *The Pope, the King*, p. 22.

56 “*Ma anco qualsivoglia familiare e dependente.*” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8281, fol. 11v. Madrid, 7. 4. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

57 ASV, FB, I, 951, fols. 82r–83v. Rome, 20. 6. 1612. Borghese to Caetani.

58 “*Traluceva ai più sensati, ma che tutta la nostra Corte se ne insospeti.*” AGS, E, leg. 999, s. fol. Poli, 1. 2. 1613. Relazione del Duca di Poli.

59 AGS, E, leg. 997, s. fol. Rome, 20. 6. 1612. Castro to Philip III.

60 For example, the visit of a Venetian prelate called Monsignor Marino (1616), and the potential mission of the Dominican friar Cornelio del Monte (1617), both agents close to Aldobrandini. See: ASV, FB, II, 261, fols. 148r–149r. Madrid, 12. 9. 1616. Caetani to Borghese; ASV, FB, II, 260, fols. 80r–81r. Madrid, 31. 5. 1617. Caetani to Borghese.

61 “*Ha mille grilli per la testa.*” ASV, FB, II, 260, fol. 225v. Madrid, 19. 11. 1617. Caetani to Borghese.

62 “*Dedito alle maledicenze.*” ASV, FB, II, 348, fol. 233r. Rome, 9. 12. 1615. Borghese to Caetani.

against His Holiness.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, Caetani had to discredit him by underlining his dissolute way of life. A similar situation was the instance when the Count of Castro supported the candidacy of Cardinal Sforza to the Archbishopric of Taranto in 1612.<sup>64</sup> This was a desirable vacant seat later obtained by the nuncio’s brother, Bonifacio – with the approval of the king and the blessing of the Cardinal-Nephew. The latter was also pushing<sup>65</sup> to give a benefice on this archbishopric to his Master of Chamber Giulio Pavoni, who had been endorsed by the nuncio for the Cross of the Brotherhood of Knights of Saint Jacob.<sup>66</sup> In the end, Caetani was sure that Sforza’s effort to visit Madrid would be useless, because “*he will spend his money, he will have as much trouble as he wants and,*” without any doubt, he “*will return to Italy empty-handed.*”<sup>67</sup>

As mentioned, the relations between Rome and Madrid were intertwined with their common Neapolitan interests – even more so when one of the Lemos was the Viceroy of Naples and the other was the ambassador to Rome simultaneously. The pope and the Cardinal-Nephew feared that their family interests could be damaged by the two brothers, whose politics were considered to be oriented towards their private interests and to strengthen their family’s presence in Italy. Consequently, Scipione Borghese requested to be warned about any political moves and he asked Caetani to watch the agents close to the Lemos, within the Spanish court. One such instance was that of Juan Montoya de Cardona, regent of the Collateral Council in Naples, who was in Madrid at the beginning of January 1615. According to the nuncio, Montoya immediately proved himself “*not to be devoted to the Church,*”<sup>68</sup> and a “*foppish flatterer,*”<sup>69</sup> strictly loyal to Viceroy Pedro Fernández de Lemos.<sup>70</sup> When Antonio Caetani met the regent in person, the latter behaved aggressively, not losing the opportunity “*to curse ... the poison of his evil intention*”<sup>71</sup> about the fief of Rigatti: one of the longest and harsher disputes between the Borghese family and the Lemos

63 “*Chimerizzando innovationi per dar poco gusto a Sua Santità.*” ASV, FB, II, 370, fol. 14r. Rome, 6. 4. 1614. Borghese to Caetani.

64 AGS, E, leg. 997, s. fol. Rome, 14. 8. 1612. Castro to Philip III. About this topic: Vittorio DE MARCO, *La diocesi di Taranto nell’età moderna: 1560–1713*, Roma 1988. Also: Mario SPEDICATO, *Il mercato della mitra*, Bari 1996.

65 Among other letters: BAV, Barb. Lat., 8279, fols. 18r–19r. Madrid, 13. 1. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

66 See: BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fol. 71r; BAV, Barb. Lat., 8278, fols. 4r, 48, 112r.

67 “*Spenderà il suo danaro, avrà strapazzo quanto ne vuole e ... se ne tornerà in Italia con le mosche in mano.*” ASV, FB, II, 266, fol. 163r. Madrid, 1. 10. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

68 “*Poco affetto alle cose della Chiesa.*” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 9r. Madrid, 9. 1. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

69 “*Adulatore affettatissimo.*” Ibidem.

70 Previously Montoya had been part of the Borghese’s clientele. See: 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, pp. 83–108.

71 “*Vomitare ... il veleno della mala intentione che teneva.*” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 10r. Madrid, 17. 1. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

brothers.<sup>72</sup> The fief was located in the Papal States, right on the border with Abruzzo Ultra, and belonged to the Mareri family. However, it was occupied by the soldiers of the Viceroy of Naples in the summer 1612 with the excuse that it was a den of criminals<sup>73</sup> and had no approval from Madrid. Paul V demanded the restitution of the fief, accusing Francesco Mareri (nephew and enemy of the legitimate feudal lord) of having usurped it with the help of Francisco de Castro. Consequently, the papal family interpreted the dispute over Rigatti as “*a new chapter of the Lemos-Aldobrandini's conspiracy*”<sup>74</sup> against them.

The precautions the nuncio was asked to perform were meant to avoid misinterpretations of the intentions of the Apostolic See. They were to prevent any loss of reputation of the papal family and to preserve themselves in position as sole interlocutors for the crown. This was a fundamental point that Caetani remembered to Lerma during an audience, when he clearly affirmed that “*the king's faction in Rome must have the first correspondence*”<sup>75</sup> with Borghese, and not with Aldobrandini.

As previously stated, the relations between Rome and Madrid were mainly based on the distribution of pensions, titles and benefices. From the beginning of 1612, Scipione Borghese had been pressing the nuncio to get a Spanish *naturaleza*<sup>76</sup> and grasp the benefits on the diocese of Jaén, the value of which was a thousand ducats.<sup>77</sup> However, his primary goal was to obtain the “*title of the Abbey of the Parco*”.<sup>78</sup> This was a negotiation that, despite Caetani's perseverance, took the entire nunciature and finally ended in 1618 due to the royal chaplain Andrea Mastrillo. The nuncio supposed Mastrillo deserved to be particularly favoured because “*his reputation was exposed to a great risk for the service*.”<sup>79</sup>

72 P. PERIATI, *Mettere fine*, p. 86.

73 ASV, FB, II, 343, fols. 106r–107v, Rome, 23. 9. 1612. Borghese to Caetani; Rome, BA, Ms. 2305. See: Claudio DE LEONI, *Espugnate il castello di Rigatti, è un covo di banditi provati*, Il Foglio di Lumen 28, 2010, pp. 2–6.

74 Maria A. VISCEGLIA (ed.), *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna*, Roma 2013, p. 136.

75 “*La fattione del Re in Roma habbia prima corrispondenza*.” ASV, FB, 266, II, fol. 145v. Madrid, 29. 8. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

76 See: Angelantonio SPAGNOLETTI, *El concepto de naturaleza, nación y patria en Italia y el Reino de Nápoles con respecto a la Monarquía de los Austrias*, in: A. Álvarez-Ossorio – B. J. García (edd.), *La Monarquía de las Naciones*, pp. 483–504; María I. CARZOLIO, *La naturaleza, de la Monarquía de los Habsburgo hasta la de los Borbones. Un estado de la cuestión*, San Miguel de Tucumán 2007.

77 AGS, E, leg. 997, s. fol. Rome, 20. 6. 1612. Castro to Philip III.

78 “*Titolo dell'Abadia del Parco*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8276, fol. 9. Madrid, 27. 5. 1612. Caetani to Borghese. The Abbey of Santa Maria di Altofonte in Sicily. See: Balduino G. BEDINI *Le abbazie cistercensi d'Italia*, Casamari 1980, pp. 174–175.

79 “*La sua riputatione è stata esposta a grandissimo rischio per il servitio*.” ASV, FB, III, 44B, fol. 12r. Madrid, 20. 1. 1618. Caetani to Borghese. Also: AGS, E, leg. 1866, fol. 236. Rome, 29. 1. 1618. Borghese to Philip III. Actually, Andrea Mastrillo became Archbishop of Messina. See: BAV, Urb. Lat., 1117, II, fol. 533v. 19. 1. 1618. Avvisi Spagnoli.

The nuncio's important services, due to his obligation to Scipione Borghese, were fundamental to strengthen the status of the papal family (e.g. the title of Parco for his master and the benefice for Giulio Pavoni).<sup>80</sup> Through trusted ministers or directly himself, Caetani had to submit [to Lerma] dozens of requests for recommendations, pensions and favours for people close to the Borghese family. He also had to submit requests from those who were part of the curial apparatus, which was another fundamental practice in establishing good relations between the two courts. There are a large variety of examples to illustrate these cases. For instance, pensions were asked by the Abbot Galeotto Uffreducci, *cameriere segreto* of Paul V and by the farrier of Scipione Borghese.<sup>81</sup> On another occasion, the nuncio was asked to intervene in favour of the nobleman Giulio Arese, who wanted to be admitted to the Senate of Milan.<sup>82</sup> Another example was the nuncio's negotiation with Lerma for the Spanish nobleman Pedro Deza, who asked to be recommend for a title of marquis, and was later appointed as Count de la Fuente by Philip III.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, there was the recommendation for the Neapolitan poetess Margherita Sarrocchi to obtain a royal privilege, so that she could benefit from the sale and royalties of a newly published poem.<sup>84</sup> In one other situation, Pier Francesco Colonna, Prince of Gallicano, asked to be appointed captain of a company of soldiers in Naples which had remained vacant after the death of his father.<sup>85</sup> This was considered a negotiation without any difficulties by the nuncio because it was "*customary not to deny the continuation of similar offices for deserving Houses.*"<sup>86</sup>

From the beginning of his tenure, Antonio Caetani had worked to ensure that his reputation as a valid interlocutor within the court of Madrid remained in high esteem, thus reinforcing the institutional role of the nunciature office. In order to maintain this, it was necessary to show favour to his family in Spain, who were useful for receiving confidential notices and information.<sup>87</sup> The cultivation of a network of friendships by the nuncio through intercessions and recommendations was important in order to fulfil the private wishes of ministers of the court and gain their trust.

80 BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fol. 71r.

81 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8278, fol. 64r. Madrid, 22. 11. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

82 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 60r. Madrid, 29. 7. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

83 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 47r. Madrid, 29. 7. 1612. Caetani to Borghese; BAV, Barb. Lat., 8279, fol. 43r. Madrid, 19. 1. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

84 BA, Ms. 1222, fols. 353v–354r. Rome, 4. 12. 1613. Borghese to Caetani.

85 ASV, FB, I, 939, fol. 22. Rome, 31. 1. 1614. Borghese to Caetani. An exact date of death of Marzio Colonna was unknown until today. About: Paolo PERIATI, *Note sulla data di morte di Marzio Colonna, duca di Zagarolo e principe di Gallicano*, *Latium* 35, 2018, pp. 39–54.

86 "*Accostumandosi di non negare la continuazione di simili carichi nelle case benemerite.*" ASV, SS, Spagna 60B, fol. 30r. Madrid, 13. 2. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

87 ASV, FB, II, 266, fol. 60r. Madrid, 15. 1. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

Caetani came to Madrid in December 1611 together with his “*nephews, and other family members*.”<sup>88</sup> After a week, the apostolic representative went to the royal residence to meet the king. As “*lords much-loved in that court*,”<sup>89</sup> during this first audience, the nuncio presented his sixteen-year-old nephew Francesco Caetani as a servant of King Philip III,<sup>90</sup> emphasizing the unlimited devotion of the family. The nuncio arrived at the royal palace “*riding a mule covered by a cloak*”<sup>91</sup> with a lavish and honourable ceremony through the streets of Madrid, thanks to the large financial outlay by his relatives. Antonio Caetani had Spanish relations through his mother, Agnesina Colonna. He was connected to the House of Enríquez, one of the most prominent noble families of the kingdoms of Spain, due to his female cousin Vittoria Colonna (Duchess of Medina de Rioseco), widow of Luís Enríquez de Cabrera (*Almirante de Castilla*). The nuncio was also closely related to Pedro Álvarez de Toledo (Marquis of Villafranca) son of Vittoria Colonna of Paliano. De Toledo's second marriage was to Giovanna Pignatelli (Duchess of Terranova),<sup>92</sup> who was a cousin of Caetani and sister of the Neapolitan nobleman Ettore Pignatelli (Duke of Monteleone).<sup>93</sup> Through the Toledo-Colonna line, Caetani was also joined to Victoria Pacheco y Colonna (Marquise of Cerralbo), wife of Gabriel de Velasco y la Cueva (Count of Siruela).

It was not rare for the nuncio's relatives to turn to the intercession of Antonio Caetani to fulfil their wishes or assert their rights. Although Caetani felt obliged to apologize to the pope for being forced to write letters every day “*in favour of this or that, relative or stranger*,”<sup>94</sup> they knew very well in Rome that “*it was not possible to do without giving such satisfactions*.”<sup>95</sup> Therefore, the letters of recommendation “*never gave any annoyance*”<sup>96</sup> because this practice was necessary, useful, and gave dignity and prestige to the nunciature; cementing the relationship between the two courts. In this regard, it is very interesting the letter written in the summer of 1613 in which the nuncio emphasized the political importance of granting some graces requested by his cousin Vittoria Colonna for her daughter Ana and for Rodrigo Enríquez de Cabrera (Marquis de Valdunquillo). Caetani

88 “*Nipoti e alcuni della mia famiglia*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 6910, fol. 47r. Madrid, 18. 12. 1611. Caetani to Borghese.

89 “*Signori amatissimi in quella Corte*.” BAV, Urb. Lat., 1081, fol. 39r. 9. 2. 1613. Avvisi di Roma.

90 BAV, Barb. Lat., Ms. 6030, fol. 59v. Becoming the Duke of Sermoneta, Francesco Caetani was appointed as *Grande de España* by Philip III in 1616, *de facto* operating a real break with Scipione Borghese, who asked the same title for Marcantonio Borghese.

91 “*Sopra una mula di mantelletto*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8275, fol. 3r. Madrid, 3. 1. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

92 She was the widow of Carlo d'Aragona Tagliavia (Prince of Castelvetro, Duke of Terranova).

93 About: Berardo GONZAGA, *Memorie delle famiglie nobili delle Province Meridionali*, Napoli 1875.

94 “*A favore di questo o di quello, o sia parente o estraneo*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8279, fol. 27r. Madrid, 19. 1. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

95 “*Far di meno di dar simili satisfationi*.” ASV, FB, I, 939, fol. 293r. Rome, 3. 1. 1615. Borghese to Caetani.

96 “*Mai alcuna molestia*.” Ibidem.

underscore how the negotiation was supported by the authority of Lerma and Uceda who, as close relatives, protected the interests of the House of Enríquez as “*their thing*.”<sup>97</sup>

During the nunciature Antonio Caetani came to be considered an enemy of Aldobrandini.<sup>98</sup> He proved to be close to Lerma and his friends such as Rodrigo Calderón (Count de Oliva, Marquis de Siete Iglesias), and the canon Gabriel de Trejo (jurist, councillor of the Inquisition and cardinal in 1615).<sup>99</sup> The closeness of the nuncio to the Lerma-Calderón-Trejo trio was made evident when he affirmed that he was not afraid of political attacks made by the Count of Castro<sup>100</sup> because this group would protect him and never allow any defamations to his person.<sup>101</sup> This closeness was viewed with suspicion by Scipione Borghese; Caetani looked as “*the most involved person of the world*” because of his “*friendships and kinsfolk*.”<sup>102</sup> Being well-accepted and loyal to the Crown of Castile also meant being at the mercy of the will of Lerma. Caetani himself complained about the pressures of the *valido*, who “*had made up his mind to force His Holiness to what he wishes*.”<sup>103</sup>

## Negotiations and representation

The depiction of the court life and its representatives which reached Rome through Caetani's writing was influenced by his personal perceptions and were affected by different situations and occasions.<sup>104</sup> From Caetani's perspective, the court was almost motionless and full of personal jealousies, in which the minutiae took precedence over state's affairs. In Madrid, negotiations were endless and continuously disturbed by venality and flattery. The nuncio sternly expressed “*there was no order and distinction of days as in Rome and in other well-regulated Courts, but often many things are resolved by the circumstance and by chance,*

97 “*Cosa loro*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8282, fol. 62r. Madrid, 9. 7. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

98 According to the nuncio it seemed that Cardinal Aldobrandini planned the trick to discredit him, together with the friends of the Lemos. BAV, Barb. Lat., 8275, fol. 2v. Madrid, 3. 1. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

99 About them: Julián JUDERÍAS, *Un proceso político en tiempo de Felipe III. Don Rodrigo Calderón, marqués de Siete Iglesias. Su vida, su proceso y su muerte*, Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos 13, 1905, pp. 334–365; 14, 1906, pp. 1–31; Santiago MARTÍNEZ HERNÁNDEZ, *Rodrigo Calderón, la sombra del valido. Privanza, favor y corrupción en la corte de Felipe III*, Madrid 2009.

100 AGS, E, leg. 999, s. fol. Rome, 2. 1. 1613. Castro to Philip III.

101 ASV, FB, II, 264, fols. 13r–15r. Madrid, 19. 1. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

102 “*Il più interessato huomo del mondo stante [...] le amicitie et il parentado*.” ASV, FB, II, 263, fols. 180r–182r. Madrid, 27. 7. 1614. Caetani to Feliciani.

103 “*Posto in testa obligar Sua Santità a quel che desidera*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 102r. Madrid, 27. 8. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

104 About: Peter BURKE, *Performing History: the importance of occasions*, Rethinking History 9, n. 1, 2005, pp. 35–52.



rather than diligence.”<sup>105</sup> Powerful individuals such as Lerma and Uceda communicated less than others: Lerma “not by nature, but by being inaccessible,” while Uceda “was truly dark and very secretive.”<sup>106</sup>

Personal interactions and the ability to communicate were a key factor in understanding the interlocutors’ disposition and interpreting their intentions in order to gain their trust. Lerma was described by Caetani as an excellent negotiator and as a person “of an insatiable rapacity.”<sup>107</sup> The entire government depended on him, although it was impossible to speak frankly with him; despite him being a man of good disposition, he was easily incensed.<sup>108</sup> Consequently, it was impossible to “calm him with reasons,”<sup>109</sup> and during meetings it was necessary for the ambassadors to move “with dexterity to not break everything”<sup>110</sup> due to his changeable moods and fickleness.<sup>111</sup> Thus, Lerma could only be persuaded with affection and kindness.<sup>112</sup>

Another individual with ever-increasing authority emerged in the correspondence of the nunciature:<sup>113</sup> the Dominican friar Luis de Aliaga,<sup>114</sup> confessor of Philip III. Caetani repeatedly stressed how this was a distinguished person who must be kept supportive in service to the Church and of the Borghese family, as the king favoured him. Having “the king’s conscience in his hands”<sup>115</sup> made Aliaga the most important minister of Christianity. His opinion was heard for all of the main negotiations concerning religious or state affairs. Caetani remarked that it was better to strive to satisfy his wishes than those of others. Aliaga appears to be the opposite of Lerma; he was moral, a substantial man who “struggled naked”<sup>116</sup> into the political arena. Caetani affirmed this in his writing, basing

105 “Non vi è ordine et distintione di giornate come in Roma et in altre Cortij ben regolate, ma molte cose spesso più che la diligenza, le risolve la congiuntura et il caso.” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 117v. Madrid, 22. 5. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

106 “Non già per natura, ma per essere inaccesibile, ... per esser veramente di natura cupa et secretissima.” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 33v. Madrid, 14. 2. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

107 “D’una rapacità insatiabile.” ASV, FB, II, 266, fol. 77v. Madrid, 28. 2. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

108 Ibidem, fol. 67v. Madrid, 29. 1. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

109 “Quietar con ragioni.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 44v. Madrid, 29. 7. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

110 “Andar destro per non sbarattar ogni cosa.” ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 256r. Madrid, 23. 10. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

111 ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 219r. Madrid, 22. 9. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

112 Ibidem, fol. 27r. Madrid, 12. 2. 1613. Caetani to Borghese; ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 157v. Madrid, 29. 6. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

113 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8275, fol. 1. Madrid, 3. 1. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

114 Bernardo GARCÍA GARCÍA, *El confesor fray Luis Aliaga y la conciencia del rey*, in: Flavio Rurale (ed.), *I religiosi a corte. Teologia, politica e diplomazia in antico regime*, Roma 1998, pp. 159–194; Isabelle POUTRIN, *Cas de conscience et affaires d’État: le ministère du confesseur royal en Espagne sous Philippe III*, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* 3, 2006, pp. 7–28.

115 “In mano la coscienza del Re.” ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 96r. Madrid, 24. 4. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

116 “Lotta nudo.” Ibidem.

his assumptions on the friar never demanding titles or churches. However, even Aliaga was not immune to gifts and favouritism (as per practice).<sup>117</sup>

Lerma and Aliaga's conflicting relationship was criticised by the nuncio as an "*incurable plague*"<sup>118</sup> that infected the monarchy. It was a delicate situation that he needed to be removed from, so Caetani decided that the most convenient approach was to keep both as friends and to not interfere between them "*showing ignorance about their competitions*."<sup>119</sup>

The only negotiations that did not appear to suffer from the impasse were the requests for recommendations, favours and intercessions to the nuncio to obtain benefices, licenses and graces from Rome. Above all, it was fundamental for the service of the Church to give a positive answer to the host of ministers and their secretaries and to the influential men of the court or their family members; and protected both lay and ecclesiastics men. Giving benefits and loans as recompense for gratitude and friendship was a legitimate<sup>120</sup> and necessary obligation. They were necessary to gain the confidence of those men who may be able to provide first-hand news; for the confidants who could support Roman interests; and for those ecclesiastics who would prove to be loyal servants of the pope, firstly following Rome and then Madrid.

Juan de Ciriza, the secretary to the king and to the Duke of Lerma, was one of the principal ministers that would have been opportune to reward. According to the nuncio, Ciriza was an excellent confidant, but moreover, he was "*the door and most likely the only vehicle to introduce and promote all of the most serious negotiations*."<sup>121</sup> At this time (January 1613), he was performing all the responsibilities that had previously been Calderón's. Therefore, it was necessary to fulfil his request for a papal dispensation which would allow him to be part of the Order of Santiago, by overcoming the difficulties of certain constitutional norms. This was particularly important as the secretary proved to be a loyal friend, turning secretly to the nuncio and not trusting any intercessions by the Spanish ambassador in Rome. Likewise, this was true for Melchor Carrillo, the minister of the Italian branch of the Secretariat of State led by Antonio de Aróztegui. He managed the documentation that came from Italy and often informed Caetani about the departures

117 F. BENIGNO, *Lombra*, p. 48, 55.

118 "*Piaga insanabile*." ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 23v. Madrid, 22. 1. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

119 "*Mostrando ignoranza di queste loro gare*." ASV, FB, II, 264, fol. 240r. Madrid, 17. 11. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

120 For example, Leonor de Sandoval y Rojas (Countess of Altamira, sister of Lerma), was nicknamed as "*sponge of the Church of God*" for the ability to gather ecclesiastical benefices for her sons. "*Spugna della Chiesa di Dio*." ASV, FB, II, 263, fol. 245r. Madrid, 21. 9. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

121 "*La porta, e quasi unico mezo, per introdurre e promuovere tutti i negotij gravissimi*." BAV, Barb. Lat., 8279, fol. 14r. Madrid, 16. 1. 1613. Caetani to Borghese. About: José A. ESCUDERO, *Los Secretarios de Estado y del Despacho (1474–1724)*, vol. I, Madrid 1969, pp. 242–243.

of the couriers bound for Rome by helping him dispatch letters.<sup>122</sup> Hence, it was very important to give a grant to Carrillo's young brother Juan Carrillo. In the summer of 1614, he obtained an ecclesiastical benefice to Baños de Montemayor in the diocese of Plasencia. This made the two brothers grateful to Scipione Borghese and brought honour to the intercession of the nuncio.<sup>123</sup>

Caetani additionally intervened in favour of the servants of the Apostolic Camera, as in the case of Lucas Dionisio Gamir, lawyer of the tribunal of the nunciature for Aragon.<sup>124</sup> Gamir proved to be useful in helping the nuncio with the matters of the Council of Aragon. Gamir's primary role was as the agent of the Archbishop of Valencia Isidoro de Aliaga (brother of Luis de Aliaga) and, as such, he had a direct link to the attention of the confessor of the king.<sup>125</sup> Thanks to the efforts of the nuncio and the involvement of Scipione Borghese, the lawyer obtained a prebend of the cathedral of Teruel against a parallel election of another canon, which was made by the *cabildo* of the cathedral.<sup>126</sup>

Taking charge of the requests impetrated by key figures of the government was particularly useful for the nuncio in managing negotiations and approaching the multitude of bureaucratic offices. Understanding the motivations of the representatives of the Spanish nobility was fundamental to strengthen his position as principal interlocutor with Rome; improving his reputation within the court of Madrid while promoting the intercession of the pope.

The Convent of Santa Clara of Gandía, which belonged to the cloistered order of the Colettine Poor Clares, was traditionally close to the Borja family. In April 1612, the nuncio went outside his authority by appointing Catalina de Borja as the abbess of Santa Clara, although she was not old enough to be elected. She was considered a model of morality and the nuns agreed to the selection. Caetani decided to concede the grant requested, as he judged it as in service to the pope. Actually, the main reason was the intense pressure from Lerma and Cardinal Borja (her uncle and her brother) to confirm her without waiting for approval from Rome,<sup>127</sup> which arrived approximately one month later.<sup>128</sup>

122 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8284, fol. 37r. Madrid, 17. 12. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

123 AC, Misc. 372 LV, I, s. fol. Madrid, 24. 8. 1614. Caetani to Borghese.

124 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8278, fol. 74. Madrid, 18. 12. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

125 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8284, fols. 19r–20r. Madrid, 17. 12. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

126 Juan J. POLO RUBIO, *Historia de los obispos de Teruel (1614–1700)*, Zaragoza 2005, pp. 33–35.

127 BAV, Barb. Lat., 8275, fol. 108. Madrid, 14. 4. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

128 BA, Ms. 1222, fol. 73v. Frascati, 23. 5. 1612. Borghese to Caetani.

The same pressures were often exerted by Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas (Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, uncle of Lerma)<sup>129</sup> for his relatives and protégés. He put forth several requests for his “*favourite*,”<sup>130</sup> his personal *contador* and *mayordomo*, Luis de Oviedo. The nuncio underlined the importance of rewarding Oviedo, emphasizing how the cardinal was controlled by him as if he had been “*his soul*.”<sup>131</sup> The Cardinal of Toledo also expressed a strong desire for a dispensation for the *cantoria* of the Church of Alcalà in favour of his nephew, the young undergraduate student Juan de Sandoval. As stressed by Caetani, it was important to concede the reward: first, because he was related to Lerma,<sup>132</sup> and second, to keep the cardinal satisfied.<sup>133</sup>

Another influential person who was fundamental in maintaining a supportive relationship toward the Holy See was Rodrigo Calderón. Despite the ups and downs of his political career,<sup>134</sup> he remained very powerful in the shadow of Lerma, proving himself a genuine factotum and a strong enemy of the Lemos. The nuncio turned to the Count of Oliva several times because he was able to promote negotiations “*better than any other person*” and he had a “*great reverence towards the Apostolic See*.”<sup>135</sup> According to Caetani, Calderón’s authority continued to be strong in the most important affairs of the crown, even without any office and despite Aliaga’s opposition. For these reasons, in 1615, the papal representative warmly recommended to grant some unusual spiritual rewards asked by the Count of Oliva, in order to “*keep him as a friend*”<sup>136</sup> and to demonstrate that in Rome nobody obstruct the negotiations.

From the correspondence it emerges how recommendations and supplications were a type of “written ritual” through which the language of social relations was expressed in the *Ancien Régime*. Moreover, this epistolary genre reveals how protection, loyalty, service, and clientele have been instrumental in building forms of power and establishing social relations. Recommendations and supplications playing an essential role in forging

129 See: Francisco M. GUTIÉRREZ, *Un ejemplo de estrategia familiar dentro de la Iglesia: los Rojas y Sandoval y el deanato de la Catedral de Jaén en el siglo XVI*, *Historia y Genealogía* 6, 2016, pp. 97–121; Luis G. CANSECO, *Don Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas. Dichos, escritos y una vida en verso*, Huelva 2017.

130 “*Favorito*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 39r. Madrid, 14. 7. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

131 “*L'anima sua*.” ASV, FB, II, 266, fol. 113r. Madrid, 30. 6. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

132 “*Molto caro e stretto parente*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8277, fol. 85r. Madrid, 12. 8. 1612. Caetani to Borghese.

133 BA, Ms. 1222, fol. 171r. Rome, 8. 11. 1612. Borghese to Caetani.

134 About: S. MARTÍNEZ HERNÁNDEZ, *Rodrigo Calderón*, pp. 147–234.

135 “*Meglio di ciascun altra persona [...] gran reverenza verso la Sede Apostolica*.” BAV, Barb. Lat., 8280, fol. 25. Madrid, 12. 3. 1613. Caetani to Borghese.

136 “*Conservarselo amico*.” ASV, FB, II, 262, fol. 86r. Madrid, 23. 4. 1615. Caetani to Borghese.

communication. At the same time they represented a constant search for a relationship which may provide a solid social identity to an individual, family, or community.<sup>137</sup>

## A final consideration

To conclude, as recent historiography has highlighted, the Spanish imperial system was characterized by poly-centrism, rather than bilateral relations. Therefore, if one wants to examine the relations between Rome and Madrid, one must highlight the broader historical context in which every single participant played his or her role. On the other hand, this behind the scene approach to diplomatic negotiations helps to deepen the depiction of the relationship between Rome and Madrid during the period considered, notwithstanding the fact it is based on the subjective point of view that came out from Caetani's writing.<sup>138</sup>

From the correspondence of the nunciature emerged how the relationship was defined according to the peculiarities of two entities that were anything but compact and coherent. Entities which were in competition on the political, religious and jurisdictional front; completely separate from one another and permeating each other. The political relations were subjected to a fragile balance of friendship and hostility that connected the two courts. These were malleable balances within groups of power, founded on family and patrons without distinct borders and whose participants often demonstrated multiple and volatile political loyalties. The balance was based on the distributions of ecclesiastical benefices and pensions, as well as on recommendations, favours and compensation. It bound various participants together, who struggled to strengthen personal careers, meet familiar expectations, and intertwine political and information networks.<sup>139</sup>

137 See: Irene FOSI, *Rituali della parola*, in: Cecilia Nubola – Andreas Würzler (edd.), *Formen der politischen Kommunikation in Europa vom 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert*. Bitten, Beschwerden, Briefe, Berlin 2004, pp. 329–349.

138 For a compendium: José DE OLARRA GARMENDIA – María L. DE LARRAMENDI, *Índices de la correspondencia entre nunciatura en España y la Santa Sede durante el reinado de Felipe III (1598–1621)*, vol. IV–VII, Roma 1964–67.

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