



The Disciplining of Historical Scholarship:  
Matteo Egizio, Naples and the Italian  
'Republic of Letters', 1700-1734

Nicholas Mithen

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to  
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization  
of the European University Institute

Florence, 06 July 2018



European University Institute  
**Department of History and Civilization**

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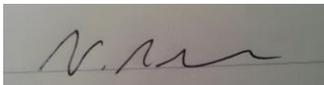
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## Abstract

This thesis is primarily an enquiry into the production of historical scholarship on the Italian peninsula in the first three decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with a specific emphasis on Naples and the Italian South. As a point of entry this study draws upon the passive correspondence of the Neapolitan lawyer and scholar Matteo Egizio. Its method is strategic rather than exhaustive: it argues that during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century networks of Italian scholars sought to systematically reform how history was written, how the past was understood and related to the present, and how scholarship worked and related to other realms of life. Working collaboratively, groups of Neapolitan and Italian scholars aimed to enforce a specific method, epistemology and sensibility upon the writing of history and the production of scholarship. Building upon the humanist tradition, this entailed a critical approach to history, valuing empiricism and certainty in factual knowledge, challenging speculation and prejudice, and opposing the excesses of universalism, rationalism, dogmatism as well as Pyrrhonic scepticism in historical thought.

This amounted to a coordinated attempt to *discipline* the production of historical scholarship. On the one hand it aimed to insulate historical scholarship from the encroachment of ideological bias, demarcating the writing of history, in a limited sense, as a distinct realm of learning. At the same time, the disciplining of scholarship made history a powerful source of authority, able to construct and deconstruct political-jurisdictional and theological-ecclesiastical arguments. Between these two tendencies, the generalization of historical criticism in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century animated tensions between the intrinsic and the instrumental value of historical argument, as well as between the particular and the general meaning of historical truth. An exposition of these conflicts is the subject proper of this thesis.

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## Abbreviations

DBI – Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani

GLI – Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia

BNN – Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, Napoli

ACDF – Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Roma

BEUMo AM – Biblioteca Estense Universitaria di Modena, Archivio Muratoriano, Modena

BACR – Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, Rovigo

BMV – Biblioteca Marciana, Venezia

BAR – Biblioteca Angelica, Roma

BSL - Biblioteca Statale di Lucca

BSNSP – Biblioteca Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, Napoli

# Chapter One - Introduction

## Synopsis and Structure

This thesis is primarily an enquiry into the production of historical scholarship on the Italian peninsula in the first three decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with a specific emphasis on Naples and the Italian South. As a point of entry this study draws upon the passive correspondence of the Neapolitan lawyer and scholar Matteo Egizio. Its method is strategic rather than exhaustive: it argues that during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century networks of Italian scholars sought to systematically reform how history was written, how the past was understood and related to the present, and how scholarship worked and related to other realms of life. Working collaboratively, groups of Neapolitan and Italian scholars aimed to enforce a specific method, epistemology and sensibility upon the writing of history and the production of scholarship. This approach was primarily formed of scholarly developments of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries: it entailed a critical approach to history, which valued empiricism and certainty in factual knowledge, which challenged speculation and prejudice, and opposed the excesses of universalism, rationalism, dogmatism as well as Pyrrhonic doubt in historical thought.

This amounted to a coordinated attempt to *discipline* the production of historical scholarship. On the one hand it aimed to 'insulate' historical scholarship from the encroachment of ideological bias, both by holding it account to the standards of moderate reason, rather than dogmatism or rationalism, and by demarcating historical scholarship, in a limited sense, as a distinct 'discipline' or realm of learning. At the same time, the disciplining of historical scholarship, manifest as its refinement, purification and disentanglement from ideological conviction, made history a powerful source of authority, able to construct and deconstruct, to 'prop up' and undermine political-jurisdictional and theological-ecclesiastical arguments. Between these two contradictory tendencies, the generalization of historical criticism in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century animated tensions between the intrinsic and the instrumental value of historical argument, as well as between the particular and the general meaning of historical truth. An exposition of these conflicts in a specific context is the subject proper of this thesis.

The disciplining of historical scholarship in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century was the result of shifting structures of scholarly organization as much as intellectual evolution; the ideal of critical history aspiring to truth was not invented in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. As a model for how the scholar should work and behave, however, its codification and enforcement during these years took effect through the densification and institutionalization of scholarly communication within the 'Republic of Letters'. To trace these processes, this thesis will deploy a specific methodological approach, a history of knowledge akin to a *konstellationsforschung*,<sup>1</sup> working between private correspondence, published texts and intellectual institutions to explore the hierarchical structures of scholarly production, the governance of regimes of knowledge, and the codification of epistemic virtues and vices. Pursuing a 'historical socio-anthropology of scholarship' as a tool for interpretation will stimulate a conclusion on the ordering of knowledge and the moderation of thought in a specific context of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe.

While this argument will be holistically presented, and each chapter aspires to make an argument of significance in and of itself, the structure of this thesis will follow a narrative of development, which it is worth describing in some detail. This thesis will be divided into four sections and a conclusion:

- 1) The first section, an extended introduction, will offer important context in three forms. The first part will present a historiographical, methodological and theoretical overview to the history of historical thought in Europe in the years around 1700. Contested historical narratives of Enlightenment and historicism, criticism and humanism, will be considered, as will the merits and drawbacks of the history of ideas, the history of scholarship and the history of knowledge as methods for approaching the history of historical thought. The second section will offer a portrait of Naples in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, as the primary context in which these theoretical, methodological and historiographical themes will be explored. This will present Naples as a 'contested city', orientating around: firstly, the political relationship between city, kingdom and empire; secondly, the relationship between city, church and state; and thirdly the 'urban intellectual environment' – the city's philosophical and theological dynamic during these

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Mulsow and Marcelo Stamm, *Konstellationsforschung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005).

years. This portrait will act as a point of reference for later chapters, as well as means to understand how scholars and historical scholarship situated itself within a political, religious and intellectual context. The third section will aim to cut across some of these contested dichotomies by presenting the characteristically moderate figure who stands at the centre of this dissertation, Matteo Egizio. Through a brief biography of Egizio and a presentation of his archived correspondence in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli it will constitute a platform for the substantial chapters which form the core of this thesis.

- 2) The second part, consisting of chapters two and three, will present the epistemology of historical thought cultivated by Matteo Egizio, his collaborators and correspondents. Chapter two will focus on antiquarianism – understood as the scholarly engagement with the material remains of the past – in Egizio’s Naples. By extracting and orientating around several strands of Egizio’s correspondence with Neapolitan and Italian scholars, it will offer a reading of the key features of their antiquarian practice: their critical engagement with sources placed in local and universal contexts, the prominence of cultural-historical themes to their activity, and the collective nature of antiquarian scholarship, structured through hierarchies, collaboration, exchange and patronage. Chapter three will extend this epistemological framework into text-based scholarship – primarily chronology and ecclesiastical history – by focusing more directly upon Matteo Egizio’s own scholarly oeuvre. By presenting a series of historical controversies engaged in by Egizio it will identify the core components of his historical method, and demonstrate its continuity with the epistemology of antiquarianism in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples.
- 3) The third part, consisting of chapter four, will act as a hinge in the context of his thesis as a whole. Its function will be to propose and enact a methodological shift, and to show how the epistemology of historical scholarship presented in chapters two and three was both manifest in and enforced through attempts to reform and rehabilitate the Italian ‘Republic of Letters’ in the years after 1700. This will present the Venetian literary journal the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia* and the concept, codified by Ludovico Antonio Muratori, of ‘buon gusto’ or good taste, as both tools and vessels for the normalization of critical historical scholarship in Neapolitan and Italian erudition. This will extend the grounding of

historical method in an epistemological, aesthetic and ontological *habitus* or world-view, while also demonstrating how scholarly norms could be codified, disseminated and defended within communities of scholars.

- 4) The fourth part of this thesis, chapters five, six and seven, will offer series of case studies demonstrating how Neapolitan and Italian scholarship was disciplined in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century in accordance with the method of critical history, the interventions of the *Giornale* and other institutions, and the ideal of 'buon gusto'. Each chapter, as well as the section collectively, will animate the political, ecclesiastical-theological and scholarly tensions central to scholarly moderation, whilst also showing the Republic of Letters to be a complex, hierarchical and contested system of communication and scholarly production. Chapter five will focus upon the transgression and defense of norms of scholarly propriety at the limits of 'good taste'. This will orientate around the relationship between unimpassioned and non-ideological erudition and polemically charged theology, as well as the centrality of behavioural and editorial practices to concepts of scholarly virtue. Chapter six will focus more directly upon the writing of ecclesiastical history and sacred erudition, and the distinction between positive theology and devotional erudition. Following polemics between Naples, Rome and Florence it will consider the theological context of divergent historical methods, as well as the role of religious orders in the architecture of Italian erudition. Chapter seven will extend these tensions into the realm of hagiography, and will be structured around the production, dissemination and reception of a specific work, as it stimulated and related to local political, theological and scholarly controversies.
- 5) A brief conclusion will return to some of the themes of the introduction, will summarize once more the argument of the thesis as a whole, and the logic behind the structure described above. Finally, it will offer some conclusions regarding the ordering of scholarly communities, the ordering of knowledge and the ordering of history in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

## Part One - Approaching Historical Scholarship in Europe, circa 1700

The objective of this thesis is to assess how historical scholarship was written, and what it was for, in first decades of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Europe, in a specific regional context. In so far as the ambition is not only to shed light upon this context, but to present a case which speaks to European early modern intellectual history at large, and to the longer history of historical thought, a substantial element of contextualisation is necessary. To this end, the following pages will provide a historiographical and methodological overview of historical scholarship and historical thought in Europe circa 1700.

### Enlightenment, Historicism and the History of Ideas

The ways in which individuals and societies understand the past – both their own past and History in the abstract – influences their understanding of both the present and the future; this in turn informs their actions and behaviour. This basic conviction makes interrogating the history of historical thought a valuable task: it offers a point of entry into specific historical enquiries, as well as providing the conceptual scaffolding around which larger narratives of historical change are constructed. It is this latter point that has made the history of early modern historical thought a central theme in intellectual history, especially as pursued by historians of ideas, of philosophy and of political thought. A long tradition has viewed the emergence of the modern world as both a result of, and as reflected in, a shift in historical consciousness, pivoting around the contested histories of Enlightenment and historicism.<sup>2</sup> In order to offer an empirical study of historical scholarship in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, as this thesis aspires to do, familiarity with these meta-narratives in the history of ideas and their political implications is essential.

A recurrent trope in readings of historical thought in early modern Europe has been to associate the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century with a crisis of historical consciousness.<sup>3</sup> This crisis challenged and discredited the wholeness of the medieval world-view, in which time

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<sup>2</sup> Both reflecting and summarizing this view, see John Lukacs, *Historical Consciousness or the Remembered Past*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

<sup>3</sup> The archetypal narrative is that of Paul Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715* (Paris: A. Fayard, 1961), famously juxtaposing Bossuet against Voltaire as signifying a shift in historical thought; Hazard elaborates this on p. 26. On a “crisis of historical consciousness” see Peter Burke, “Two Crises of Historical Consciousness,” *Storia Della Storiografia* 33 (1998): 3–16; also Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), ch. 1, pp. 9-30 which similarly settles on the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century as point of rupture.

and history were either cyclical, static or moving towards a transcendental end. In part, this rupture permutated from the Cartesian demand for a degree of epistemological certainty which pre-modern historical knowledge could not offer.<sup>4</sup> As the prevalence of a naïve and willful credulity, of prejudice and dogmatism, and a reliance upon discredited evidence were recognized, the validity of scholars to render the past meaningful was compromised. Attempts by ‘antiquarian’ scholars to enhance claims to certainty through methodological innovation only served to accentuate the other, in many ways more fundamental, shortcomings of pre-Enlightenment historical scholarship: its deployment of basically trans-historical assumptions, its failure to contextualise historically, its lack of a critical viewpoint, and its inability to connect historical facts into historical narratives capable of explaining patterns and trends and change over time. By the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century, “history had ceased to be a science that reinterprets the past in order to understand the present. In this sense, it had entered into a period of crisis”.<sup>5</sup>

The ‘crisis’ thesis asserts that the undermining of historical authority in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century took place in the context of the ascent of a new cosmology, and a new understanding of nature. The ‘baptizing’ of Epicurean epistemology – the merging of an atomistic and materialistic world-view with the temporal linearity and transcendentalism of Christian eschatology – established both the singularity and directionality of History in a worldly key.<sup>6</sup> By the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the redefinition of causality within modern science in a Newtonian framework underpinned a vision of the world, society and history as dynamic system governed by universal and measurable laws.<sup>7</sup> This was the

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<sup>4</sup> On ‘Historical Pyrrhonism’ see recently A. Matytsin, ‘Historical Pyrrhonism and its Discontents’, in Anton M Matytsin, *The Specter of Skepticism in the Age of Enlightenment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), pp. 233-263. Matytsin’s conceptual framework is largely that inherited from Popkin, *The History of Scepticism* (Oxford University Press, 2003); for a good study, sensitive to a wide range of sources, see Carlo Borghero, *La certezza e la storia: cartesianesimo, pirronismo e conoscenza storica* (Milano: Angeli, 1983).

<sup>5</sup> Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism*, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> The influential account is Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950); on viewing Gassendi as the unifying figure of epicureanism and Christian world-view see Margaret J Osler, “Baptizing Epicurean Atomism: Pierre Gassendi on the Immortality of the Soul,” in *Religion, Science, and Worldview: Essays in Honor of Richard S. Westfall*, ed. Richard S Westfall, Margaret J Osler, and Paul Lawrence Farber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 163–84.

<sup>7</sup> For a provocative recent interpretation of the rise of systems – specifically self-organizing systems – as a way of thinking from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, see Jonathan Sheehan and Dror Wahrman, *Invisible Hands: Self-Organization in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016); on ideas of history and providence, pp. 11-46.

new ontological regime in which the 'old' way of understanding the past lost its meaning, and from which the 'Enlightenment' concept of history emerged.

In this narrative, from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, history rediscovered its capacity to explain the present in two forms: firstly, as a staging for scenarios demonstrating a meta-historical collision between reason and superstition; and secondly, as a means to interpret the laws of historical development and processes in a universal key.<sup>8</sup> In both cases the Enlightenment has been read influentially by Cassirer as signifying the "conquest of the historical world",<sup>9</sup> an emancipation from inherited traditions and dogmas, which underpinned the human capacity to use their reason for improvement, to the "practical advancement of the human condition on this earth".<sup>10</sup> The survey of the structures and processes of historical change in comparative context and a universal frame provided the substance from which 18<sup>th</sup>-century historians could begin to escape the weight of the past. In this respect, Enlightenment historians tended to construct their activity as polar opposite to the 'erudits', antiquarians and ecclesiastical historians of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and before: enclosed within their new approach was a "change in the standards of historical realism".<sup>11</sup>

In presenting the Enlightenment's historical thought, one of the objectives of Cassirer's 'emancipatory' reading was to revise the assertion that the Enlightenment lacked a "sense of history", and was essentially unhistorical in nature.<sup>12</sup> As Bourgault and Sparling state in their recent introduction to enlightenment historiography, what was meant by these claims was "not that the great Enlightenment historians did not write important historical works; it is rather that they lacked a certain sensibility we are

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<sup>8</sup> This dichotomy, represented as a distinction between Montesquieu and Voltaire, and then between English and French enlightenment traditions of historical thought, is sketched in H. Trevor-Roper, 'The Historical Philosophy of the Enlightenment', in H. R. Trevor-Roper, *History and the Enlightenment*, ed. John Robertson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 1-16.

<sup>9</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 197-233.

<sup>10</sup> As a kind of hold-all definition of Enlightenment: John Robertson, *The Enlightenment: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2015), p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Burke, "Two Crises of Historical Consciousness", p. 11; The derogatory view of the French philosophes to erudition is traced in Quantin, "Reason and Reasonableness in French Ecclesiastical Scholarship", pp. 401-36.

<sup>12</sup> Here Cassirer follows Dilthey, 'The Eighteenth Century and the Historical World' [1901], Wilhelm Dilthey, *Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, ed. Rudolf A Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, vol. IV, Wilhelm Dilthey, *Selecte Works* (Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 325-386.

supposed to have gained from romantics, historicists and professional historians”.<sup>13</sup> Through its universalising approach, in Enlightenment historical thought the present colonized both the past and the future, leaving time “empty”.<sup>14</sup> In this sense, the Enlightenment move to resolve the crisis of historical thought associated with pyrrhonic scepticism was itself pyrrhic, or superficial; it was not based not upon the acceptance of the new cosmological order, but rather the transposition of the previous order of history into an immanent, rather than transcendental, key. Enlightenment historians have been interpreted as essentially accommodating Christian eschatology and providentialism by presenting it in new packaging, by turning God into History.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, as historians, they suffered from anachronism, rationalism and naivety, viewing past and future through the lens of the present. As White has it, they “lacked an adequate psychological theory... (they) needed a theory of human consciousness in which reason was not set over against imagination as the basis of truth against the basis of error but in which the *continuity* between reason and fantasy was recognized”.<sup>16</sup>

This criticism of mainstream 18<sup>th</sup>-century concepts of history, and the provision of this psychology, came in the form of historicism, building upon but inverting the Enlightenment view of the past.<sup>17</sup> Advocates of ‘historicism’ stressed the historical specificity of each moment, event and social-cultural-political formation, which became products of a coalescing of historical forces and processes. Rather than the events and narratives of history directly informing, explaining or providing material with which to judge the present (and future) as they had done for Enlightenment historians, under the regime of historicism, the past became meaningful and purposeful in and of itself, as indicative of the design of History as a world-historical process. These two modes – the ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ dimensions of modern historical consciousness; “historicism

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<sup>13</sup> S. Bourgault and R. Sparling, ‘Introduction’, to Sophie Bourgault and Robert Alan Sparling, eds., *A Companion to Enlightenment Historiography* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 1-23, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> H. Janssen, ‘in search of new times: temporality in the enlightenment and counter-enlightenment’, *History and Theory* 55, Feb. 2016, pp. 66-90, p. 67.

<sup>15</sup> This is basically the argument of Carl L Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933).

<sup>16</sup> Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael S Roth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), p. 51.

<sup>17</sup> It is a critique sustained by champions of Historicism, such as Becker and White; Historicism is a much contested term: see Frederick C Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). ‘Introduction: The Concept and Context of Historicism’, pp. 1-26; Georg G. Iggers, “Historicism: The History and Meaning of the Term,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56, no. 1 (1995): 129–52.

as methodology” and “historicism as teleology”<sup>18</sup> – were bound by a romantic ontology and associated “romantic hermeneutic” whereby the universality of history gave meaning to its particularity, and vice-versa.<sup>19</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, primarily in German context, history as both science and philosophy framed itself around this essential worldview.

Just as 18<sup>th</sup>-century Enlightenment historians sought to qualitatively distinguish their method from the antiquarians and ecclesiastic historians of the 17<sup>th</sup>, so too exponents of historicism constructed their approach as an inversion of Enlightenment (a)historical thought. This latter contention came under scrutiny in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, where the relationship between Enlightenment and 19<sup>th</sup>-century historicism was explored amidst the ‘crisis of historicism’ announced in part by Nietzsche.<sup>20</sup> The process of embedding the histories of historicism and enlightenment into one another, with both having roots in the late 17<sup>th</sup>-century crisis of historical consciousness, was the platform for their contestation as philosophies of history underpinning political ideologies. Here historicism, with a base in an epistemological relativism and pluralism, could be either viewed as the salve to a totalitarianism emergent from Enlightenment universalism and instrumental reason,<sup>21</sup> or, conversely, as the source of the totalizing world-view, at once

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<sup>18</sup> The distinction is Hegel’s, reflected upon in Samuel Moyn, “Amos Funkenstein on the Theological Origins of Historicism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64, no. 4 (2003): 639–57, pp. 641–43, p. 645

<sup>19</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and method*, trans. Donald Marshall and Joel Weinsheimer (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), “The Connection between the historical school and the Romantic Hermeneutic”, pp. 202–8.

<sup>20</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *On the advantage and disadvantage of history for life* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980). Juxtaposes the flaws and incompatibilities a wholly historicized and a wholly ahistorical (superhistorical) worldview. We have seen Cassirer’s stress on elements of continuity between historicism and the enlightenment; Meinecke, in Friedrich Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus* (München: Oldenbourg, 1936) saw Enlightenment and Historicism as antagonistic, but stressed the emergence of the latter from the former.

<sup>21</sup> As is the case with Isaiah Berlin, for whom the ‘counter-enlightenment’, represented by Vico and Herder, prefaced the pluralizing dimension of historicism, though not its philosophy of history, which Berlin opposed: I. Berlin, “The Counter-Enlightenment,” in Isaiah Berlin, *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); There is a spate of new scholarship on Berlin, among which: Lifschitz, “Between Friedrich Meinecke and Ernst Cassirer: Isaiah Berlin’s Bifurcated Enlightenment,” in *Isaiah Berlin and the Enlightenment*, ed. Laurence W. B Brockliss and Ritchie Robertson, 2016, 51–66; Horkheimer and Adorno similarly problematized, to quite different political ends, the ahistorical nature of the Enlightenment as source of totalitarianism: Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Knudsen gathers together Meinecke, Eric Auerbach and Walter Benjamin into a pro-historicism, anti-Enlightenment group: Jonathan Knudsen, “The Historicist Enlightenment,” in *What’s Left of Enlightenment?*, ed. Keith Michael Baker and Peter Hanns Reill (Stanford University Press, 2001), 39–70, pp. 47–8.

organicist, nihilistic and relativistic, underpinning fascism, which undermined Enlightenment values.<sup>22</sup>

In different readings, by stressing its 'subjective' or 'objective', methodological or philosophical, dimensions, historicism, in its relationship with the Enlightenment, could become the font of modern liberalism *and* modern totalitarianism. In this context, early modern historical thought became handmaiden to the birth of political-philosophical modernity. This remained the case after the Second World War, even as political-theoretical polemics gave way to serious historical scholarship of the Enlightenment, which, nonetheless, remained framed by the ideological context of the Cold War and the aftermath of totalitarianism.<sup>23</sup> Contestation over the legacy of the Enlightenment and historicism through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century implied a degree of consensus over what those terms signified, and their periodization. This also largely implied a consensus regarding pre-Enlightenment thought, as lacking, as theological in tone, and at best pregnant with a foreshadowing of historicism.<sup>24</sup> Before the crisis of historical consciousness, Europeans generally navigated the world immersed in the weave of time, bound to a view of *historia* as *magistra vitae* and lacking the 'view from nowhere', the trademark of modernity.

The clarity of this historical narrative has been disrupted since the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, in dialogue with the dissolution of the Enlightenment as a strong historical formation. Innovations within historical scholarship, as well as the petering out of the ideological nexus and geo-political context which had sustained 'Enlightenment studies' as a political-intellectual project led to more social- and cultural-historical approaches to

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<sup>22</sup> The argument posed by Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1960); Popper's conception of historicism has been widely discredited as simplistic and politically-informed, but has been influential nonetheless. A similar influential condemnation of historicism was made by Strauss; Strauss' criticism of, and Arendt's ambivalence about, historicism has been recently contextually reassembled in Liisi Keedus, *The Crisis of German Historicism: The Early Political Thought of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>23</sup> Peter Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment, an Interpretation: The Rise of Modern Paganism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967) for instance, presents itself as transcending these polemics, though remains a politicized work: see pp. 495-6, "as a historian, I trust, I have not acted as a judge; but to the degree that this book can claim to move beyond historical analysis to a philosophical comprehension of the past, it decides between the Christian millennium, with its ideal of dependence, and the Enlightenment, with its ideal of autonomy, in favour of the autonomy."; with an overview, see Annelien de Dijn, "The Politics of Enlightenment: From Peter Gay to Jonathan Israel," *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 785–805.

<sup>24</sup> Identifying this tendency, reflected upon further in the following section, is Zachary Sayre Schiffman, "Renaissance Historicism Reconsidered," *History and Theory* 24, no. 2 (1985): 170–82.

18<sup>th</sup>-century thought, against which historians insisting upon a paradigmatic and coherent enlightenment have tended to rail.<sup>25</sup> The capital 'E' Enlightenment, coupled with its definitive article, has fragmented into enlightenments in national, religious and institutional variations. If the concept of Enlightenment retains some value for making sense of specific and general historical developments in the European 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the trade-off is that it is denuded of its previous clarity and ideological force.<sup>26</sup> This has led to a degree of incommensurability between the intellectual historian's enlightenment and that of the philosophers and political thinkers, for whom 'the Enlightenment' tends to retain a strong conceptual meaning.<sup>27</sup>

This conceptual weakening of the singular Enlightenment as an ordering structure in early modern intellectual history has stimulated a reformulation of the history of historical thought, proceeding by methods alternative to the history of ideas. The "struggle between historicism and Enlightenment" which had framed how 20<sup>th</sup>-century historians understood historical thought from 1500 to the present has become,

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<sup>25</sup> Reviewing this dissolution, see Giuseppe Giarrizzo, "Enlightenment: The Parabola of an Idea," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 141, no. 4 (1997): 436–53, pp. 449–53; This opposition was not always necessary, with the case of Robert Darnton showing how a less philosophy-centric approach to the Enlightenment (angling against Gay, see Robert Darnton, "In Search of the Enlightenment: Recent Attempts to Create a Social History of Ideas," *The Journal of Modern History* 43, no. 1 (1971): 113–32) could lead back to its defense as strong historical formation: Jonathan Popkin, "Robert Darnton's Alternative (to the) Enlightenment," ed. Haydn Mason (Voltaire Foundation, 1999), 105–28 referenced in A. de Djin, on Darnton, op. cit, pp. 793–5. The most significant example of this explicit defence of Enlightenment from an historian being the influential work of Jonathan Israel on the Enlightenment, viewed as an attempt to 're-launch' the modernization thesis contained within Enlightenment studies, Jonathan I Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001): for its critique, see, once case among many, Anthony J. La Vopa, "A New Intellectual History? Jonathan Israel's Enlightenment," *The Historical Journal* 52, no. 3 (2009): 717–38. These debates are sensitively discussed in John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 14–28.

<sup>26</sup> Generally see J. G. A Pocock, "Historiography and Enlightenment: A View of Their History," *Modern Intellectual History* 5, no. 1 (2008): 83–96: "the keyword "Enlightenment" is ours to use and should not master us", p. 83; Contemporary historians engaging with Enlightenment need to include a lengthy passage justifying the terms inclusion, and explaining its relevance for their specific subject. These usually involve a weak definition coupled with an admission of the concept's limitations: e.g. William J Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and Its Empire, 1648-1715* (Cambridge University Press, 2015)., pp. xi–xvii; on this point, see this work's review by Ann Thomson, "Review of Bulman, Anglican Enlightenment," *American Historical Review* 121, no. 3 (2016): 1023.

<sup>27</sup> This informs the format of Vincenzo Ferrone, *The Enlightenment: history of an idea* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015) – for its theoretical elaboration, see especially pp. 58–66; the continued ideological force of the enlightenment outside of departments of history is highlighted by the recent work by Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (Penguin, 2018), and the criticism it received from historians, including those maintaining a fairly classical idea of Enlightenment, e.g. David Wooton, "Comfort History," *Times Literary Supplement*, February 14, 2018.

according to some scholars, “more or less obsolete”.<sup>28</sup> An approach which has sought to avoid this dichotomy has been central to the emergence and rise of the history of scholarship.

### The Rehabilitation of Late Humanism and the History of Scholarship

The key methodological innovation of the history of scholarship has been to disrupt the equation whereby historical thought was, first and foremost, a context for political and philosophical ideas. Rather than take the “struggle between historicism and enlightenment” as a model for understanding all cultures of historical thought, the history of scholarship has instead focused on the practice of the historian, and placed this in context.<sup>29</sup> This has facilitated a more coherent, substantive and less speculative research agenda. Methodologically this has translated into a commitment to ‘descending’ into scholarly controversies of the past, recomposing the practices of knowledge production as a means to understand scholars and thinkers of the past on their own grounds, and in their own terms. In the process, historians of scholarship have contributed to unravelling the Enlightenment- and historicism-centric interpretations of historical thought, showing them to be based around “the fetishization of the post-1680 period”.<sup>30</sup> Crucially, they have tended to interpret the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century as emerging from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, rather than foreshadowing the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

The rise and normalization of the history of scholarship has led to a general reappraisal of the scholarly culture and historical thought of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. In a previously well-established trope, the Renaissance recovery of antiquity had been seen as provoking a new ‘sense of the past’ as being of significance for the present, with the potential to disrupt a static ‘Medieval’ view of history and time.<sup>31</sup> This had been seen,

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<sup>28</sup> Knudsen, “The Historicist Enlightenment.”, p. 40.

<sup>29</sup> An approach called for, if not particularly followed, in 1964 in George H. Nadel, “Philosophy of History before Historicism,” *History and Theory* 3, no. 3 (1964): 291–315.

<sup>30</sup> Dmitri Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science: Histories of Philosophy in England, c. 1640-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Edward Arnold, 1970); useful for its historiographical survey, as well as viewing the Renaissance as signifying a shift in historical sensibility, is Paula Findlen, “Possessing the Past: The Material World of the Italian Renaissance,” *American Historical*

however, as a kind of ‘false-start’, “a revolution (in method) accomplished and then betrayed – or at least forgotten”.<sup>32</sup> It lacked the re-ordering of temporality, the critical detachment from historical narratives, and the urgency reflecting the ‘weight’ of the past, which Enlightenment history and historicism proper demanded and implied.<sup>33</sup> The humanists recovered, collected and compiled texts and antiquities, but didn’t know what to do with them, while practitioners of *historia letteraria* composed narratives which were eloquent but devoid of criticism and reflexivity. Indeed, the period between the ‘Renaissance’ and the ‘Enlightenment’, broadly speaking the later 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries, has been seen as witnessing the *return* of an ahistorical sensibility, principally through the confessionalisation of scholarship.<sup>34</sup> As history was polemical and directed towards ideological ends, the ‘progressive’ steps taken by the Renaissance humanists in thinking critically about the past and insisting upon factual knowledge – steps that made their attitude to the past ‘more modern’ – were discarded in favour of biased, polemical, and most importantly intensely religious, scholarship. The shards of light glimpsed by the Renaissance humanists were only revived and coupled with narrative histories in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, unhinged by the philosophical ferment of the mature 17<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>35</sup>

One of the most significant achievements of the ‘new history of scholarship’<sup>36</sup> has been to overthrow this narrative of rise, fall and then rise, and of the almost-modern

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*Review* 103 (1998): 83–114; Hans Baron, “Der Erwachen Des Historischen Denkens,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 147 (1932): 5–20.

<sup>32</sup> D. R. Woolf, “Erudition and the Idea of History in Renaissance England,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1987): 11–48, p. 16.

<sup>33</sup> Paula Findlen, “Historical Thought in the Renaissance,” in *A Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. Lloyd S Kramer and Sarah C Maza (Oxford: Blackwell, 2013), 99–122, describes Renaissance Historiography as “an art in search of a science”, p. 111.

<sup>34</sup> William James Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance 1550-1640* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002), 2002, ch. 13, ‘The Decline of Historical Consciousness’, pp. 198-214; see H. Trevor-Roper, ‘The Historical Philosophy of the Enlightenment’, viewing the 17<sup>th</sup> century, through the prism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century philosophes, as signalling the “decline of criticism... an era of intellectual regression”, Trevor-Roper, *History and the Enlightenment*, pp. 1-16, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Momigliano’s designation of Edward Gibbon, and to a lesser extent Winckelmann, as the first to meaningfully unite the antiquarian and the historical approach to the past has been widely influential : Arnaldo Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13, no. 3/4 (1950): 285–315.; this informs Pocock’s multi-volume work on Gibbon, who becomes the crucial hinge in the history of historical thought: *Barbarism and Religion*, vols. 1-6, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999-2015).

<sup>36</sup> As distinguished from history of scholarship more narrowly concerned with disciplines – see Jean-Louis Quantin and Christopher Ligota, “Introduction,” in *History of Scholarship: A Selection of Papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship Held Annually at the Warburg Institute* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1–38, pp. 5-7.

character of Renaissance historical thought. This has been achieved by demonstrating that the key move towards historical criticism didn't take place as 'crisis' at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, but rather was initiated earlier, in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, by scholars such as Louis Cappell, Joseph Justus Scaliger and John Selden, whose work was built upon, challenge and developed, in an essentially scholarly project which unfurled over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, and into the 18<sup>th</sup>.<sup>37</sup> The dramatic philosophical-political orientated narrative of false starts and crises has been replaced with one of "slower-moving, tectonic continuity in intellectual practices underneath more rapidly changing fashions in ideology, rhetoric, and self-presentation."<sup>38</sup> Historical pyrrhonism in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century was more spectral than substantial, its challenge more practical than existential, and was confidently countered by late humanist scholars satisfied with the validity of their method and approach.<sup>39</sup> Decoupling the practices of historical scholarship from historicism as a political-philosophical agenda have allowed realms of learning such as sacred history, criticism, chronology and antiquarianism to be assessed anew, and their methodological innovations better understood.<sup>40</sup>

Most dramatically in recent years a return to erudition and scholarship has revised the opposition posited between critical history and ecclesiastical history. Rather than criticism being an external factor which, in time, radically unraveled ecclesiastical and sacred history, launching a secular and secularizing enlightenment, it has been convincingly demonstrated that historical criticism developed *within* ecclesiastical history, as scholars from different confessions sought to deploy historical truth as an authority with which to prevail in, but also to overcome and transcend, religious

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<sup>37</sup> An argument condensed in Dmitri Levitin, "From Sacred History to the History of Religion: Paganism, Judaism and Christianity in European Historiography from Reformation to 'Enlightenment,'" *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 04 (December 2012): 1117–60, most explicitly on p. 1135.

<sup>38</sup> Nicholas Hardy, *Criticism and Confession: Rethinking the European Republic of Letters*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> That the question posed by the "historical pyrrhonists" were influential in the enhancement of historical criticism is the central argument of Borghero, *La certezza e la storia*.; see also Carlo Borghero, "Historischer Pyrrhonismus, Erudition Und Kritik," *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Gesellschaft Für Die Erforschung Des Achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* 31 (2007): 164–78.

<sup>40</sup> As Z. Schiffman argued convincingly in 1985, those identifying the emergence of a radical historical mentality in the 15th and 16th century Renaissance – among whom he saw John Pococke, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law*, 1957, Donald Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*, 1970, and George Huppert, "The Renaissance Background of Historicism", *History and Theory* 5, 1966 – had "mistaken developments in scholarship for the emergence of historicism", p. 172, Schiffman, "Renaissance Historicism Reconsidered".

polemics.<sup>41</sup> It was, to a large degree, from *within* the, often confessionalized, scholarly endeavours of biblical hermeneutists, sacred historians and critical chronologists that the *ars critica* was developed.<sup>42</sup> Some of the more problematic historical equations and chronological controversies formed by 17<sup>th</sup> Century critical scholars *did* provide fuel to those with more polemical interests, and some controversialist scholars *did* seek to use criticism to undermine specific religious beliefs (though rarely religious belief *tout court*). Even in its most mature manifestations, the move towards thinking critically about the past generally stemmed, however, not from deists, heterodox figures engaged in a radical agenda of religious, philosophical and political reform, but from orthodox and conservative figures concerned to establish historical truth as a means to replace religious, intellectual and political conflict with stability, order and peace, though often on confessionalized terms. To the extent to which the changes in historical method in the early modern period can be understood as a process of secularization of historical scholarship, that was broadly the “unintended consequences” of its reform in method and an objection to certain forms of devotion and superstition, rather than the result of a blanket anti-religious agenda.<sup>43</sup>

Pre-dating the formation of a critical approach to historical sources to the years around 1600 rather than a century later, and disassociating it from Enlightenment thought and its conception of society, both prompts and coheres with a wholesale reassessment of the culture of antiquarianism and philology, which has been demonstrated to be the

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<sup>41</sup> N. Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> N. J. S Hardy, “The *Ars Critica* in Early Modern England”, PhD Dissertation, (University of Oxford, 2012); Bravo’s very dense but rich article Benedetto Bravo, “Critice in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and the Rise of the Notion of Historical Criticism,” in *History of Scholarship: A Selection of Papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship Held Annually at the Warburg Institute*, ed. Christopher Ligota and Jean-Louis Quantin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 135–95.

<sup>43</sup> On the ‘unintended consequences’ of orthodox scholarship is a recurrent theme in Martin Mulso and H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Enlightenment Underground Radical Germany, 1680-1720* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015), e.g. p. 109; see Alan Charles Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650-1729* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); for a case, see Jean-Louis Quantin, “Anglican Scholarship Gone Mad? Henry Dodwell (1641-1711) and Christian Antiquity,” in *History of Scholarship: A Selection of Papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship Held Annually at the Warburg Institute*, ed. Christopher Ligota and Jean-Louis Quantin, 305–54., i.e. “the self-defeat” of patristics, “In many cases, at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, scholarship was threatening the orthodoxy it had been meant to strengthen”, p. 354; this is also the key argument of Peter N. Miller, “The ‘Antiquarianization’ of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-57),” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62, no. 3 (2001): 463–82; a model of unintended consequences is also, in fact, referred to in Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 18.

incubator for criticism at large.<sup>44</sup> Within this scholarly nexus the years between 1550 and 1700 gave birth to a sophisticated culture of historical thought poorly represented by previous assumptions about its ahistorical and timeless conception of the past. 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century historians developed a sensitivity to the historical particularity of words and objects, and could sustain complex notions of historical change over time, rather than being bound to a timeless syncretism.<sup>45</sup> The application of this sensitivity to Scripture did not imply the relativizing implications of historicism, but rather an earnest aspiration to better recover the past, as the pursuit of the truth about history became an end in and of itself.<sup>46</sup> Whereas Momigliano in his classic study of antiquarianism saw the years around 1700 as signifying the rupture in historical method, recent work in the history of scholarship is more inclined to view this moment as the culmination of the previous two hundred years of innovation within Europe's scholarly communities.

These historical reformulations have been the result of a shift in method and approach. Of merit in its demythologizing of the Enlightenment- and historicism- centric interpretations of early modern European historical thought, the method used and advocated by historians of scholarship does, however, carry with it some potential limitations.<sup>47</sup> Outside of the hands of the discipline's pioneers and most brilliant and eloquent practitioners, the history of scholarship is open to being indulged and abused. By purging historical interpretations of early modern thought of its grand narratives – by conceiving of itself as emerging from the “crisis of historicism” itself<sup>48</sup> – the history of

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<sup>44</sup> On the recent historiography of antiquarianism in general see the introduction to ch. 2; An early exponent of this argument, seeing the reuniting of antiquarianism and historical scholarship in the work of John Selden in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, is Woolf, “Erudition and the Idea of History in Renaissance England.”; Woolf cites Huppert, Pococke and Kelley, along with Momigliano, as precursors, though doesn't seriously take on board the challenge of Schiffman (see above, note 34), citing the article only in passing p. 15; in the context of Jesuit scholarship, see Jan Marco Sawilla, ed., *Antiquarianismus, Hagiographie und Historie im 17. Jahrhundert: Zum Werk der Bollandisten, Ein wissenschaftshistorischer Versuch* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> On the nuances of syncretic sacred history see Zur Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds: Geography, Religion, and Scholarship : 1550-1700* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 178-80.

<sup>46</sup> Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); Miller, “The ‘Antiquarianization’ of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-57)”; on this historiography, see Levitin, “From Sacred History to the History of Religion.”, pp. 1123-1142.

<sup>47</sup> The following is presented with recognition of much excellent research in the history of scholarship; it aims to identify, however, some potential tendencies which are prone to emerge with the normalization of history of scholarship.

<sup>48</sup> As argued in Quantin and Ligota, “Introduction.”: “(historicism's) elaborate articulation of historiographical procedures, the reflection on the ideological context of historical investigation, on the historian himself as a creature of history, is all at the level of what the historian does with the results of scholarship, not of scholarship itself”, p. 31.

scholarship can sometimes appear to prioritize description over interpretation. By objecting to the tragic or triumphalist readings of the past, as well as the proliferation of methodological ‘turns’, and positioning themselves as arbiters of scholarly neutrality, historians of scholarship work in an alternative, almost ironic or nostalgic, key, cultivating the past with scholarly devotion, curiosity and even playfulness. Early modern scholars of the past appear less as objects of critical interrogation and more as interlocutors – this is particularly prevalent in scholarship about the Republic of Letters, book history and the history of learning, offering a “sunny view of the humanities”, an “unproblematically positive vision of what scholarship should be”.<sup>49</sup> In depoliticizing the past through deconstructive critique, historians of early modern scholarship can appear to practice a contextualism which becomes its own end, mirroring the early modern antiquarians they study. This can inform the other, in many ways contradictory, stylistic feature facilitated by history of scholarship’s descriptive mode: pedantism underpinning dense, turgid and impenetrable texts.<sup>50</sup>

Most problematically, the sub-discipline threatens to become perceived as an esoteric voice on the fringes of mainstream historical debate, staging an ongoing discourse internal to itself. Furthermore, in its counter-punching and reductive style the history of scholarship can appear parasitic, relying upon the grand-narratives which it works to unravel, without offering any substantive historical structures in return. By fixating on slow-moving narratives and minute case-studies, often orientating around specific individuals, texts, or disciplines, the history of scholarship, practiced in a narrow way, can struggle to form the medium-sized historical arguments, “theories of middling reach”, which both lubricate discourse within the academy and provide platforms for exchange beyond the university cloister.<sup>51</sup> The vastness of ‘big data’ digital humanities projects in the history of scholarship appears poised to extend rather than resolve these issues.

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<sup>49</sup> For criticism along these lines see Caspar Hirschi, “Republicans of Letters, Memory Politics, Global Colonialists: Historians in Recent Histories of Historiography,” *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012): 857–81, p. 865; not dissimilar criticism is suggested in N. Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, 2017, p. 16; applauding the new sensibility, see Miller’s call for a new Republic of Letters, as well as for a new antiquarianism: Peter N. Miller, “A New Republic of Letters,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 3, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> see Anthony Ossa-Richardson, “Review of Between Philology and Radical Enlightenment: Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768),” *Intellectual History Review* 22 (2012): 304–6.

<sup>51</sup> On the merits of medium-sized theories, I draw here upon Mulsow, *Enlightenment Underground Radical Germany, 1680-1720*, introduction, p. 12.

## Regimes of Scholarship and the History of Knowledge (after the History of Science)

In his 2015 work on the Enlightenment, Vincenzo Ferrone called for scholars to “go beyond” the ‘centaur’ of Enlightenment studies – the merging of historical and philosophical interpretations – in order to “emancipate historians from the philosophers”, so that each could stand on their own feet.<sup>52</sup> The new history of scholarship has offered one methodology with which to purge historical interpretations of the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century of the remnants of distortive political-philosophical ideology, and represents a welcome and valuable call for truth-aspiring historical scholarship. But in order to offer substantial, meaningful and internally coherent readings (in the plural) of early modern Europe’s intellectual culture and historical thought, intellectual history needs to resolve, or at least confront, its own centaur, the schism within itself: between the history of (mainly political and philosophical) ideas, and the history of scholarship. Between these approaches, one largely present-centric, the other wholly past-centric, the intellectual culture of early modern Europe has alternately been made too familiar, pulled forwards towards the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century modernity, and too strange, pushed back towards the Middle Ages. It has been contested between tribes of scholars whose disagreements manifest themselves less through direct confrontation and more through “speaking past” one another, using different methodologies, different lexicons and moving in different circles.<sup>53</sup>

In a sense the methodological schism within intellectual history, when directed to the history of historical thought, is a collision between one camp (the historians of ideas) insisting upon historical thought as primarily to do with, or rooted in, the philosophy of history, and in a sense, metaphysics, and another (the historians of scholarship) viewing historical thought as primarily about the practice of historical scholarship, and therefore method. Refashioning the situation in these terms – prioritizing *either* method

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<sup>52</sup> See Ferrone, *The Enlightenment*, p. 63; on the ‘centaur’, see p. 173, note 2: in the Italian the term used was *ircocervo*, “the Aristotelian “goat-stag... a fabulous animal, half goat, half stag; idea or thing that is intrinsically contradictory, impossible and therefore inexistence” with Ferrone keen to add “no “hierarchical” or “qualitative” difference is inferred between the two aspects of the “animal””.

<sup>53</sup> See the instructive, if prickly, 2016 exchange between William Bulman and Dmitri Levitin on the relationship between the ‘new’ history of scholarship and the ‘Early Enlightenment’ in Levitin’s *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science*: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/2023> (accessed 29.3.2018).

or metaphysics in historical thought – points the way towards some strategies whereby the history of historical thought might elevate itself above the schism within intellectual history. Principal among these would be to borrow from approaches in the history and philosophy of science, which, in its fundamental critique of scientific positivism, has fixated upon reunifying metaphysics and method in the production of knowledge.<sup>54</sup>

The history of ideas and the history of scholarship have both had a difficult relationship with the history of science since its formation as a discipline from the 1970s.<sup>55</sup> In recent years, however, the expansion, and with this the pluralization and decentering, of the history of science, merging into a history of knowledge which encompasses histories of information, communication, scholarship, the humanities and technology as well as the natural sciences, provides groundwork for more productive collaboration.<sup>56</sup> A history of knowledge sensitive to the shifting epistemic and social organization of knowledge formation might supply the history of scholarship with new tools with which to proceed.

Underpinning the history of science's methodological innovation is its rejection of positivism and its commitment to a strong historicization of knowledge production. This is contained within Kuhn's seminal notion of "paradigm shifts" in scientific production, best understood, in its impact if not original intention, not as an attempt at strong historical periodization, and more "as a way of characterizing – if not 'explaining' – transformation in research agenda and academic commitments".<sup>57</sup> A fruitful cross-

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<sup>54</sup> On the genesis of this model of the history of science, see Lorraine Daston, "History of Science in an Elegiac Mode: E. A. Burt's Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science Revisited," *Isis* 82, no. 3 (1991): 522–31; Recently, theorising science as metaphysical, see James Ladyman and Don Ross, *Everything Must Go: Metaphysics Naturalised* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> See for instance the exchange between Mordechai Feingold, on the one side, and Steven Shapin and Peter Dear on the other, regarding Shapin's *The Social History of Truth*, 1995 in *Isis*, 87, 1996, pp. 131-9, 505-8, 681-7; see also some of the criticism targeted at Mario Biagioli's *Galileo, Courtier: the practice of Science in the culture of absolutism*, 1993 by Michael Shank: *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 25, 1994, pp. 236-43; *Early Science and Medicine*, 1, 1996, pp. 70-105, 106-50. As John Tresch recently wrote on this subject "for most historians of science trained in the past thirty years, doing history of science has meant avoiding the history of ideas", John Tresch, "Cosmologies Materialized: History of Science and History of Ideas," in *Rethinking Modern Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Darrin McMahon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 137–72, p. 131.

<sup>56</sup> Lorraine Daston and Glenn W. Most, "History of Science and History of Philologies," *Isis* 106, no. 2 (2015): 378–90; Lorraine Daston, "The History of Science and the History of Knowledge," *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2017): 131–53 – "the history of science is becoming, haltingly and hesitatingly, the history of knowledge", p. 132; Jürgen Renn, "From the History of Science to the History of Knowledge - and Back," *Centaurus* 57 (2015): 37–53; On the field as emergent, see Peter Burke, *What Is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).

<sup>57</sup> Donald R Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: The History of Intellectual History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 214; Lorraine Daston, "The History of Science without Structure," in *Kuhn's Structure of Scientific*

pollination between historical, philosophical and social-scientific approaches to science has informed a reading of knowledge production as less defined through specific intellectual output – the ‘ideas’ at play – and more as “materialized cosmologies”, as reflecting underlying ontological and epistemological convictions.<sup>58</sup> This in turn supports a criticism of implicit assumptions about timeless frameworks and concepts, and sensitivity to structural change over time and the framing of scientific activity;<sup>59</sup> in this sense, the history of science and the German *Begriffsgeschichte* are increasingly collaborative in a sophisticated methodology for placing thought and practice in context.<sup>60</sup>

The history, philosophy and sociology of science interrogates knowledge production as a regime. This basic position informs the approach of this thesis primarily in two mutually connected ways: through an historical epistemology and historical sociology of scholarship. Approaching intellectual production as epistemologies in practice provides the hinge through which method and metaphysics might be historicized in dialogue with one another. The turn to epistemic themes in the history of science owes much to Michel Foucault, and, much like in the case of Kuhn, while the specific argument, and certainly the chronology, of Foucault’s reading of epistemic regimes in early modern Europe history are problematic,<sup>61</sup> aspects of his method remain pertinent. If epistemic regimes are not viewed as totalizing historical structures, as they were by Foucault in *Les Mots et Les Choses*, but as tools of historical enquiry, and so are accordingly pluralized, and rendered internally incoherent, they have the capacity to shine a light on, and historicize, the deep logic underpinning scientific and scholarly production. The key methodological premise is to, in effect, subsume scientific activity, as well as

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*Revolutions at Fifty: Reflections on a Science Classic*, ed. Robert J Richards and Lorraine Daston, 2016, 115–32.

<sup>58</sup> Tresch, “Cosmologies Materialized: History of Science and History of Ideas.” On whether or not a Kuhnian paradigm approach is appropriate for the history of historical thought see Georg G. Iggers, “The Crisis of the Rankean Paradigm in the Nineteenth Century,” *Syracuse Scholar* 9, no. 1 (1988): 1–7.

<sup>59</sup> As stated most bluntly by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2014) in their claim that “objectivity too has a history”, an approach followed up and expanded by Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger, *The Emergence of Impartiality* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014). Murphy and Traninger provide a welcome critique of Daston and Gallison’s “anachronistic and misleading” discussion of ‘objectivity’ in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and before, a point well addressed by the chapters collected in their own volume.

<sup>60</sup> Désirée Schauz, “Wissenschaftsgeschichte und das Revival der Begriffsgeschichte,” *NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin* 23, no. 1–2 (September 1, 2015): 53–63,

<sup>61</sup> For a concise summary of the limitations of Foucault’s framework of epistemes, see Jan Miel, “Ideas of Epistemes: Hazard versus Foucault,” *Yale French Studies* 49 (1973): 231–45, especially pp. 238–44.

intellectual production at large, within epistemological and social norms, rather than the other way round. This approach underpins historical research into epistemic virtues and vices, into the “moral economy of science”, into the legitimacy or illegitimacy of knowledge, the substance of objectivity, impartiality and truth, and into the institutionalization of knowledge practices.<sup>62</sup>

Discussion of epistemic regimes and mentalities can, quite reasonably, stimulate anxiety among rigorous historians of scholarship for their ‘floating’ quality, their idealistic impenetrability as historical formations, as well as their implicit structuralism. But the epistemology-centric framework of a history-of-science-inspired history-of-knowledge, founded upon a nuancing of Kuhn and Foucault, can also entail “a more fleshy idiom”<sup>63</sup> founded upon the embedding of knowledge in social and political processes. The proliferation of epistemic practices relates not primarily to the intrinsically superior truth-claims they beget, but rather to the social, political and moral processes underpinning their extension and reproduction. This is how regimes of knowledge, understood as dynamic systems rather than fixed structures, are established, maintained, contested and transformed. The agency of great figures, and the autonomy of monolithic categories are fragmented, and causality is redistributed, not evenly but hierarchically, through the infrastructure of knowledge: institutions of learning, sites of knowledge production and platforms for knowledge circulation such as journals, correspondence and textbooks, and more broadly the governance of science.<sup>64</sup>

Clarifying the epistemological and social dimensions of systems of knowledge production enables the contextualisation of thought – the act which stands at the core of

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<sup>62</sup> See Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), and especially on its methodological introduction, pp. 3-41; Barbara Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study of the Relationships between Natural Science, Religion, History, Law, and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Lorraine Daston, *Objectivity* (New York: London: Zone: 2007); *The Emergence of Impartiality*, K. Murphy and A. Traninger (eds), 2013; L. Daston, ‘The Moral Economy of Science’, *Osiris*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, vol. 10, 1995, pp. 2-24; Gianna Pomata and Nancy G. Siraisi, *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe* (Boston: MIT Press, 2005), where, in the introduction *historia* is defined as an “epistemic genre”, p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> David Kaiser, “Thomas Kuhn and the Psychology of Scientific Revolutions,” in *Kuhn’s Structure of Scientific Revolutions at Fifty*, ed. Lorraine Daston and Robert J Richards (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 71–95, p. 89.

<sup>64</sup> One of the better expositions of the interplay between intellectual production and the circulation of knowledge and information is Simon Schaffer, “Newton on the Beach: The Information Order of Principia Mathematica,” *History of Science* 47, no. 157 (2009): 243–276.; on the infrastructure of knowledge in a global key see the essays collected in Simon Schaffer et al., eds., *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770-1820* (Sagamore Beach, MA: Science History Publications, 2009).

intellectual history – in two ways. Firstly, it demands that the mechanics binding intellectual forms to socio-political dynamics are not assumed *a priori* but are instead empirically reconstructed through a process of embedding. Secondly, in quite a different sense, it demands a recognition of the intellectual stratum – to the extent to which it can be delineated – as a context *for itself*, subject to internal dynamics whose relationship to social forces is contingent rather than necessary. In both cases working through the history of knowledge can act as an antidote to entrenched structuralism inherent to the historian’s gaze regarding how ‘the intellectual’, ‘the political’, ‘the religious’ etc. are formed and relate to one another. Combining these approaches – the social and epistemic ordering of knowledge – brings us close to something like a historical anthropology of scholarship, which might be able to nuance and enhance methods from the history of scholarship. One of the categories ripe for reconceptualization through this lens, and fundamental for this thesis at large, is the ‘Republic of Letters’.

As is well-established, the term ‘Republic of Letters’ is not a historiographical construct, but was also used by early modern scholars, as a means to situate themselves in an imagined community of scholars, extended in time and space.<sup>65</sup> The nature of the Republic of Letters has been understood in a range of different ways. According to one interpretation the Republic of Letters was a political project whose members supported and facilitated the construction of a public sphere distinct from state control, where values of tolerance and intellectual, religious and political ecumenism could be enacted.<sup>66</sup> Against this reading, an interpretation more in line with the history of scholarship has proposed that the Republic of Letters was first and foremost an apolitical space, which functioned in a trans-national and trans-confessional key.<sup>67</sup> The

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<sup>65</sup> On the gestation and lexicon of the Republic of Letters see, among others, Françoise Waquet, “Qu’est-Ce Que La République Des Lettres? Essai de Sémantique Historique,” *Bibliothèque de l’école Des Chartres* 147, no. 1 (1989): 473–502; Krzysztof Pomian, “République Des Lettres: Idée Utopique et Réalité Vécue,” *Le Débat* 130, no. 3 (2004): 154–70; Dirk van Miert, “What Was the Republic of Letters? A Brief Introduction to a Long History,” *Groniek* 47, no. 204/5 (2017).

<sup>66</sup> As is well known, this vision has been appropriated by Habermas, and Habermasian scholars, as part of the prehistory of the modern public sphere: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010) pp. 23–30. A recent development of this reading has been to see the Republic of Letters as a ‘commons of knowledge’, Joel Mogyor, *A Culture of Growth: The Origins of the Modern Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 179–225.

<sup>67</sup> See Noel Malcolm, ‘Private and Public Knowledge: Kircher, Esotericism, and the Republic of Letters’, in Paula Findlen, *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 297–308, especially, p. 301: “If Ideology is a system of justification for politics, then the ideology of the seventeenth century Republic of Letters was a peculiarly negative one, an ideology of the non-political”; on the inclusivity of the Republic of Letters, see Anthony Grafton, “A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: The

culture of sociability commonplace amongst self-identifying ‘citizens’ of the Republic of Letters was largely driven by a desire to preserve and extend their personal relations and scholarly practice.<sup>68</sup> Just as scholarship was an end in and of itself, so was scholarly communication, and as a result members of the Republic of Letters generally favoured a ‘status-quo’ conservatism. The limitations of this apolitical reading of scholarly communication – most explicitly its narrow, anachronistic, and indeed secular use of the concept of the “political” – have recently been demonstrated through a stress on the centrality of confessionality to 17<sup>th</sup> century scholarship.<sup>69</sup> In this context, the retention of a singular, ideologically coherent (even with an ideology of the non-political) Republic of Letters is becoming increasingly unviable.

An important side effect of depoliticizing the Republic of Letters, and then re-politicizing it on its own terms, has been its de-essentialism. When ‘pulled apart’ and rendered, first and foremost, a system of communication and information exchange, and only *a posteriori* judged as possessing any ideological coherence, the picture which emerges is instead one of myriad shifting, and imperfectly conjoined Republics of Letters, structured around key figures, institutions and sites, and often motivated by regional or institutional controversies, or the local manifestations of pan-European concerns. On the one hand this has made ambiguous the limits of the ‘Republic of Letters’, how it bled into diplomatic, mercantile, political and ecclesiastical correspondence, as well as how social and political interactions and events, structures and contingencies interfaced with epistolary communication and the machinery of scholarly production.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, it further enhances the sense in which within networks of scholars the architecture of the Republic of Letters was a hierarchical system, in which the reach and authority of different scholars in different contexts differed widely.

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Republic of Letters,” in *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2009), 9–34.

<sup>68</sup> Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

<sup>69</sup> Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, 2017, pp. 5-7, 15-16; Dirk van Miert, “The Limits of Transconfessional Contact in the Republic of Letters around 1600: Scaliger, Casaubon and Their Catholic Correspondents,” in *Between Scylla and Charybdis Learned Letter Writers Navigating the Reefs of Religious and Political Controversy in Early Modern Europe*. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 367–408.

<sup>70</sup> On the ‘Martian Republic of Letters’ see Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment*, pp. 36-43; some good examples of networks connecting scholars, merchants and diplomats are included in Peter N. Miller, *Peiresc’s Mediterranean World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), e.g. pp. 169-205; 338-366

Revising the 'Republic of Letters' own rhetorical self-presentation and viewing it as a complex of dynamic, hierarchical systems can show how it acted as the medium for reform of ideals, norms and practices within a regime of scholarship. The contributions of participants in the Republic of Letters were often shaped by their role as "representatives of ecclesiastical and academic institutions" and were conditioned by the "interference by their patrons or their institutional overseers",<sup>71</sup> but the 'communities' or networks of scholarship also constituted an essential and contested framework within which their works would be judged, and ought to conform. In sum, any conceptual dichotomy between a passive, friendship-based, studious and collaborative Republic of Letters, and one structured around conflictual ideologies and the politicization of scholarship is largely false, once it is understood that scholarly norms themselves represented and contained disputed convictions and assertions, both of a specific scholarly and general intellectual nature. From this perspective, the 'policing' of scholarship by authoritative figures and institutions within erudition signified instruments through which methodological and epistemological standards were established and maintained. This makes the study of constellations of scholarly controversies, reassembled and placed in context, rather than a reified Republic of Letters, crucial in enquiries into the knowledge regime of early modern Europe.

## Conclusion

The tri-partite distinction of method in intellectual history presented in this methodological and historiographical introduction – the history of ideas, the history of scholarship, the history of knowledge – is inevitably too precise: not only do many intellectual historians bridge these sub-categories; each sub-discipline is also itself internally diverse. Nonetheless I have tried to identify some general methodological trends within each and suggest how they have tended to align with certain historical interpretations of Europe's intellectual culture in the years around and following 1700. Furthermore, the institutionalization of these three sub-disciplines within the contemporary university, especially in Anglophone academia, and especially in the case of the history of political thought and the history of science, means that it is worthwhile

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<sup>71</sup>Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, p. 15.

explicitly elaborating upon their differences in approach. This thesis takes an ecumenical approach to method in intellectual history, though its gestation as a project mirrors in a fairly crude way the chronology of this introduction. In reductive terms: the impetus for this study comes from the history of ideas and history of political thought's 'Enlightenment-centric' narrative, its guiding methodological direction comes from the history of scholarship, and the arguments it aims to contribute pertain to the long history of knowledge.

More specifically: a sensitivity to the epistemological and social ordering of scholarship can inform modes of contextualisation in intellectual history, thereby extending the essential insights of the history of scholarship to their full potential. By drawing upon approaches from the history of science, a dynamic history of knowledge can disrupt the fixation upon teleologies of intellectual evolution which remain, to some extent, fundamental to the history of scholarship. By socializing the intellectual, it can offer instead a reading of the shifting organization of knowledge and learning. Tracing the contested institutionalization and normalization of practices and convictions in scholarship, as this thesis proposes to do, might then act as a platform to return empirically, and more reflexively, to some of the broader historical readings of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century historical thought with which this section began.

## Part Two - Assembling Naples, 1700-1734: Portrait of a Contested City

The ambition of this thesis is to understand the production of historical scholarship in a regional context – Naples and Southern Italy – and to reflect upon how general intellectual dynamics played out in dialogue with specific local circumstances. Naples and Southern Italy provides a particularly interesting context in which to interrogate historical writing in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic Europe; the political, religious and intellectual turmoil in the city and region in the years leading up and following 1700 made the tensions within historical scholarship especially acute. Reassembling a regional context sheds light upon general dynamics within early 18<sup>th</sup>-century historical scholarship, while thematically tracing the writing of history will shed light upon specific dynamics pertinent to the Italian South.

To this end, the following section will offer a portrait of Naples in the first three-and-a-half decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Presenting Naples as a ‘contested city’, the objective will be two-fold: firstly, to introduce the key political, religious and intellectual contexts in which historical scholarship was produced; and secondly, to locate Naples as an urban centre within local, regional and pan-European structural and institutional frameworks. The methodological dynamic at play is to propose how orientating around a city as a ‘centre of gravity’ when posing an intellectual-historical question might aid in the construction of a meaningful argument, as a tool for a syncretic contextualisation.

The ultimate objective of this thesis is not to *describe* Naples as a place, but to *use* Naples as tool with which to follow, reassemble and understand scholarly networks. As such, an initial description of the city and its environs in the years in question will serve as an introduction and point of reference for the chapters which follow. This description proceeds according to three main lines of enquiry: firstly, the political context, understood as contested between the city of Naples, the kingdom of Naples and the Imperial context (Spanish and then Austrian; Habsburg, then Bourbon, then Habsburg again); secondly, the religious context, wherein the city of Naples staged a complex negotiation between the Church, encompassing both the curia in Rome and Neapolitan ecclesiastical institutions and centres, and the State, understood in a broad sense, as formal and informal representatives of civil authority; and thirdly, the intellectual context, orientating around philosophical and theological themes, postulating an essential disagreement about different ways of relating ‘things human’ to ‘things divine’. This tripartite approach will provide a general picture of the history and historiography of Naples in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and a platform from which to present the figure whose writings and correspondence stands both at the centre of Neapolitan scholarship during these years, and this thesis: Matteo Egizio.

### The Political Environment: City, Kingdom, Empire

The final years of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century were, even by the standards of a region whose long history is defined by political instability, a period of political turmoil in Naples and the Italian South. Since the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century the ‘Kingdom of Naples’, encompassing all of Southern Italy, had been a possession of the Madrid-led polycentric Habsburg monarchy, and before this, had been a territory of the

Kingdom of Aragon. Under this political regime the city and kingdom were governed by a centrally-appointed viceroy and his political aides, in dialogue with an appointed committee – the ‘Consiglio Collaterale’ – made up largely of lawyers and bureaucrats, not all Neapolitans, which advised the viceroy on local policy and contributed to regional governance. As well as being, throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, by far the most populous city in the Spanish monarchy, and so an important economic centre and source of taxation and manpower, Naples was also capital and political, economic and cultural centre of its region, and an important urban node on the Italian peninsula. As such, it was the point of a reference for a range of long-standing baronial families who held considerable formal and informal influence alongside the Viceroy’s court and the Consiglio Collaterale. Administering vast territories in the rural South, and holding their own ‘courts’ in the capital, these nobles were also integrated into pan-European aristocratic networks which linked the courts and political centres of Europe.<sup>72</sup>

An influential historiographical tradition in Neapolitan scholarship has sought to sharply define these groups, tracing through the later 17<sup>th</sup> century the emergence of a ‘ceto civile’, a Neapolitan civil class, informed by new intellectual currents, inclined to critique entrenched structures of aristocratic and ecclesiastical power and to champion jurisdictional reform.<sup>73</sup> There was a consistent, and growing, movement for political-legal reform in Naples through the 17<sup>th</sup> and into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, but it maps imperfectly onto a coherent social class. More generally, the viceroy, the Consiglio Collaterale, the ‘ceto civile’ and the regional aristocracy occupied fragmented power-bases, and operated within political structures which were ill-defined and intertwined. Working by case demonstrates different structures of collaboration and triangulation from subject to subject.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> For a case-study into the Neapolitan aristocracy Tommaso Astarita, *The Continuity of Feudal Power: The Caracciolo Di Brienza in Spanish Naples* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); A. Spagnoletti, “The Naples Elites between City and Kingdom’,” ed. Tommaso Astarita (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 197–214.

<sup>73</sup> Taking a, in part, class-based and teleological view (though nonetheless valuable historiography), see Raffaele Colapietra, *Vita Pubblica e Classi Politiche Del Vicereame Napoletano (1656-1734)*, (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1961), tracing “la linea del conflitto tra baronaggio e ceto civile”, p. 30; Salvo Mastellone, *Francesco d’Andrea politico e giurista, 1648-1698. L’ascesa del ceto civile* (Firenze: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki, 1969); Raffaele Ajello, *Preilluminismo giuridico e tentativi di codificazione nel Regno di Napoli* (Napoli: Jovene, 1968).

<sup>74</sup> For a good description of the political landscape in general, Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment Scotland and Naples 1680-1760*, pp. 54-70; Encyclopedic and less ideological readings that those from the 1960s are offered in Giuseppe Galasso, *Storia del Regno di Napoli: Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo e austriaco*

This situation, less a balance of powers than an interweaving of mutually reliant networks and relationships, was rendered fragile in the last years of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century as a result of the dynastic crisis prompted by the childless and infirm Habsburg King of Spain Charles II. The expectation and eventuality of a succession crisis led to conflict within the city and kingdom of Naples, and a heightening and polemicization of existing political and intellectual tensions. Upon Charles II's death on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1700 the Spanish crown was claimed by several parties, principally the then 15-year old Austrian Habsburg Archduke Charles, son of Emperor Joseph I, on the grounds of dynastic continuity, and by Prince Philip, the 17-year old grandson of Louis XIV, of the House of Bourbon, on the grounds of genealogical descent, and the will of the dead king. Conflicting claims triggered the War of Spanish Succession, a conflict between the Habsburg and the Bourbon dynasties, between the Holy Roman Empire and a Franco-Spanish alliance, which redrew the map of European geo-politics, and with it the political order of the Italian peninsula.

Rival allegiances to the now ousted Habsburg dynasty or the new Bourbon line was one factor in the political conflict which ensued within Naples in 1700 and 1701. Conflict also reflected enthusiasm for different interpretations of political reform. A predominantly aristocratic faction of Neapolitans saw the succession crisis as an opportunity to enact a coup, supported by the Habsburg dynasty in Vienna, hoping to oust the present viceroy and re-organise the political and economic structure of the Kingdom. This coup, known as the 'Congiura di Macchia' after one of its ringleaders Giacomo Gambacorta, Principe di Macchia, failed, was suppressed by the viceroy Luis Francisco de la Cerda, Duke of Medinaceli with support of Spanish troops.<sup>75</sup> The leaders of the coup were either executed or fled to Rome, and many of them then on to Vienna, seeking refuge in the Imperial court. The political tensions which the coup represented didn't, however, go away.<sup>76</sup>

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(1622-1734), vol. 3 (Torino: UTET, 2006).; more descriptive than interpretative, see Giulio Sodano, "Governing the City," in *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. Tommaso Astarita (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 109-29.

<sup>75</sup> The domestic agenda of one aspect of the coup is evidenced in Tiberio Caraffa's *Parere*, published in 1973, V. Conti, "Il 'Parere' Di Tiberio Carafa a Carlo d'Absburgo," *Il Pensiero Politico* 6 (1973): 57-67, pp. 57-67.

<sup>76</sup> On the 'congiura' see Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment*, pp. 159-61.

Amidst conflict across the Italian peninsula, the Spanish Bourbons, supported by the French, remained in power in Naples until 1707, when the kingdom was invaded by Imperial troops. A change of viceroy regime, directed initially from Habsburg-occupied Barcelona, and then Vienna, entailed a re-ordering of the political hierarchies within Naples. Some of those loyal to Madrid and the Bourbons fled or lost positions of authority, while some Neapolitans exiled after the 'Congiura' returned. Other nobles and politicians refashioned themselves as pro-Habsburg, or maintained position in spite of the dynastic change. The Austrian possession of Naples was officially recognized by the treaties of Utrecht (1713) and Rastatt (1714), and would last until 1734, when a young Charles III, 'Carlo Borbone' invaded from Parma, during the War of Polish Succession.

The near thirty years of effective Austrian rule were typified by both change and continuity.<sup>77</sup> Reforming elements within the Neapolitan 'civil society' saw the dynastic change as an opportunity to encourage structural changes to the city's and Kingdom's finances, its economy and its systems of political organization. These drew upon previous attempts from the preceding decades, but crystallised into a semi-coherent agenda, in the light of the prospect of a more actively engaged polity. This enthusiasm is well captured in a document prepared for the first Austrian viceroy of the city, Wirrich Philipp von Daun, in 1707, titled 'Brieve e chiara idea del regno di Napoli et delle cose che al medesimo s'appartengono'.<sup>78</sup> Addressed to Daun as an aid for effective government, the document maps out the political systems and institutions which support and curtail the viceroy's authority, and the particular nature of royal prerogative in Naples, as compared with other states. The main drive of the anonymous 'Idea del Regno' is the importance of opposing "dei pregiudizi inferiti dagli Ecclesiastici alla Reale Giurisdizione" against civil authority, which will be covered in the following section, but it also set forth an assessment of the kingdom's finances, its polity, and described in depth the reality and dangers of 'baronaggio'.<sup>79</sup> Support of the barons was

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<sup>77</sup> Overviewing Austrian rule in Naples as a progressive process, see Antonio Di Vittorio, *Gli austriaci e il Regno di Napoli* (Napoli: Giannini, 1973).; for a dense and systematic description of the key themes of Austrian governance, see Marcus Landau, *Rom, Wien, Neapel waehrend des spanischen Erbfolgekrieges: Ein Beitr. z. Gesch. des Kampfes zwischen Papstthum u. Kaiserthum* (Leipzig: Friedrich, 1885).

<sup>78</sup> Held among the MS of the University Library, Cambridge, ADD 4441; on the inside cover, the MS is described as "statistique exacté e détaillé remise en 1707 a Monsieur le Fld. Mareschal de Daun Vice Roi de Naples, je l'ai eu de son petit fils ». Below this a note, regarding the MS' previous ownership, H. H. Peach, 1907, Nov.r.

<sup>79</sup> The report generally hopes to describe "come si siano governate fin ora le Provincie del Regno, e come si governino al presente", f. 5v.

important for civil order and the viceroy's authority; too much power, however, led to abuse of the jurisdiction and feudal law, an excess of violence and exploitation, economic mismanagement and an undermining of the viceroy and imperial authority.

Opposition to 'baronaggio' reflected concerns to better control the levers of political-economic power and reform. Other pamphlets in these years were completed by Alessandro Riccardi, Serafino Biscardi and Gaetano Argento, all representatives of the Neapolitan group of lawyers advocating structural reform in the Kingdom, and a more pro-active central authority.<sup>80</sup> Such approaches also became manifest in more considered reassessment of the circumstances of Naples vis-à-vis other European powers, and how economic beleaguerment related to the moral corruption of the city's political class – the best representative of this was the *Vita Civile* (1712) of Paolo Mattia Doria.<sup>81</sup> Much of this push for reform identified the mismanagement of the Kingdom under Spanish rule, the economic consequences of 'baronaggio', ecclesiastical immunity and arbitrariness, and an enthusiasm that a Vienna-run establishment might enact more sweeping reform.<sup>82</sup>

If the political uncertainty between the years 1707 and 1713 stimulated expansive ideas about reform, after the mid-1710s the Austrian regime appears to have rather sought to consolidate their power, and the fate of Naples as a 'kingdom governed as a province' was extended through to another dynastic break in 1734.<sup>83</sup> Some projects of economic reform were pursued during this time, generally depending upon *ad hoc* collaboration between the viceroy and senior Neapolitans, rather than a centrally coordinated programme. This in part also reflected the consolidation of the structures of patronage which bound Vienna to Naples, and then on to regional arenas in the Italian South. Imperial policy tended to favour stability rather than whole-scale transformation, and the Viceroy, Neapolitans on the Consiglio Collaterale and noble elites had a vested interest in pursuing this moderate line.

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<sup>80</sup> On Riccardi's *Richieste* see Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Alessandro Riccardi e Le Richieste Del 'Ceto Civile' All'Austria Nel 1707," *Rivista Storica Italiana*. 81 (1969): 745–77.

<sup>81</sup> I rely here mainly upon J. Robertson, who links Doria's manuscript *Massime del governo spagnolo a Napoli* and his *Vita Civile*, in *The Case for the Enlightenment*, pp. 186-198.

<sup>82</sup> Raffaele Ajello, "Gli 'Afrancesados' a Napoli Nella Prima Meta Del Settecento. Idee e Progetti Di Sviluppo," in *I Borbone Di Napoli e i Borbone Di Spagna: Un Bilancio Storigrafico*, ed. Mario Di Pinto (Napoli: Guida Editori, 1985), 225–92.

<sup>83</sup> Doria's phrase, used as a theme by Robertson, *The case for the Enlightenment*.

Neapolitan political historiography has tended to stress Austrian dominion as a series of 'missed opportunities' for political-economic reform, assessing Naples in these years negatively both in relation to the Neapolitan political milieu of the mid-to-late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in relation to other Italian and European contexts.<sup>84</sup> Neapolitan history continues to be written from an emotional perspective rooted in Neapolitan identity: in his preface to his history of Southern Italy, *Between Salt Water and Holy Water*, Thomas Astarita writes "visitors tell us that Naples reminds them of Bombay or Cairo, and we want to remind them that we are Europeans and secretly wish someone would mistake Naples for Stockholm or Bern".<sup>85</sup> This complex relationship with Europe and the West makes Naples an interesting vantage point from which to assess the narratives of European history. The emphasis here, however, is to take a less diachronic, and indeed less value-orientated, interpretation, and instead contextualize Neapolitan politics synchronically. Here the key context for much political contestation in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Naples was not its failure to modernize, but rather the Kingdom's disputed relationship with Rome and the Catholic Church.

### The Religious Environment: City, Church, State

If clamour for political and economic reform in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples led to little substantial change, the shifts in the kingdom's relationship with ecclesiastical jurisdiction during Austrian governance were more significant. Through the 17<sup>th</sup> century and into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, much of the political-theological discourse in the Catholic world concerned the limits of episcopacy, and the source of authority in the appointment of ecclesiastical office; key issues also included the nature of benefices due to the church from state authorities, the extent of ecclesiastical immunity from civil legislation, and more broadly the capacity for both 'civil-political' and 'theological-

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<sup>84</sup> This later period of reform, and how it differs from the Austrian period, is looked at by Koen Stapelbroek, *Love, Self-Deceit, and Money: Commerce and Morality in the Early Neapolitan Enlightenment* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), ch. 1, 'Commerce, Morality and the Reform of Naples', 12-20. In Imbruglia's narrative of rise and fall, Naples' 18th century starts effectively in 1734, Girolamo Imbruglia, *Naples in the Eighteenth Century: The Birth and Death of a Nation State* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Anna Maria Rao, "Missed Opportunities in the History of Naples," in *New Approaches to Naples c.1500-c.1800: The Power of Place*, ed. Melissa Calaresu and Helen Hills, 2013, 203-24.

<sup>85</sup> Tommaso Astarita, *Between Salt Water and Holy Water: A History of Southern Italy* (New York ; London: WWNorton, 2005), preface.

ecclesiastical' affairs to be moderated by the church and state authorities respectively. These tensions crystallized in France, where a substantial movement lobbied for the rights of the Gallican church, but they played out also in Iberia, in central Europe and on the Italian peninsula, where the French model of Gallicanism is an imperfect category with which to understand regional dynamics.<sup>86</sup> In Naples there was a lengthy historical backdrop to conflict between ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, predicated upon Rome's claims that, since the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, Naples had been a fief of the Papal States; as such the civil ruler of Naples was obliged to pay the 'Censura di China', an annual payment to Rome in exchange for jurisdictional authority over temporal affairs. Dissatisfaction with this state of affairs was *the* driving force behind calls for reform in the Kingdom through the early modern period, and political instability and dynastic change in the years around 1700 prompted a spike in anti-curial and regalist discourse.

A concrete point of emphasis for these developments in late 17<sup>th</sup>-century Naples was the so-called 'Processo degli Ateisti', a trial carried out by the Neapolitan, and then the Roman, inquisition against a group of Neapolitans accused of reading and propagating heretical and atheistic literature. The trial began in March 1688, with the denunciation by Francesco Paoli Manuzzi of a group of Neapolitan 'atheists' – he drew attention to Basilio Giannelli, Giacinto de Cristofaro and Filippo Belli, as well as several of their friends and associates.<sup>87</sup> All of the implicated were young scholars and lawyers, close to the intellectual culture of the then-defunct 'Accademia degli Investiganti', led by Lionardo Di Capoa, Tomasso Donzelli, Tomasso Cornelio and Lucantonio Porzio. This was the culture of empirical science, influenced heavily by Gassendi and 'Epicureanism', as directed towards medicine, mathematics and natural philosophy, but also touching upon genuinely heretical assertions.

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<sup>86</sup> The historiography of Gallicanism, like that of Jansenism, has sometimes been viewed through its relationship with Enlightenment, the French Revolution e.g. Dale Van Kley, "Piety and Politics in the Century of Lights," in *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, ed. Mark Goldie and Robert Wokler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 110–46 and Catherine Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la nation: le jansénisme au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005); For a good contextualist study of Gallicanism as an ecclesiastical movement, see Jotham Parsons, *The Church in the Republic: Gallicanism and Political Ideology in Renaissance France* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004) and Sophie Nicholls, "Gallican Liberties and the Catholic League," *History of European Ideas* 40, no. 7 (2014): 940–64.

<sup>87</sup> Osbat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli. Il processo agli ateisti, 1688-1697* which reconstitutes the trial meticulously through archives in Naples and Rome.

In the years through to 1692, and then to a lesser extent until 1695, the trial rumbled on, and the Roman authorities became increasingly, and increasingly transparently, involved. Neapolitan reaction and resistance to the trial came in two forms: a defence of modern philosophy and science against the charge of heresy; and a defence of the Neapolitan civil realm against the interventions of Rome and the Inquisition. These arguments could clearly imply one another, but they were also conceptually distinct. The issues at stake in the latter were not primarily philosophical or theological but legal and procedural, relating both to the principle of Inquisitorial and Roman intervention, and also to the nature and form of that intervention. These could take different manifestations, with different degrees of severity in their anti-curial sentiment.

One of the first Neapolitans to weigh in on the jurisdictional controversy prompted by the Processo was Amato Danio, the kingdom's *Regio Consigliero*, sitting on the Consiglio Collaterale. Danio's 1691 manuscript *Memoriale*<sup>88</sup> and his 1692, published, *L'antichità dell'ufficio della Santa Inquisitione*<sup>89</sup> both defended in principle the Inquisition's right to intervene in affairs of heresy, but condemned the excess and malpractice of the inquisitors in this specific case. Danio's objection was moderate; in 1698 he was compelled to compose a work *defending* the Inquisition against its more virulent Neapolitan critics: Danio's *De Necessaria et Iusta Inquisitionis Sancte Fidei* received approval from the Holy Office, but appears to have not been published.<sup>90</sup> The less moderate works objected to by Danio, which mainly circulated in manuscript among Neapolitan lawyers, were written by jurists such as Serafino Biscardi, Giacinto de Mari and Pietro di Fusco. Their arguments, combining the procedural and historical criticism of the Inquisition, and connection the controversy around the inquisition with other tensions in ecclesiastical-jurisdictional pretensions, found their most essential

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<sup>88</sup> *mandato dalli Deputati della Citta di Napoli alla Maesta del Re Cattolico Carlo II Re di Spagna circa li rumori per cagione dell'Inquisizione*, a copy included in BSNSP MS XIII D6, ff. 160-175

<sup>89</sup> *contra all'eresie e l'utilita che ne hanno ricevuto e ne ricevon gli Stati del Cristianesimo e le avversita accadute cosi in generale, come in particolare ai Prencipi ed a privati, li quali invece di favorire, proteggere e difendere l'Inquisitione e gli Inquisitori gli hanno maltratti o impedito il loro esercizio. Raccolte dal Dottor Amato Danio Regio Consigliero per Sua Maesta Cattolica nel Consiglio di Santa Chiara o sia di Capuana nel Regno di Napoli,*

<sup>90</sup> *Institutione adversus Philippis a' Limboris Remonstrante, et anonymus Gallus* – the work was a criticism of the *Historia Inquisitionis* by Phillip van Limborch and the *L'Histoire de l'Inquisition et son Origine* by Jacques Marsollier, though was planned in the context of the Neapolitan situation: ACDF Stanza Storica, censurae, Titulum Librorum 1697-1701, no. 28; Danio's position has been viewed as representing the viceroy's interest to balance the defence of the civil jurisdiction with an attempt to avoid unnecessary disruption: Vittor Ivo Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta. Un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento*. (Napoli: Istituto italiano per gli studi storici, 1970), p. 154.

manifestation in Nicola Caravita's 1695 *Ragioni a pro' della fedelissima citta e Regno di Napoli contr'al procedimento straordinario nelle cause del Sant'Officio*, which framed the Inquisition's intervention as an offence to royal jurisdiction and civil law.<sup>91</sup> The most explicit elaboration of the cross-pollination between the defence of civil legal authority and the defence of modern philosophy was that of Giuseppe Valletta. Initially Valletta emphasised the need for the Inquisition to adhere to the *via ordinaria*, to be accountable and moderate; this transpired into a more general condemnation of papal intervention. This rested more upon his philosophical orientation than on a 'ragione di stato' jurisdictional position, but its conclusion was to argue that "il governo della società religiosa non ha nulla a che fare con la gerarchia civile".<sup>92</sup>

These different layers of jurisdictional criticism constituted a discursive renegotiation of the relationship between civil and religious authority. This renegotiation was carried out around specific regional controversies: for instance, the contested benefices – ecclesiastical rights exempt from civil jurisdiction – of the Archbishopric of Sorrento, in 1702;<sup>93</sup> or the viceroy's condemnation of Fabrizio Pignatelli, Archbishop of Lecce, in 1712, over the issue of ecclesiastical immunity from tax.<sup>94</sup> These local case-studies had the capacity to provoke tensions between Rome and Madrid or Vienna, and played out through the prism of Naples and the channels of Imperial bureaucracy. As demonstrated in the 'Brieve e Chiara Idea' prepared for the new viceroy Daun, which numbered the "pregiudizi" maintained by the Church in Rome at twenty-three distinct points, the advent of Austrian rule provoked a renewed enthusiasm for anti-curial politicking among Neapolitan lawyers. Initially the Austrian Habsburg regime was keen to establish its authority over Rome, as manifest both through the appointment of Vincenzo Grimani, a Cardinal but loyal to Vienna and critical of Rome's foreign policy, to the position of viceroy in 1708, and filling the positions on the Consiglio Collaterale and in

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<sup>91</sup> On Caravita, see Stefano Fodale, "Nicolo Caravita e La Negazione Dei Diritti Pontific Sul Regno Di Napoli," *Annali Di Storia Di Diritto*, x-xi (67 1966): 241–315.

<sup>92</sup> Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta. Un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento.*, p. 184; Comparato's distinction between a Valletta's arguments based in natural law, inspired by Grotius, and those of F. D'Andrea, and Caravita, based in civil, that is historical, law, is here instructive, pp. 70-1.

<sup>93</sup> See the biography of Filippo D'Anastasio, much of it structured around the controversy, E. Gencarelli, "Anastasio, Filippo," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 3 (1961); also F. D'Anastasio, *Apologia di quanto l'arcivescovo di Sorrento ha praticato con gli Economi de' bene Ecclesiastici di sua Diocesi*, 1724.

<sup>94</sup> Giancarlo Vallone, "Conflitti Giurisdizionali Nel Salento," in *San Pietro in Lama: Storia, Società, Territorio e Religiosità Di Un "Feudo Del Vescovo,"* ed. Giancarlo Vallone, Mario Cazzato, and Antonio Costantini (Galatina: M. Congedo, 1998), 291–331.

the Imperial bureaucracy with anti-curial figures, such as Gaetano Argento and Costantino Grimaldi in Naples, and Alessandro Riccardi in Vienna.<sup>95</sup> Polemics focusing on the issue of ecclesiastical benefices were exchanged,<sup>96</sup> and in 1709 Grimani directed the circulation of a manifesto marking out the extent of civil jurisdiction and affirming the legitimacy of the Habsburg Charles VI as ruler of Naples, at this point not recognized by Rome. This was angrily received by the Pope, who excommunicated Grimani, though later in 1709 Rome compromised, accepting some of the terms and the legitimacy of a Habsburg, rather than Bourbon, Naples.<sup>97</sup>

After 1710, and especially after the treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt in 1713 and 1714 respectively, direct collision between Rome and Naples on issues of ecclesiastical jurisdiction were generally avoided, with the ceasing of direct military conflict on the Italian peninsula. Issues of ecclesiastical authority continued to be disputed, but more as domestic issues of governance, rather than manifestations of, or stimuli for, inter-state conflict. For instance, the density and volume of ecclesiastical property in Naples were disputed in works by jurists such as Daniele Zoringro and Francesco Peccerillo, who both called for more strident state control over the construction of religious buildings.<sup>98</sup> Within these minor controversies, however, more substantial objections to the Church could be nourished. Pietro Giannone, commissioned by Argento and the Collaterale, had in 1715 composed a legal treatise defending the rights of the citizens of San Pietro in Lama, in Lecce, to grow olives without paying a fee to the Archbishop.<sup>99</sup> The work represented a significant phase in Giannone's formation, the main fruit of which would

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<sup>95</sup> A huge amount of insight into the internal politics of the Consiglio Collaterale in these years is given in Dario Luongo, *Vis jurisprudentiae: teoria e prassi della moderazione giuridica in Gaetano Argento* (Napoli: Jovene, 2001).

<sup>96</sup> Most significantly Niccolò Caravita's *Nullum Ius Pontificis Maximi in Regno Neapolitani*, 1707, viewed as "la nascita dell'anticlericalismo a Napoli" in Romeo De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)* (Napoli: E.S.I., 1971), p. 21.

<sup>97</sup> On Grimani as viceroy see A. Borelli, "Grimani, Vincenzo," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 59 (2002).; Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Napoli e i Vicere Austriaci, 1707-34," *Storia Di Napoli* 7 (1972): 347-458.; with a good overview, see Harold Samuel Stone, *Vico's Cultural History: The Production and Transmission of Ideas in Naples, 1685-1750* (New York: Brill, 1997), pp. 144-155.

<sup>98</sup> D. Zoringro, *Discorsi sul Franchigie degli ecclesiastici nel Regno di Napoli*, 1712; F. Peccerillo, *Ragioni... impedire la fabbrica delle nuove chiese e l'acquisto che gli Ecclesiastici fanno de' beni de' secolari*, 1719. On the density of ecclesiastical buildings in Naples, see Helen Hills, *Invisible City: The Architecture of Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan Convents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 19-23.

<sup>99</sup> Pietro Giannone, *Per li possessore degli oliveti nel feudo di San Pietro in Lama contro monsignor vescovo di Lecce barone di quel feudo intorno all'esazione delle decime dell'olive*, 1715; the case was an extension of the controversy with the Bishop of Lecce began several years earlier, Mario Cazzato, Antonio Costantini, and Giancarlo Vallone, *San Pietro in Lama: storia, società, territorio e religiosità di un "feudo del vescovo"* (Galatina: M. Congedo, 1998).

be his *Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli*, 1723, the work against which the entirety of Naples' anti-curial political environment through the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century and 18<sup>th</sup> Century has been judged.<sup>100</sup>

Giannone's *Istoria* set a new tone in Neapolitan scholarship, in part for its rhetorical anti-clericalism, and in part for its historical method, treating the Church as a historical entity rather than a fixed institution. The work traced the history of the Kingdom of Naples from antiquity, tracing its rise and fall as a political entity, and attributing many of its ills to a repressive Church failing to limit itself to celestial, rather than temporal, interventions. Upon its publication, the viceroy in Naples was initially unsure how to treat the *Istoria*, but as ecclesiastical opinion turned on Giannone, he was excommunicated, his *Istoria* banned by the royal censor, and he left Naples for Vienna in search a patron.<sup>101</sup> After his exile to Vienna, Giannone and his *Istoria* served to act as a point of reference for the remaining Neapolitan community of jurists and scholars committed establishing a stronger distinction between ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction.

The legacy of Giannone, following his death in prison in Turin in 1748, and his thought, especially his posthumously published *Triregno*, have acted as a pivot around which a historiographical narrative of laicization, secularization and radicalism in Neapolitan political and intellectual culture has been constructed and preserved. There is an important element of truth to this narrative: a consistent objective of an active Neapolitan community of lawyers and scholars in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century was to renegotiate the relationship between the civil and the religious, 'things human' and 'things divine', though case by case they tended to envisage this relationship differently. At the same time, it's important to stress that there was not a necessary correlation between criticism of the Roman curia and criticism of religion, or even Catholic Orthodoxy. A proto-secularization of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples is unwarranted: key critics of the Church's politics, such as Giuseppe Valletta, argued that religion and theology needed to be insulated, not banished, from worldly affairs; there was also a

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<sup>100</sup>Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone*. (Milano-Napoli: R. Ricciardi, 1970); Agostino Lauro, *Il giurisdizionalismo pregiannoniano nel Regno di Napoli Problema e bibliografia (1563-1723)*. (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1974); Lino Marini, *Pietro Giannone e il giannonismo a Napoli nel Settecento: lo svolgimento della coscienza politica del ceto intellettuale del regno* (Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & figli, 1950).

<sup>101</sup> On Giannone, the *Istoria* and its reception, see ch. 3.

consistent appeal to an ecclesiastical primitivism and personal spirituality at the core of elements of Neapolitan anti-curial politics, represented in Costantino Grimaldi's 1708 *Considerazioni intorno alle rendite ecclesiastiche*.<sup>102</sup> At the same time, prominent representatives of the clergy in Naples, and critics of the anti-curial polemics, such as Carlo Maiello, were enthusiastic participants in discussions around modern philosophy. Rather than view early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples as structured around a conflict between a traditional religious culture and a radical counter-culture escaping its religious baggage, Romeo De Maio has suggested that it should be seen as a period of spiritual efflorescence and religious transformation. His work has emphasized the structural and doctrinal diversification of belief in Naples during these years, as it engaged with the new philosophy as well as currents within theology.<sup>103</sup> This is a useful lens through which to assess Naples' intellectual environment.

### The Intellectual Environment: Things Human and Things Divine

Political and ecclesiastical contestation in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples was both fueled and shaped by the city's inheritance of the philosophical and theological dynamics of 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe. The contestation of philosophical-theological positions was not solely, or even primarily, a context for political thought; they were contested as issues of substance in and of themselves. The generator of controversy was the disputed relationship between philosophy and theology, and the substance of and relationship between reason and faith. Naples was an important receptacle for the 'new' philosophy, an enthusiasm for the innovations of Galileo and the recovery of a non-Aristotelian classical tradition structured around Sextus Empiricus, Democritus and Lucretius.<sup>104</sup> The key context for receiving and propagating atomist philosophy was the *Accademia degli Investiganti*, led by Tommaso Cornelio and Luc'Antonio Porzio, and then later by

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<sup>102</sup> On the religious character of Grimaldi's thought see Vittor Ivo Comparato, "Ragione e Fede Nelle Discussioni Istoriche, Teologiche e Filosofiche Di Costantino Grimaldi," in *Saggi e Ricerche Sul Settecento* (Napoli: Istituto italiano per gli Studi Storici, 1968), 48–93.

<sup>103</sup> De Maio, for instance, stresses the importance of a growing number of private conventicles and influential priests around whom networks of Neapolitans could congregate, as well as the significant diversity within the clergy and ecclesiastical community: De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)*. e.g. pp. 63-82.

<sup>104</sup> For an excellent review of philosophical developments in late 17<sup>th</sup>-century Naples, structured in part around Giannone's autobiography, see Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment Scotland and Naples 1680-1760*. pp. 121-34.

Leonardo di Capua, whose 1681 *Parere* typified their approach to experimental natural science based in recovering the probable through empiricism and a productive scepticism. Following Gassendi, the *Investiganti* wanted to demonstrate the commensurability between atomistic cosmology and Christian orthodoxy;<sup>105</sup> in their view, it was Aristotelianism, not Epicureanism, which represented the font of all heresy. This was the intellectual frame of the ‘processo degli ateisti’;<sup>106</sup> it was a viewpoint which reached its Neapolitan apogee in Giuseppe Valletta’s manuscript polemics in defense of modern philosophy – Valletta attributed the corpuscular philosophy to Moses – and in Costantino Grimaldi’s published criticism of the Jesuit Benedetto de Benedictis.

One of the solutions presented by Valletta to the mutual accommodation of religious orthodoxy and epicurean physics was to establish a qualitative difference between method in philosophy – experimental – and in theology – dogmatic. The essential problem of Aristotelian philosophy for Valletta was that, once adopted by Christian thinkers, it undermined such a distinction, and as such encouraged probabilism and speculation in theological matters:

perche approvare, per così dire, la libertà di teologare e poi appugnare la libertà filosofare? ... introdurre il probabile nelle cose spirituale, l’improbabile nelle scienze umane... scienza nelle coscienze, coscienza nelle scienze; ed in un motto, Accademici nella Teologi, Dogmatici nelle filosofare; filosofi nella Teologia, e nella Filosofia Teologi?<sup>107</sup>

The differentiation of philosophy and theology, the practical empiricism, and the almost fideist solution proposed by Valletta,<sup>108</sup> fostered by the *Investiganti*, was challenged by the reception of Descartes and his Christian metaphysics in Naples from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. In its purest manifestation Cartesianism set its sights not on the probable, or more certain, but upon the true, the ‘clear and distinct’ idea;<sup>109</sup> Descartes’ metaphysical

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<sup>105</sup> On the *Investiganti* in general, Maurizio Torrini, “L’Accademia Degli *Investiganti*. Napoli 1663-70,” *Quaderni Storici* 16, no. 48 (1981): 845–83.

<sup>106</sup> On the trial in the context of philosophy, see F. Cacciapuoti, “Il Processo Agli Ateisti: Dale Discussia Teologiche Al Giusnaturalismo,” in *Dalla Scienza Mirabile Alla Scienza Nuova: Napoli e Cartesio ; Catalogo Della Mostra Bibliografica e Iconografica ; Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, 7 Aprile - 5 Luglio 1997* (Napoli: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, 1997), 149–71.

<sup>107</sup> Giuseppe Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, ed. Michele Rak (Firenze: Olschki, 1975), p. 96.

<sup>108</sup> The interpretation of Comparato, Giuseppe Valletta. *Un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento.*, p. 212, 242.

<sup>109</sup> On the waning of the *Investiganti* see Maurizio Torrini, “Le Discussione Sulle Statuto Delle Scienze Tra Le Fine Del 600 e l’inizio Del 700,” in *Galileo e Napoli*, n.d., 359–83.

dualism, received in Naples largely through Malebranche and Regius, implied an alternative moral-anthropological framework.<sup>110</sup> This could inform political-jurisdictional dynamics, through the medium of theories of natural law;<sup>111</sup> a more direct context, however, was the renegotiation of theological orthodoxy itself.

The important framework here was the imagined doctrinal yardstick, essential to 17<sup>th</sup> Century Catholic moral theology, stretching between, on the one end, variations of probabilism, and on the other variations of rigorism. The key issues of dogma concerned the nature of Grace, predestination and free-will. Probabilists, often associated with the Society of Jesus, defended the right of Catholics to make moral choices deemed probable, even in the instance of a more probable choice being available. In conception and practice this doctrine was underpinned by theological concept of conscience, and on the centrality of the believer in navigating their world.<sup>112</sup> For its critics, probabilism both emerged from and led to further laxity in moral theology and lacked intellectual rigour. The complexities of morality couldn't be resolved purely through internal deliberation; there was an authoritative guide to religious life: scripture and the theological tradition of the Church fathers. This distinction rested upon different and opposing cosmologies: the first inclined to stress the divine aspects of the human mind, thereby designating to man the agency to resolve moral uncertainty via his conscience; the second stressing the Fallen state of mankind, and therefore need to refer to concrete guidance in moral issues.

This latter position was that developed by the 'Jansenists' since the mid 17<sup>th</sup> Century: defenders of Cornelius Jansen's edition of Augustine, and the interpretation of

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<sup>110</sup> As suggested in Robertson's account, p. 126; the role of Malebranche in Naples is elaborated on at length in Pierre Girard, *Comme des lumières jamais vues: matérialisme et radicalité politique dans les premières Lumières à Naples (1647-1744)* (Paris: Honoré Champion éditeur, 2016).; and Pierre Girard, "Filosofia Malebranchiana e Tradizione Cartesiana Nel Primo Illuminismo Napoletano," *Laboratorio Dell'ISPF* XIV, no. II (2017).

<sup>111</sup> As Robertson, *Case for the Enlightenment*, shows in the case of Gregorio Caloprese and Nicolo Capasso, pp. 131-34; Enrico Nuzzo, *Verso la vita civile: antropologia e politica nelle lezioni accademiche di Gregorio Caloprese e Paolo Mattia Doria* (Napoli: Guida, 1984).; these readings are more nuanced than former interpretations of an inherent continuity between philosophy and politics, see e.g Salvo Mastellone, *Pensiero politico e vita culturale a Napoli nella seconda metà del seicento* (Messina: G. D'Anna, 1965).: "l'atomismo abituava, cioè, la mente ad una vision dinamica della vita e... sulla concezione della società", p. 92.

<sup>112</sup> For a concise definitions of probablism, see in Stefania Tutino, *Uncertainty in Post-Reformation Catholicism: A History of Probabilism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 8-9

Augustine's reading of grace and free-will enclosed therein.<sup>113</sup> For Jansenists, most prominently those associated with the Port-Royal Abbey in Paris, exponents of probabilism undermined core tenants of doctrinal authority; for the probabilists, the 'Jansenists' supported theological doctrine akin to Calvinists, and was furthermore a front for political reform. Through the 17<sup>th</sup> and into the 18<sup>th</sup> century the tension between probabilist and Jansenist readings of moral theology played out through the prism of curial politics, with series of Papal Bulls and prominent cardinals supporting one side or the other. With the 1713 Bull *Unigenitus* the controversy was formally resolved, though by this time Jansenism had matured and refashioned the religious culture of Catholic Europe.

Another current in Catholic theology of the later 17<sup>th</sup> century which interfaced with the juxtaposition of Jesuit and Jansenist was Quietism. Quietism encouraged a retreat from controversies on issues of doctrine and instead advocated a more personal, 'inner' spirituality based upon introspection, meditative practices and asceticism. Like probabilism, quietism appeared to undermine the authority of Church tradition and scripture in moral issues and to encourage superstition; it also, much more than probabilism, challenged ecclesiastical hierarchies. On these points it was attacked by 'Jansenist' rigorists, as well as being condemned by the Vatican. At the same time, despite their doctrinal differences, 'Jansenism' and quietism, and to an extent probabilism, can be seen as responses to a common desire for a purification of religion, even if they conceive this in different and contradictory ways. Like quietism, Jansenism contained an ascetic and meditative streak, though this was often directed towards study rather than pure contemplation.<sup>114</sup> All these currents were symptoms of a Catholic church which was becoming more heterogeneous and subsequently more difficult to discipline.

These theological dynamics were interwoven with ascent of modern philosophy in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, and it was within this dialogue that they became manifest in Naples in the

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<sup>113</sup> For a general overview of Jansenism in 17th century France, see Alexander Sedgwick, *Jansenism in Seventeenth-Century France: Voices from the Wilderness* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977). More focussed on the political implications of Jansenism in the 18th century, is Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la nation*.

<sup>114</sup> They all, in a sense, represent 'Religions of the heart', Ted Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), pp. 18-36; continuity is also proposed in Hans-Jürgen Schrader, Heinz Schilling, and Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Jansenismus, Quietismus, Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002).

late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The philosophical objection to Aristotelian scholasticism in Naples developed in an Augustinian key, fueled by the reception of key Jansenist authors, notably Pascal and Arnauld.<sup>115</sup> Pasquale Sposato's enquiry into Neapolitan Jansenism – or rather, 'philo-jansenism' – remains the most useful dedicated account, demonstrating the penetration of a rigorist approach to theology, and more generally Port-Royal scholarship, in Naples in the years around 1700.<sup>116</sup> De Maio's scholarship sheds light upon the continuity of quietist spirituality in Naples towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, while also suggesting the existence of productive flows between a quietist or fideist sensibility and the reception of modern philosophy.<sup>117</sup> The quest for certainty which defined the proliferation of modern philosophy in early modern Europe was not a secular philosophical task, but one of religious gravity.

It's important to both substantiate the philosophical-theological situation in Naples circa 1700, and to contextualize this in pan-European theological debates of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, because this intellectual environment remained in place for the first third of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The two key innovators philosophically were Giambattista Vico and Paolo Mattia Doria, who confronted the problem of epistemological uncertainty presented by Cartesianism in different ways: Doria through a turn to ethics, and then Neo-Platonism, and Vico through his own New Science. Probably a better marker of the 'mainstream' intellectual current, and indicative of this continuity, is Costantino Grimaldi. In the wake of the 'processo' Grimaldi engaged in a series of fiercely contested polemics with the Jesuit Benedetto de Benedictis, who rejected the modern philosophy as heretical, and defended Aristotle and Scholasticism. De Benedictis died in 1706; almost twenty years later in 1724, Grimaldi decided to reprint an extended collective edition of his *Lettere* against De Benedictis, clearly feeling the themes to remain relevant. Indeed they were still controversial: under pressure from ecclesiastical bodies, the Neapolitan viceroy ordered in October 1726 the books to be destroyed. Writing to his friend Alessandro Pompeo Berti in Lucca, Grimaldi lamented the decision:

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<sup>115</sup> See Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment*, pp. 127-30

<sup>116</sup> Pasquale Sposato, *Le Lettere provinciali di Biagio Pascal e la loro diffusione a Napoli durante la rivoluzione intellettuale della seconda metà del secolo 17.: contributo alla storia del giansenismo e del giurisdizionalismo nel regno di Napoli* (Tivoli: Arti grafiche A. Chicca, 1960).

<sup>117</sup> Romeo De Maio, "Il problema del quietismo napoletano," *Rivista storica italiana.*, no. 4 (1969): 721-44.

il mondo, o quanto corrotta! Se potessi rinselvarmi nell'ultima caverni di qualche spelonga, lo farei in verità!... i libri che andarono in secretaria furon buttati a mare dal sig. Vicere, e poiche il mare no li volle ingoia li vomita ne lidi, da me si rimandarono in secretaria avendone recuperati alquanti atteso cosi mi conveniva fare.<sup>118</sup>

Through the 1700s, the 1710s and the 1720s the philosophical and theological tensions which had become manifest most acutely in the 1690s remained live. This was because the essential intellectual questions to which they offered such different answers – the nature and attainability of truth, and the cosmological ordering of ‘things human’ and ‘things divine’ – remained of central importance.

#### Conclusion: The Past as Authority

The above section has used the paradigm of a ‘contested city’ to present Naples in the years following 1700, identifying key political, religious and intellectual dynamics. In so doing it has followed a substantial historiographical tradition. In each case, however, it has tried to suggest that these contestations were complex, and reduce poorly to a matrix of dialectical opposites: curialists vs anti-curialist, conservative nobility and reforming members of the ceto-civile, Aristotelian-Scholastics and Cartesians/atomists, Augustinians and Thomists, Jesuit probabilists and Jansenist rigorists, and across the board ‘novatores’ and ‘veteres’, ancients and moderns. These were all real tensions within Naples during these years, but when presented in their binary form as historical realities rather than methodological tools they struggle to offer a nuanced empirical picture of the intellectual environment in a given chronological frame. Many, if not most, Neapolitan intellectual figures simply fall somewhere between the lines.

The nature of the proposal put forwards in this thesis also demands the formulation of a less schizophrenic frame of reference. Key aspects of the Neapolitan intellectual environment circa 1700 – an enthusiasm for empiricism, a Cartesian drive for truth relieved of its metaphysical implications, and a ‘philo-jansenist’ sensibility for theological purity and religious reform, converging in the context of an unstable

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<sup>118</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Berti, Lucca, 18.10.1727, BSL, MS 1969, f. 151.

political environment – encouraged a ‘turn to history’ in early 18th century Naples. This should not be read to imply that prior to the late 17th century history was not taken seriously by Neapolitans, that trends in historical scholarship were outgrowths of philosophical innovation, or that a heightened engagement in history was a development organic to Naples; it certainly does not imply that the ‘turn to history’ constituted a proto-Enlightened historicism. In much simpler, and less teleological, terms, amidst the uncertainty of the present the certainties of the past seemed, to a community of Neapolitans, to offer an authority in the resolution of both specific and general problems.<sup>119</sup>

In both its form and content, the writing of history in early 18th century Naples responded to and reflected the political-jurisdictional, religious-ecclesiastical and philosophical-theological environment of the city and kingdom. This is broadly acknowledged in the oeuvre of the city’s two most famous historical thinkers of the era, Giambattista Vico and Pietro Giannone. In an important sense, however, neither Vico nor Giannone were conventional historians, as judged by the standards of scholars of their own day.<sup>120</sup> Vico’s reunification of philosophy and philology in his *New Science*, his “ideal eternal history” and its rehabilitation of myth, rested upon a metaphysical and methodological foundation both unpalatable and incomprehensible to many of his immediate contemporaries. Giannone, on the other hand, was first and foremost a jurist whose turn to history served an instrumental purpose. Both figures feature briefly in this thesis, but one contention held throughout this research project is that the stature of these two figures, and the weight of historiography directed towards their life and thought, has distorted how other intellectual and scholarly dynamics of their context have been understood. The place of Vico and Giannone in pan-European histories of modernity means they tend to act as regional anchors around which local Neapolitan dynamics are constructed, and against which they are assessed and judged; enquiring into questions of historical thought makes this tendency even more acute.

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<sup>119</sup> Concrete evidence of this enthusiasm for history at the turn of the 18th Century is given in the *lezioni* given at the academy held by the Viceroy Medinaceli, where historical lectures, serving a range of purposes, featured prominently; on the Academy see the volume of essays, and four volumes of printed editions, edited by M. Rak, *Lezioni dell’Accademia di Palazzo del duca di Medinaceli.*, 2000-5, vol. 1-5; Silvio Suppa, *L’Accademia di Medinacoeli fa tradizione investigante e nuova scienza civile.* (Napoli: Nella sede dell’Istituto [italiano per gli studi storici, 1971].

<sup>120</sup> See ch. 3.

Without undermining the singularity of Vico and Giannone's thought, the concern of this thesis lies elsewhere. It aims to construct the 'norms' of Neapolitan historical scholarship against which Vico and Giannone's historical thought and work has been distinguished: by themselves, by their contemporaries, and by later historians. Not only of value in and of itself, studying a community of less prominent scholars also offers an alternate means to assess scholarship and erudition in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Naples at large: to place in dialogue the (somewhat artificially distinguished) political, religious and intellectual narratives displayed in the above pages. The world of erudition and learning was amorphous by nature, even as it had its own complex architecture and logic. It was bound up with and inflected by, though also remained, and sought to remain, distinct from, concurrent political, religious and intellectual tensions. By stepping back from the great political and philosophical thinkers, this culture of scholarship can be better understood.

### Part Three - The Scholar and the *Via Media*: Matteo Egizio and his Letters

The portrait of Naples as a contested city is a useful tool, but a flawed one too. Remaining wed to a dialectical mode of history is particularly inadequate for exploring the city's moderate figures, those uncomfortable in either 'camp', and keen to resolve rather than aggravate conflict. Matteo Egizio is representative of Neapolitan moderates, and throughout this thesis his life, his scholarship and correspondence will act as a pivot around which to pose a less partisan enquiry into Neapolitan intellectual life in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. To aid this enquiry, this section will offer a brief overview of his biography, his works and his archive, and will introduce several of the key themes which will act as points of reference for the substantive chapters which follow.

Egizio was born in Naples in 1674, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January. His father, originally from the Pugliese town of Gravina, served as a clerical assistant to the noble Milano family, and ensured that Egizio received a good education, learning Latin and Greek with the renowned Neapolitan scholar Gregorio Messere, as well as studying philosophy and medicine. Like many aspirational young Neapolitans not born into wealth Egizio studied law at the university in Naples, and after graduating practiced as a lawyer, as an advisor and secretary to several prominent noble houses, and also as a teacher, giving private lessons in classics, philosophy and jurisprudence. Professional employment sustained

Egizio during the Austrian Habsburg possession of Naples between 1707 and 1734, and he never married nor had children, and appears to have had little family. Given Egizio's aristocratic patronage, with the restoration of a Bourbon monarch with the coming of Carlo Borbone IV in 1734, he was appointed 'segretario della città di Napoli', then secretary to the newly appointed Neapolitan ambassador in Paris, the 'Principe di Torella'. The pinnacle of Egizio's career was his appointment, officially in 1745, as first librarian of the newly established Biblioteca Reale, primarily consisting of Carlo Borbone's Farnese collection brought to Naples from Parma. Egizio's ambitious plans for the library were cut short by illness and then death on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1745.<sup>121</sup>

Alongside his professional employment and official appointments,<sup>122</sup> the vast majority of Egizio's life was dedicated to historical scholarship, and to building a dense scholarly network on the Italian peninsula, to which he acted as an important regional node. An enquiry into Egizio's writings and correspondence gives valuable insight into his intellectual character and the intellectual environment he inhabited, and to which he contributed. To begin this enquiry, it is useful to consider Egizio's early philosophical writings.

### Egizio's Philosophical Formation

As a young man Egizio was intellectually formed by the culture of the Accademia degli Investiganti, as it was confronted by the Inquisition in the fallout from the Processo degli Ateisti. Whereas the *Investiganti* such as Cornelio and Di Capoa championed experimental natural science based on academic scepticism and the establishment of

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<sup>121</sup> Much of this biographical information is drawn upon from Massimo Ceresa, "Egizio, Matteo," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 42 (1993); as well as a series of older biographical studies, by Andrea Mazzarella da Cerreto 'Matteo Egizio', *Biografia degli uomini illustri del regno di Napoli ornata de loro rispettivi ritratti compilata da diversi letterati nazionali ... Tomo primo* and the funerary oration, by Gherardo De Angelis, *Orazione funebre fatta, e recitata dal padre Gherardo de Angelis de' Minimi, in lode del dottore don Matteo Egizio, morto nell'anno 1745*, 1745. Focussed studies include S. Salvatore Ussia, *L'epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento* (Napoli: Liguori, 1977) and M. Giuseppina Castellano Lanzara, *La Real Biblioteca di Carlo di Borbone e il suo primo bibliotecario Matteo Egizio* (Napoli: A. Miccoli, 1942).

<sup>122</sup> Some insight into Egizio's professional and teaching life as a lawyer is given by a series of manuscripts in his archive: BNN MS XIV E20-22, *Excerpta et Adversaria*; MS XV B25, *Scritti Autografi IV: Diritto Feudale*; MS XV B26, *Scritti Autografi V: Trattato di Giurisprudenza*; MS XV B27, *Scritti Autografi VI: Praxis Divers*; MS XV B28, *Scritti Autografi VII, Trattati di Giurisprudenza*. These undated manuscripts appear mainly as reference books rather than specific treatises.

probable causality, Egizio has been interpreted among a later generation of scholars fixated more on the eternal and necessary, rather than contingent and specific, limitations on human knowledge.<sup>123</sup> This ‘tragic’ and cosmological scepticism was the main theme of Egizio’s 1695 essay, *De Scientiarum Ambiguitate*. The essay was a transcription of a lecture given at the Accademia degli Uniti in Naples, when Egizio was only twenty-one years old.<sup>124</sup>

Egizio’s *De Scientiarum Ambiguitate* reads as a statement of moderate scepticism, stemming from recognition of the limitations of human knowledge – fallen, corrupt and wretched – in its capacity to interpret the natural world. Reviewing ancient assertions on the uncertain nature of knowledge from Plato, Diogenes, Pythagoras, Epicurus and Democritus, Egizio’s key polemic is to forcibly distinguish the sciences from theology and matters of religion. The sciences address God’s creation but they were made by man, and so can only exist within the limits of human reason. Going further, the futile human drive for exact knowledge of the natural world exaggerates man’s wretched state, and subsequently the purest religion has historically flourished in the age of highest ignorance of things scientific, with Christ and the Apostles, ignorant of scientific learning but the best representatives of purity of faith, a case in point.<sup>125</sup>

A young Egizio has been seen as weighing in on the side of the ‘moderns’ as an answer to the polemics of the Jesuit Bendetti,<sup>126</sup> but this misreads the conclusions of his *De Ambiguitate*. The intrinsic uncertainty of knowledge leads Egizio to discredit equally all the philosophical schools, bemoaning the ‘civilibus bellis flagrare non desinunt’<sup>127</sup> which he saw raging around him. Given the human condition, where “nil solidi, au certi in rebus habitus humanis”, these polemics are futile.<sup>128</sup> In this epistemic context, why, Egizio asks, bother to study the sciences at all? Not, he concludes, as a means to gain certain knowledge, but as a means for self-cultivation, to aspire towards the virtues be-

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<sup>123</sup> Here interpreted with Nicolo Sersale, Lucantonio Porzio and the general culture of scientific discourse at the Accademia di Medinaceli, see Maurizio Torrini, “Le Discussion Sulle Statuto Delle Scienze,” in *Galileo e Napoli*, ed. Fabrizio Lomonaco and Maurizio Torrini (Naples: Guida Editori, 1987), 359–83.

<sup>124</sup> The essay was published posthumously with some of Egizio’s other unpublished writings in the 1751 volume *Opuscoli volgari, et latini di Conte Matteo Egizio... nuovamente raccolti e la maggior parte non ancora dati alla luce*, Napoli, 1751, pp. 317-326.

<sup>125</sup> Egizio, *Opuscoli*, p. 321.

<sup>126</sup> Stone, *Vico’s Cultural History*, p. 54, under subchapter titled ‘the Moderns counter-attack in Manuscript’, pp. 54-64.

<sup>127</sup> Egizio, *Opuscoli*, p. 323.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 326.

fitting of man. The humility of striving for but necessarily not reaching truth teaches man about himself, and how to act in the world.<sup>129</sup> While Egizio is opposed to Stoic cosmology for its theological connotations, his citation of Seneca (*Epistulae Morales* 88) aligns his early thought with the classical ideal of an active life, of studying to cultivate virtue, against the abstractions, sophistry and dogmatism he saw in his contemporaries of contrasting philosophical leanings.

Egizio's stance on the importance of distinguishing religion and philosophy is not dissimilar to that set forth by Giuseppe Valletta,<sup>130</sup> in whose vast library he was a regular presence, and whose catalogue he revised.<sup>131</sup> Valletta's library was an important center of learning in Egizio's Naples, both for the collection of books it harboured, and for its function as a point of reference and congregation for Neapolitans and for scholars visiting the city. Egizio's familiarity with modern philosophy, probably cultivated with Valletta in his library, is demonstrated through his 1702 *Discorso Físico-Filosofico*, composed as a letter sent to Egizio's friend and correspondent, the Venetian patrician-scholar Bernardo Trevisan.<sup>132</sup>

Egizio's *Discorso* is composed to convey his condolences upon the death of Trevisani's only daughter Elisabetta Maria and her betrothed Sig. Gio. Morosini, and to reflect upon their causes of death. The second half of the *Discorso* is a medical reflection upon the precise causes of death, drawing heavily upon Cartesian and mechanistic theories of the passions and the pineal gland, capable of "commover l'anima" and leading to death.<sup>133</sup> This theory is presented as a significant improvement over the interpretations of "P. Kirker, dallo Scotti, dal Porta e similgianti Autori, che si sono impacciati di Magia

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp. 324-25.

<sup>130</sup> Valletta concluded his *Difesa della Filosofia Moderna*, also composed in the mid 1690s, with a recognition of the uncertainties of human knowledge, Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, p. 164-5.

<sup>131</sup> According to Carlantonio Villarosa, *Ritratti Poetici di Alcuni Uomini di Lettere antichi e moderni del Regno di Napoli*, 1824, pp. 137-141; on Valletta's library see Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment Scotland and Naples 1680-1760*, pp. 105-6, 130-31.

<sup>132</sup> The *Discorso* was also published in the 1751 *Opuscoli volgar e latini*, pp. 76-114; a manuscript version exists in the BNN MS XV F8; Trevisani's *Meditazioni Filosofiche*, 1704, circulated widely through Egizio in Naples (see Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 02.07.1701, BNN MS XIII.C.90 199) – on Trevisan see Ulvioni, *Atene sulle lagune*.

<sup>133</sup> Egizio, *Opuscoli*, pp. 97-107; The *Discorso* is described by Totara as "la prima esplicita testimonianza a stampa ell'adozione del meccanicismo cartesiano delle passioni ell'anima nell'ambiente scientifico napoletano", in 'Pina Totara, "Il Lezzo Di Ser Benedetto": Motivi Spinoziani Nell'opera Di Biagio Garofalo', *Bollettino Del Centro Di Studi Vichiani* 30 (1999): 60-71, p. 64, a claim elaborated in Pina Totara, "I Segni Della Malattia d'amore e La Dottrina Delle Passioni Nel Seicenti'," ed. M. L. Bianchi, *Signum, Atti Del IX Colloquio Internazionale*, 1999, 289-327, p. 324.

naturale".<sup>134</sup> This mechanistic reading is only valid for deaths deemed 'accidentale' rather than 'naturale', a distinction mapped out, through a discourse on fate and providence, in the first part of the *Discorsi*. Egizio's key sources here are Platonic and Stoic notions of fate, tempered by a Christian idea of providence, and he pits these against, on the one hand, an Epicurean denial of any order to the world, and on the other, the Peripatetics, led astray by their commitment to Aristotelian metaphysics.<sup>135</sup>

Egizio's conclusion, that "all'onnipotente Dio le cose eziandio necessarie esser contingenti" underpins his view of a divine order, the truth of which is unknowable to the human mind. This established, the dichotomy of 'natural' and 'accidental' deaths is applied to Trevisan's daughter and her partner. The death of Trevisan's daughter Elisabetta was natural, the work of fate, equated with, or more precisely seen as the effect of, divine providence, and cannot be understood by the "debolezza dell'umano intendimento".<sup>136</sup> The death of her betrothed Morosini, by contrast, was an 'accidental' death, that is, the result of the "perturbazioni dell'animo",<sup>137</sup> the onslaught of passions resulting from the incomprehensible death of his lover.

Egizio's philosophy in the *Discorso* is largely derivative, but it is relevant in that there is a real coherence between the conclusions of Egizio's *De Scientiarum Ambiguitate* and here his *Discorso*, where in the concluding passage he cited Democritus' expression that "La verità ella è veramente nascosta in un profondo pozzo", adding "ne si è opra per le mie forze il trarnela sù".<sup>138</sup> This is an academic, rather than a pyrrhonic scepticism; truth remains out of reach, but learning becomes the platform for self-cultivation. Egizio's advice is that through study, each man might move "dall'ignoranza una volta fattami conoscere in gioventù, divenir più cauto, e sapiente nella vecchiezza".<sup>139</sup> Once the distinction between divine truths and human certainties is militated, then the incremental project of learning, envisaged as 'work on self', may proceed.

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<sup>134</sup> Egizio, *Opuscoli*, p. 101.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

## Scholarship and Moderation

These philosophical texts show Egizio to be engaged with discussion about ‘modern’ philosophy in Naples in the years around 1700.<sup>140</sup> His scepticism regarding human knowledge and his middle-path between the excesses of the epicureans and the scholastics, a kind of Christianized stoicism, is indicative of his general intellectual disposition. Egizio appears as a scholar in search of order and stability in a society he perceived as collapsing into the arbitrariness of virulent religious polemics, untempered atomist epistemology and immoderate political conflict. At the same time, he was not a dogmatist and objected to the uncritical adherence to intellectual, political and religious status quo. His concern, which he formulates in these early texts, and which he maintained throughout his life, was to moderate human thought and action through an appeal to the ontological limits of the human condition. The virtuous life for Egizio aimed at, but recognized the unattainable nature of, Truth, and steered a *via media* between dogmatism and skepticism, between tradition and innovation.

This conviction informed Egizio’s contribution to the reformulation of aesthetics and poetry in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Naples. In line with a pan-Italian movement, Neapolitan scholars in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century sought to reform poetry and the use of language in literary and scholarly tracts in objection to the excesses of the style of baroque poetry. The disciplining of language according to rules based on simplicity and clarity of argument – modelled on the language of Petrarch and Dante, and then punctuated by the Cartesian aesthetics of Port-Royal – could align itself with a discourse about the moderation of the passions, as well as a criticism of sophistry and casuistry associated in Naples with the Jesuit Order and Scholastic philosophy.<sup>141</sup> Egizio would have been aware of this intellectual nexus, but his own contribution to the purification of language aligns better with the work of the Neapolitan ‘colony’ of the Arcadian academy, of which

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<sup>140</sup> He also circulated Antoine Dilley’s work on the soul of animals *Dell’Anima delle Bestie*, translated by his friend Gaetano Lombardo, both texts which broadly deployed Cartesian inspired modern philosophy (see Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples 12.11.1701, BNN MS XIII.C.90 201), and his *Discorso* cites the new edition of Lucretius published in Florence by Alessandro Marchetti, credited as promoting Epicurean discussion in Naples, and promptly placed on the Index in Rome, *Opuscoli*, p. 78.

<sup>141</sup> In Naples this was represented in the work of Gianvincenzo Gravina and Gregorio Caloprese Amedeo Quondam, *Cultura e ideologia di Gianvincenzo Gravina* (Milano: Mursia, 1968); Amedeo Quondam, *Dal Barocco all’Arcadia* (Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1980).

Egizio was an active member under the name Timaste Pisandeo.<sup>142</sup> Discussions of poetry and aesthetics constituted a significant strand of Egizio's correspondence, especially with figures such as Saverio Pansuti and Stefano Manfredi; Egizio composed poems regularly in the 'neo-classical', or anti-Baroque style, and also edited in 1714 the writings and letters of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century petrarchist Sertori Quattromani. In Egizio's view, poetry, just like philosophy, should be isolated from religious concerns, and should be written in an unimpassioned key: Egizio wrote in 1704 to Sig. Carlo del Tufo in critique of the recent composition by a 'Sig. Andrea Vitale', on the theme of the passion of Christ. Vitale's key errors were his choice of subject, 'la passione del signore', which when depicted in passionate terms could dilute the religious truth held within scripture.<sup>143</sup> Tufo also erred from a virtuous path in his fabulous, and inaccurate depictions of the past, conforming to an overly sentimental poetic style.<sup>144</sup> Poetic discourse was the context which fostered a clarity of thought and a clarity of judgement. Purging language of ambiguity as much as possible, and returning Italian to the purity of the *quattrocento*, informed and underpinned the most persistent object of Egizio's study: the cultivation of a critical approach to the past. History represented for Egizio the ultimate authority and arbiter over the present, able to resolve the instability of the present day. Once reconciled to the intangibility of an eternal truth, the "certezza della erudizione"<sup>145</sup> provided, for Egizio, the criterion of knowledge and hence action, and establishing facts from falsities through critical enquiry into the past became his chief scholarly activity. Of intrinsic value, purging prejudice and falsity from historical scholarship was also a means for the scholar to retain his societal and political capital,

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<sup>142</sup> Ussia sees Egizio's aesthetics, like that of much of the Arcadian movement after its initial phase, as "mostrano un processo di banalizzazione di quell'assunto estetico", in Ussia, *L'epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento*, pp. 96-97; Egizio distanced himself from the more philosophically charged aesthetic theories of Gianvincenzo Gravina, and then opposed the 'school' associated with Nicolo Capasso in the 1720s and 30s, which objected to the indulgences of the pastoral style: see Michele Rak, "Una Teoria Dell'Incertezza," *Filologia e Letteratura*, 1969, 233-97; on this context more generally, see Quondam, *Dal Barocco all'Arcadia*.

<sup>143</sup> "Rispondo in primo luogo, che questa non è colpa del sig Vitale, ma del soggetto, di cui ha egli preso a cantare: di modo tale che, se non vorremo incolparlo nell'elezione di tale materia, quale si è la Passione del Signore; io non veggo come, per non peccare in Poetica (se pure egli e così gran peccato) avesse dovuto peccare contro alla Religione, coll'inventire, e formare Episodi, lontani dalla lettera del sacrosanto Vangelo", f. 54r, MS XV F8, ff. 51r-90r.

<sup>144</sup> "dichiari il soggetto della Favola: perche egli è tolto da Istoria vera", f. 57v – and then ff. 63v-64v.

<sup>145</sup> To which Egizio moved from the ambiguity of 'relativismo', in Ricuperati's reading in his 'Giuseppe Ricuperati and G. Giappichelli, "Giannone e Suoi Contemporanei: Lenglet Dufresnoy, Matteo Egizio e Gregorio Grimaldi," in *Miscellanea Walter Maturi* (Torino, 1966), 57-87, p. 65.

his capacity to interject into and direct polemics with authoritative arguments made 'from history'.

Egizio distanced himself from, and covertly criticized, the more explicit political polemics of his day, and especially those which exploited historical scholarship for ideological ends.<sup>146</sup> His guardianship of the impartiality of erudition and his commitment to enforcing criticism in historical scholarship, acted, as he perceived it, as a bulwark against the reign of arbitrariness. As such, he ensured that the equation by which objectivity in scholarship might inform the ordering of the political, religious and intellectual world was sustained and fortified.<sup>147</sup> In a preface to an unpublished text written in the final years of Egizio's life, composed to advise King Charles IV about his lineage (the complex historical question, for whose authority Egizio was called, was how many kings of Naples had been called Charles), Egizio explicitly stated the obligations of the historian:

uno degli errori che suol commetersi nel giudicare delle usanze antiche egl'è il considerarle sempre con un certo rapporto alle moderne, di cui abbiam troppo piena la fantasia. E l'altro errore, ugualmente grave si è il non voler distinguere qual cosa in una tempo, e quale in altre circostanze per avventura convengasi<sup>148</sup>

This insistence upon the situatedness of events, customs and objects in their historical context, the "certezza di erudizione", was the consistent and prevailing (non-)'ideology' which drove Egizio's intellectual life.

Between 1707 and 1734, Egizio cultivated his position at the heart of networks of critical historians, philologists and archaeologists working in the Kingdom of Naples. It has been argued that Egizio's 'filo-borboniche' tendencies – his explicit support of the Bourbon king of Spain Philip V in 1706, and then his choice of aristocratic patrons, pro-Bourbon nobles<sup>149</sup> – rendered him politically marginalised during the Austrian regime.

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<sup>146</sup> The most explicit case is his criticism of Pietro Giannone (see ch. 3).

<sup>147</sup> This is basically the interpretation of Ussia, where he sees Egizio as curator of "una cultura erudita dalla funzione mediatrice di conflitti ideologici, punto di verifica di una certa circolazione di idee che trovavano in lui il luogo dello smussamento", Ussia, *L'epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento*. p. 45.

<sup>148</sup> *Lettere di M. Egizio al Re Carlo Borbone*, BNN MS XV B23, f. 91r.

<sup>149</sup> Egizio composed an inscription to go on the equestrian statue of Philip IV in 1705, and then wrote a defence of his inscription upon the criticism of its aesthetic form: *Lettera in difesa dell'iscrizione per la statua equestre di Filippo V*, Napoli 1706.

This claim is difficult to quantify, though it is perhaps strengthened by the upturn in Egizio's fortunes after the re-establishment of a Bourbon monarch in the shape of Carlo IV.<sup>150</sup> But his years in private employment, dedicated to personal study, were crucial in establishing his reputation as among the pre-eminent scholars working in Naples and the Italian South. He developed the contacts and reputation, but also the learning and character of a "bibliotecario modello", leading to his appointment as director of the new royal library by the Bourbon monarchy, officially in 1740.<sup>151</sup>

Reading his plans for the design of the library, Egizio's vision as a haven for scholarship is explicit: "Per biblioteca s'intende un luogo dove si conservano i libri con ordine proprietà, con sicurezza, con dignità e con li comodi necessari per leggere e scrivere". Egizio's envisaged library would also act as a museum, incorporating statues and inscriptions, fossils, minerals and natural artefacts, atlases and maps, and "due buoni globi, l'un celeste, 'altro terrestre; ed almeno due sfere armillari, l'una secondo l'antico sistema di Tolomeo, l'altra secondo il sistema di Copernico. Anche qualche buon Microscopio".<sup>152</sup> Egizio's plans for a redesigned library were not completed, and his death in 1745 at the age of 71 prevented him from realizing his vision of a centre for humanistic learning.

### Ordering the World: Egizio and his Letters

The bulk of this thesis will not take as its objective a more thorough conventional biography of Matteo Egizio. Instead it seizes upon the scholarly agenda of criticism and moderation which he represented, and uses his correspondence network as a means to trace a more far-reaching enquiry into the intellectual culture of the Italian South during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rather than appearing as an all-encompassing ideological conflict between two opposing intellectual parties, the picture which emerges from this enquiry

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<sup>150</sup> Egizio later wrote critically about the period of Austrian dominion, which "ci governo sempre come Provincia da lontano, e non come Regno presenzialmente.", MS XV B23, , ff. 88v-89r.

<sup>151</sup> In her study of the Royal Library, Castellano-Lanzara describes Egizio as follows: "Zelo, capacità, erudizione, letterature sono le qualità che si riconoscono all'Egizio nel dispaccio reale di nomina e che implicitamente vengono ritenute dal Re le qualità essenziali del bibliotecario. A questi qualità si aggiungevano nel Nostro bontà d'animo, mitezza di carattere, singolare modestia, e grande interesse nel favorire gli studi altrui con i frutti della sua dottrina, nonche una grande capacità di organizzazione e di sintesi dopo l'analisi più minuziosa, onde la figura dell'Egizio costituisce quella del bibliotecario modello", Castellano Lanzara, *La Real Biblioteca di Carlo di Borbone e il suo primo bibliotecario Matteo Egizio*, p. 12.

<sup>152</sup> Matteo Egizio, 'Memoria per la Real Biblioteca', ASN Farnesiane, F. 1052, cited in Castellano Lanzara, pp. 17-22; Castellano-Lanzara also includes a copy of the plan of the library, held in the documents in the Archivio di Stato di Napoli.

is one of a networked community of scholars keen to resolve the spectre of uncertainty, ambiguity and arbitrariness they felt to be descending over their kingdom. To return to the theoretical dichotomy proposed earlier, their strategy concerned both method and metaphysics: establishing the 'mondanità' of human affairs, and minimizing, though by no means denying, the interventions of God in history, accorded with the sober project of critically ordering history into chronologies and topographies composed of evidence-based certainties, and stressing the difference between different pasts, and between the past and the present. The agenda behind this project of ordering was essentially conservative, or better 'preservative'; it was not future-oriented or radical, or stimulated by grand projects of reform and re-structuring. It was rather past-oriented, addressing itself to consolidating – literally giving solidity to – the present through a disciplining of history. As we trace in Egizio's biography, the key questions it was trying to address were epistemological, militating the criteria of truth and certainty within the limits of the human constitution. By assessing the truth 'in things', rather than 'in and of itself', erudite scholars such as Egizio could construct a platform for meaningful orientation in, and navigation of, the present. Infused by their inheritance from the humanistic and classical tradition it was this mentality which underpinned their commitment to scholarship, their moderate worldview, and the *via media* by which they lived.

Excavating and working with Egizio's correspondence allows insight into the relationships, controversies and structures through which this 'mentality' and the agenda of the critical scholar was constructed and played out. Egizio's passive correspondence – a section of the letters he received<sup>153</sup> – is held in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, in four boxes, loosely organised alphabetically by correspondent, all together 933 letters from 127 correspondents between 1699 and 1741. A systematic study of the correspondence, charting the letters by date and provenance, was carried out by Salvatore Ussia in his 1977 *Epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento*. Ussia's study is a valuable resource in giving an overview of the structure of the correspondence, and is supplemented by a series of essays depicting

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<sup>153</sup> It is evident, through the partial nature of some strands of correspondence, and the non-existence of letters from contacts to whom we know Egizio wrote, such as Apostolo Zeno and Antonio Francesco Gori, that the collection in Naples is incomplete.

aspects of Egizio's intellectual life, and some specific episodes in his correspondence.<sup>154</sup> The picture which emerges is a regionally integrated scholar, cultivating an extensive, though not always intensive, relationship with correspondents in the dispersed settlements of the Kingdom of Naples, and then intensive correspondences with more senior and better-known figures in the larger urban centres across Italy, in Venice, Modena, Florence, Palermo and above all, Rome. Egizio exchanged only a few letters beyond the Italian peninsula: several to Italians based in Vienna and Habsburg central-Europe, and one to a scholar in the Netherlands. He initiated and maintained correspondence with several non-Italians based on the peninsula for travel and 'grand tours', principally Germans and Englishmen. Rather than a pan-European intellectual, a map of Egizio's correspondence depicts a regional and Italian-centric scholar.<sup>155</sup>

In Ussia's study, in spite of its subtitle, Egizio's correspondence is interpreted primarily as a window onto his life, and it performs this function well, though with inevitable limitations. In contrast, this study sets out to *use* Egizio's correspondence not to directly further understand Matteo Egizio as an individual and a scholar, but rather as a tool with which to 'descend' into the dynamics of scholarship in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Italy and Naples. My contention is that using correspondence as a point of entry into an intellectual culture enables: firstly, a more 'organic' view of intellectual processes and structures less restricted by pre-conceived notions of disciplinary and ideological narratives; secondly, a more socially embedded form of intellectual history, more sensitive to questions about scale and the movement and exchange of information; and thirdly, crucially, a means to combine these two aspects. This endows this study with a degree of intimacy with the scholarly activity under analysis: its method is to 'follow' controversies through archives, assembling them as they conjoin with other controversies, implicate different individuals and groups, institutions and structures, and with the contingencies and stand-alone events. As much as possible, with this methodology, the arbitration of the historian is countered, or balanced, by a commitment to the flow of history, which carries research according to the weave of

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<sup>154</sup> On the letters specifically, see Ussia, *L'epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento*, pp. 9-25, with breakdown according to correspondent and number of letters, according to provenance, to year, and then several visualizations and maps.

<sup>155</sup> Apart from a few letters in French and Latin, Egizio's correspondence is almost entirely in Italian.

specific historical micro-narratives. To this end, while the historian doesn't make himself invisible, the writing of *better* history is ensured.

This definition of “better history” would have been alien to Egizio: it stems from the conviction that history is a social science as well as an art. As in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, so today, the past performs many functions: one of these is to rethink questions about *how* the social assembles itself. Here studies of correspondence networks can contribute significantly. Because they consist of fragments and are spatially extended, bodies of letters offer a platform to revise some of the conventions about causality and the agency of individuals in the social models customarily assumed by historians. Working *through* passive correspondences, orientating around the often muted individuals which stand immobile at their centre, captures the limitations of a mechanistic sociology to understand both specific case-studies, relations between case-studies, and the general system within which they exist. The picture which emerges is instead too dense, its parts too inter-connected and inter-reliant. Thinking about intellectual history in terms of networks and systems requires methodological innovation: not new digital tools for visualisation, but rather alternative epistemological tools to rethink how parts relate to one another, the relationships between part and whole, and between centre and periphery. The centre of the network is not the void, but is rather the “centre of the fold”, the point at which lines coalesce.<sup>156</sup> This is the spatial logic whereby this study might conceive of itself as an intellectual biography of Matteo Egizio.

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<sup>156</sup>Michel Serres writes “If you take a handkerchief and spread it out in order to iron it, you can see in it certain fixed distances and proximities. If you sketch a circle in one area, you can mark out nearby points and measure far-off distances. Then take the same handkerchief and crumple it, by putting it in your pocket. Two distant points suddenly are close, even superimposed. If, further, you tear it in certain places, two points that were close can become very distant. This science of nearness and rifts is called topology, while the science of stable and well-defined distances is called metrical geometry.”, Michel Serres, Bruno Latour, and Roxanne Lapidus, *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), p. 60-61.



## Chapter Two - The Epistemology of Antiquarianism in Matteo Egizio's Correspondence

This chapter and the one which follows aim to interrogate how the past was engaged with by scholars in Matteo Egizio's Naples, through a study of his work and his correspondence. The ambition is to establish the extent to which Egizio and his scholarly correspondents adhered to a coherent historical epistemology, methodology and sensibility, and to identify key features of their approach to the past.

From the years following his death, Egizio has usually been categorized as an antiquarian - but what does, and did, this actually mean? In recent years, antiquarianism as a category has been conceptually 'opened up' and contested within historiographical debate.<sup>157</sup> This has complexified the meaning of the term beyond a pejorative composer of "rambling chronicle-histories... compilations which merely accumulated disjointed facts",<sup>158</sup> where the antiquarian is the outdated 'other' to the critical or philosophical historian, or a kind of proto-archaeology. Instead it has instated the early modern antiquarian as a constituent part of a sophisticated scholarly culture. By asking directly "what kind of knowledge is antiquarian knowledge?"<sup>159</sup> the point of departure for this reappraisal has been the critical re-assessment and historicization of the work of Arnaldo Momigliano, among the first to take the work of the 'antiquarians' seriously.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> The most thorough recent description of this historiography is Kelsey Jackson Williams, "Antiquarianism: A Reinterpretation," *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 2, no. 1 (December 10, 2017): 56–96. A similarly thorough review, based on Northern European case-studies, is Lydia Janssen, "Antiquarianism and National History. The Emergence of a New Scholarly Paradigm in Early Modern Historical Studies," *History of European Ideas* 43, no. 8 (November 17, 2017): 843–56. Approaching this problem from the history of archaeology, see T. Tim Murray, "Rethinking Antiquarianism," *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 17, no. 2 (2007): 14, and Alain Schnapp, *La Conquête du passé: aux origines de l'archéologie* (Paris: Carré, 1998). As in other fields, the prism of the global has been deployed to better make sense of antiquarianism as a problem for research; see Q. Edward Wang, "Beyond East and West: Antiquarianism, Evidential Learning, and Global Trends in Historical Study," *Journal of World History* 19, no. 4 (January 16, 2009): 489–519; Alain Schnapp et al., *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, 2013; Peter N Miller and François Louis, *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500-1800* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011).

<sup>158</sup> Herbert Butterfield, *Man on His Past: The Study of the History of Historical Scholarship* (Cambridge: University, 1955), p. 4.

<sup>159</sup> Peter N Miller, *Peiresc's Europe: Learning and Virtue in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 20.

<sup>160</sup> Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian"; Peter N Miller and Peter Burke, eds., *Momigliano and Antiquarianism: Foundations of the Modern Cultural Sciences* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), especially Ingo Herklotz, "Arnaldo Momigliano's 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian': A Critical

Looking beyond a base accumulation, and extending Momigliano's assertion of the 'synchronic' nature of antiquarian enquiry has led to nuanced studies on the inherent materiality of antiquarianism,<sup>161</sup> their critical concern with establishing the truth about things as an end in and of itself, and the sense in which this was driven, above all, by curiosity.<sup>162</sup> The "reconstructive ambition" of the antiquarian, "the capacity to envision the broken and fragmentary made whole again" is a valuable trait around which to orientate because it gestures towards the intrinsic and epistemological drive underpinning early modern antiquarianism.<sup>163</sup> This allows a dialogue between more precise<sup>164</sup> and more expansive<sup>165</sup> definitions of the antiquarian to be sustained, particularly in the relationship between text and object in historical thought. It proposes antiquarianism as not only a method but also a way of thinking: of putting things in context, of relating parts to wholes, and particularities to universalities.<sup>166</sup>

Assuming a more nuanced and less pejorative approach to antiquarianism has complexified the term's meaning, as well as its chronology. Various studies have disrupted Momigliano's 18<sup>th</sup>-century narrative, citing the vitality of antiquarian scholarship through the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century, as well as into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and in a non-European context.<sup>167</sup> In this context, rather than aspire to definitive interpretative

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Review," in *Momigliano and Antiquarianism: Foundations of the Modern Cultural Sciences*, ed. Peter N. Miller and Peter Burke (University of Toronto Press, 2015), 127–53.

<sup>161</sup> On the particular quality of the antiquarian's material conception of history, see Peter N. Miller, *History and Its Objects: Antiquarianism and Material Culture since 1500*, 2017.

<sup>162</sup> Curiosity is, for Vine, the defining feature of the antiquarian: Angus Edmund Vine, *In Defiance of Time Antiquarian Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 18; Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds.*, pp. 12-13, 82-85.

<sup>163</sup> Miller, *Peiresc's Europe*, p. 31.

<sup>164</sup> Cited in Dmitri Levitin, "Egyptology, the Limits of Antiquarianism, and the Origins of Conjectural History, c. 1680–1740: New Sources and Perspectives," *History of European Ideas* 41, no. 6 (2015): 699–727., p. 5 which offers a parallel reading of early modern antiquarianism, what it was and what it was not, based upon an assertion that philological criticism was the prime mover in the development of early modern historical thought and method.

<sup>165</sup> Jan-Marco Sawilla, "Vom Ding Zum Denkmal, Überlegungen Zur Entfaltung Des Frühneuzeitlichen Antiquarianismus," in *Europäische Geschichtskulturen Um 1700 Zwischen Gelehrsamkeit, Politik Und Konfession*, ed. Thomas Wallnig (Walter de Gruyter GmbH Co. KG, 2012), 405–46.

<sup>166</sup> On the 'neo-stoicism' of the antiquarian, see Miller, *Peiresc's Europe*. especially ch. 4, 'The Theology of a Scholar: Antiquaries and Accommodation', pp. 102-29; Jean Papy, "Far and Away? Japan, China, and Egypt, and the Ruins of Ancient Rome in Justus Lipsius's Intellectual Journey," in *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500-1800*, ed. Peter N. Miller and François Louis (University of Michigan Press, 2011), 81–102, especially pp. 93-4. In general I find useful here Hayden White's speculative but thought-provoking description of the antiquarian or 'annalistic' historical mode as based on synecdoche, and a 'Leibnizian' metaphysics, in its understanding of the relationship between parts and wholes, microcosms and macrocosms: see White, *Metahistory*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>167</sup> Anthony Grafton, *What Was History?: The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007)., pp. 190-92; Peter N. Miller, "Writing Antiquarianism: Prolegomenon to a History," in *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500-1800*, ed. Peter N. Miller

frameworks, the best way to proceed is empirically, to establish what specific 'antiquarians' and communities of scholars were actually doing in specific places at specific times.<sup>168</sup> It is with this approach that this chapter turns to Matteo Egizio's Naples.

That by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century Naples had become one of the key European centers for antiquarian and archaeological activity, with the series of excavations made at Pompeii, Paestum and Herculaneum, is common knowledge. Through research driven by the state, by academies and institutions, and by 'Grand Tourists' and visiting scholars from across Europe, especially Britain and Germany, Naples' classical inheritance was enthusiastically excavated and projected to a pan-European audience.<sup>169</sup> The decades prior to these famous excavations, the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, however, also witnessed a lively environment of archaeological and antiquarian activity, even as this has received substantially less historiographical interest.<sup>170</sup> Engagement with the material past in early modern Naples, in accordance with broader historiographical tendencies, has often been viewed through the prism of archaeology in the late 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and indeed 20<sup>th</sup> Century, both in terms of the professionalization of the discipline, and its implicit relationship with burgeoning nationalism.<sup>171</sup> Certainly it was the case that through the early modern period there was fundamental relationship between the materiality of history and its locality, a relationship which could assume political and ideological force – a case of contemporary significance being the Tuscan discovery of an Etruscan past. In the mid-to-late 18<sup>th</sup> century, it has been convincingly argued that the archaeological recovery of Neapolitan antiquity directly fueled calls for political and jurisdictional

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and François Louis (University of Michigan Press, 2011), 27–57; in Thomas Da Costa Kauffman, "Antiquarianism, the History of Objects and the History of Art before Winckelmann," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62 (2001): 523–42.

<sup>168</sup> This is the case-based approach advocated by Williams, 'Antiquarianism: A Reinterpretation', p. 75.

<sup>169</sup> Relatively recently a series of publications have sought to stress the role of Neapolitans in the excavation of Southern Italy's long history, countering a perception of the arrival of enlightened Northern European archaeologists and archaeological practices: principally, Giovanna Ceserani, *Italy's Lost Greece: Magna Graecia and the Making of Modern Archaeology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Giovanna Ceserani, "The Antiquary Alessio Simmaco Mazzocchi: Oriental Origins and the Rediscovery of Magna Graecia in Eighteenth-Century Naples," *Journal of the History of Collections* 19, no. 2 (2007): 249–59; on domestic antiquarianism later in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, see Anna Maria Rao, "Tra Erudizione e Scienze: L'antiquaria a Napoli Alla Fine Del Settecento," in *L'incidenza Dell'antico*, ed. Ettore Lepore and Alfredina Storch Marino (Luciano, 1995), 91–134.

<sup>170</sup> Traced in Ceserani, *Italy's Lost Greece.*, pp. 45-52, mainly focussing on Vico, and then Mazzocchi.

<sup>171</sup> This is broadly where the narrative of Ceserani's book takes us; see also Antonino De Francesco, *The Antiquity of the Italian Nation: The Cultural Origins of a Political Myth in Modern Italy, 1796-1943* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

reform.<sup>172</sup> The prevalence and significance of this archaeological-political equation in the earlier period, in a different political environment, is not self-evident. To make sense of how and why local history was excavated and discussed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, a synchronic approach, dedicated to situating archaeological practices within the broader scholarly world can offer better insight than a diachronic reading structured around political or disciplinary narratives.

In accordance with this methodology, this chapter will consider several episodes in the antiquarian activity of Matteo Egizio and his correspondents in the first three decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. By extracting and exploring several strands of correspondence Egizio maintained with Neapolitan and Italian scholars during these years, it will try to establish key elements of their antiquarian method and epistemological approach. The nature of antiquarian discourse, especially as manifest in private letters and correspondence, is often descriptive, fragmentary and non-analytical. This makes it sometimes challenging to interpret meaningfully, and to collate with other realms of intellectual activity. To try to offer a nuanced interpretation of what antiquarians were doing in Naples in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, here three themes will be considered in turn. Firstly, this chapter will explore the practices of the Neapolitan antiquarian as *local knowledge*, and their function as a particular type of historical criticism. Secondly, the *quality* of historical inquiry facilitated by the antiquarian's engagement with objects and the material past, will be considered, with an emphasis upon their approach to the built environment and to religious customs of antiquity. This will, in part, engage with the interpretation of antiquarianism as a kind of proto-cultural history as well as a precursor to the history of religion, art and architecture. Thirdly, various ways in which antiquarianism was a collective intellectual endeavor will be explored, in terms of scholarly patronage, sociability and collaboration.

#### Antiquarianism as Criticism: Egizio's letters from Francesco Bianchini

One feature of the early modern antiquarian's toolbox was their ability to play a kind of rudimentary 'jeu d'échelles': to fluidly pass between the particularity of a given artefact

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<sup>172</sup> A. M. Rao, "Antiquaries and Politicians in Eighteenth-Century Naples," *Journal of the History of Collections* 19, no. 2 (2007): 165-75.

and the chronological meta-narratives of universal history. Antiquarianism was generally not concerned with, and ill-equipped for, the reformulation of medium-length historical narrative structures. The universal nature of their gaze did not, however, imply the absence of a critical lens: the close analysis and contextualization of artefacts both confronted specific historical questions, and validated the substance of history as a whole. In this sense, early modern antiquarians embedded the micro and the macro into one another, as the basis for clarity of understanding.<sup>173</sup> This approach to antiquity is typified in the work and thought of the Rome-based Veronese scholar Francesco Bianchini, and his letters to Egizio clarify both the critical dimensions of his method, and the emphasis he placed upon first-hand experience of excavated history.

Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) was a scholar and scientist who spent most of his career in employed in the Roman curia. A keen astronomer, Bianchini was, from his vantage point in Rome, well-integrated into both Italian and pan-European scientific networks.<sup>174</sup> Alongside his scientific pursuits, Bianchini was also a keen archaeologist and historian. He combined a study of chronology and ecclesiastical history with an antiquarian recovery and interpretation of material artefacts, which would constitute arguably his most significant publication, the *Istoria Universale provata con monumenti, e figurate con simboli degli antichi*, 1697. In his *Istoria* Bianchini both argued methodologically, and demonstrated practically, that material artefacts could and should be used as sources to ascertain more accurate historical knowledge.<sup>175</sup> For Bianchini, the universal scope of chronology, or annalistic history writing, ought to be united with the meticulous method of history in the particular: “l’istoria senza Cronologia è una Musica senza Battuta, e gli annali senza l’istoria sono battute senza Musica”.<sup>176</sup> In their unity, Bianchini envisages the conjunction of ‘apprendere’, based in chronology, and ‘comprendere’, based in active historical research, which is the key to good practice. The ‘Istoria’ or ‘musica’ invoked by Bianchini is not only the study of published texts, but is an active process of research, primarily orientating around the excavation of the material remains of antiquity, and the interpretation of symbols,

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<sup>173</sup> Miller, *Periesc’s Orient*, p. 9.

<sup>174</sup> On the Roman context of Bianchini see ch. 6; in general, see the collection of essays on Bianchini in Valentin Kockel and Brigitte Sölch, *Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) und die europäische gelehrte Welt um 1700* (De Gruyter, 2011).

<sup>175</sup> Tamara Griggs, “Universal History From Counter-Reformation to Enlightenment,” *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 2 (2007): 219–247, pp. 221-228.

<sup>176</sup> *Istoria Universale*, p. 6.

images, monuments and artefacts.<sup>177</sup> Only this dialectical approach between research and chronology could establishing certain knowledge about the past.<sup>178</sup>

Bianchini's critical attitude towards the symbols and monuments of antiquity is widespread through his correspondence with Egizio, in both constructive and destructive manifestations. In his first letter to Egizio Bianchini thanked Egizio for the "Inscrizioni antica trasmessarmi, la quale aggiungerò all'altri raccolta nel viaggio di Napoli",<sup>179</sup> also thanking Egizio for his descriptions and commentaries on the copies previously sent. Inscriptions, copied usually from stones, were precisely the symbols offering keys into antiquity which Bianchini had methodologically prized in his *Istoria*, and their reproduction in vast compendiums for wide distribution and consumption was a pan-European industry, with publications from the Netherlands by famous Dutch scholars, such as Johann Georg Graevius, Jakob Gronovius, Philip Cluver and Jan Gruter, being among the most authoritative on the early history of the Italian peninsula. These compendiums were fundamental resources for early modern scholars; at the same time, the capacity of the local antiquarian to both corroborate and review the inscriptions compiled in large compendiums, and to make new discoveries not included, or even contradictory to those included, in such works, added a critical component which was integral to Bianchini's 'musica' of history.

In a letter sent from Rome, dated 21<sup>st</sup> February 1708, Bianchini added in an extended appendix, "la copia di alcune iscrizioni ultimamente scavate sul Monte Coelio". To this he added notes of a series of inscriptions which "sono le più recenti scoperte fatte in materia di antichità, perciocché furono scavate la sett. antecedente." These Bianchini added to a recently acquired artefact which he contributes to the papal museum – "il museo di N. sig.e" – "una vase assai rara... la quale era in una vigna fuori di porta Maggiore... con la cavità superiore ornamenta di piccioli fori che comunicano con il magg.e a fine di ricevere le libazioni".<sup>180</sup> Bianchini's point of reference directing him through this interpretation – of the vase as serving a religious function for libations – was an inscription from the compendium of inscriptions recently published by Rafaele

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<sup>177</sup> Bianchini describes his method, pp. 31-34. Here as well as in the preface to the work Bianchini discusses at length the interpretation of symbols, in texts and objects, as a means to interpret the past.

<sup>178</sup> On Bianchini's method, Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Francesco Bianchini e l'idea Di Storia Universale 'Figurata'," *Rivista Storica Italiana*. 117, no. 3 (2005): 873-943.

<sup>179</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 30.12.1702, BNN MS XIII C.90 23.

<sup>180</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 21.02.1708, BNN MS XIII C.90 33.

Fabretti, *Inscriptionum Antiauarum Explicatio*, 1699. Fabretti's inscription is noted, Bianchini observes, in a recent book by the English antiquarian William Fleetwood, his *Inscriptonum Antiquarum Sylloge*, 1691, a commentary on the authoritative inscriptions book by Jan Gruter. Bianchini was disparaging of Fleetwood's citation, given that he "non dice il luogo, ne distingue i versi". Fabretti himself had been outspoken in his criticism of northern European scholars, and especially the Dutch antiquarian Gronovius, in their 'armchair' antiquarianism, not doing actual field work themselves, a sentiment with which Bianchini would agree.<sup>181</sup>

If Bianchini was critical of the derivative inscriptions incorporated by Northern European scholars, he was also expanding upon the work of his fellow Italians. Elsewhere, in a letter from 29 December 1707, Bianchini also found reason to propose additions to Fabretti's book of inscriptions. Bianchini acquired a recently excavated fragment of mosaic discovered in excavations on the Aventine Hill: the fragment depicted "la testa d'un filosofo in atto pensoso e acconto vi si legge la famosa sentenza incisa nel vestibolo del tempio di Appoline Delfico - γνῶθι σεαυτόν". This Bianchini retained "per saggio della filosofia morale de gli antichi", and framed next to a fragment given to him as a gift by a 'Signor Magnavacca' of Bologna, a "frammento della Iliade di Omero".<sup>182</sup> This fragment, Bianchini proposed, deserved to be published, "perche sia il principio della Iliad che manca nella Tavola simili illustrate con il celebre libro di Monsig. Fabretti".<sup>183</sup>

Bianchini's letters to Egizio demonstrate his sensitivity to the potential but also the limits of antiquarian scholarship. From the excavations at Monte Coelio Bianchini recounted discovering "due gran vasi di terra cotta intorno a duecentocinquanta litri di medaglie dell basso imperio di bronzo Piccioli". He was able to identify some of the coins as depicting the head of the Emperor Claudius, and others Diocletian, while "vi si sono ritrovata due con l'impianto di Severo Giuliano, uno de' trenta tiranni in tempo di Gallieno."<sup>184</sup> The quality of preservation allows Bianchini to better date the coins,

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<sup>181</sup> On Fabretti's polemics with Gronovius see Massimo Ceresa, "Fabretti, Raffaello," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 42 (1993); also Harry B Evans, *Aqueduct Hunting in the Seventeenth Century: Raffaello Fabretti's De Aquis et Aquaeductibus Veteris Romae* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 227-32.

<sup>182</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 29.12.1707, BNN MS XIII C90 32.

<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, Bianchini continues, "ha nel rovescio una specie di Aerotico".

<sup>184</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 21.02.1708, BNN MS XIII C90 33.

though Egizio doubts Bianchini's dating, annotating the letter in the margin "questo Severo non so se fu del tempo di Gallieno". The procedures for ascertaining certitude in the analysis of artefacts, the remit of criticism and the limits of skepticism were discussed at length around 1700. At the centre of this discussion was the polemical Jesuit scholar Jean Hardouin. Initially a serious scholar of some renown, from the 1680s, Hardouin began to become suspicious regarding the discoveries of the antiquarians and the classical inheritance, which he increasingly saw as almost all fakes, and part of an atheistic plot to replace the Christian God with an abstract idea of truth.<sup>185</sup> When Egizio seemingly referenced Haroduin in a letter to Bianchini, he received a strong riposte:

Del P. Harduino, e delle di lui congetture tutti gli uomini di quali giudizio tanto in Francia quanto in Italia fanno pochissimo conto. Certa cosa è, che nelle interpretazioni delle lett.e che V.S Stima accenna nelle consapute medaglie non puo essere più stravaganti ne più mal fondato. Ma l'ultimo libro data da lui in luce (e ritirato dal P. La Chaise otto giorni dopo) cioè quelli che ha per titolo *Chronologiae ex Nummis Antiquis restitutae prolusio de nummis Herodiadum*, Paris 1693 in 4.o, ha finito di screditare le di lui fatiche per la straordinaria immaginazione di voler far passare quasi tutti gli antichi Autori per Apocrifi e supposti.<sup>186</sup>

The antiquarian, in Bianchini's view, deployed critical inquiry which warded against both the kind of excessive pyrrhonism set forth by Hardouin, as well as uncritical deference to the standards previous scholarship. The domain of Bianchini the archaeologist was the 'juste milieu'.

### Filippo Belli and the History of Avellino

Bianchini's enthusiasm for the recovery, and the revision, of inscriptions tends to place itself in a pan-European context, rhetorically via his references to compendiums of inscriptions and antiquarian controversies of broad significance, as well

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<sup>185</sup> More on this, see ch. 4; See Quantin, "Reason and Reasonableness in French Ecclesiastical Scholarship." p. 430-31; on Hardouin more generally, see Anthony Grafton, "Jean Hardouin: The Antiquary as Pariah," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 62 (1999): 241-67.

<sup>186</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 21.02.1708, BNN MS XIII C90 33.

methodologically through his *Istoria Universale*. In a different context, a critical revision of inscriptions could take on a much more intensely local relevance. Another of Egizio's more distinctly antiquarian lines of correspondence was the letters he received from Filippo Belli between 1713 and 1719. Belli (1665-1719) was a native of Atripalda, close to Avellino, a Campanian city located just inland from Naples. During the late 1680s Belli was part of the group of Neapolitans, with Giacinto da Cristofaro, Basilio Giannelli and Francesco Paolo Manuzzi, who were incriminated by the Neapolitan Inquisition, acting on behalf of the Roman Inquisition, accused of being heretics and atheists for their engagement with Cartesian and Gassendian philosophy.<sup>187</sup> In the 1690s Belli was excused after which point he appears to have retreated from public Neapolitan intellectual life to his family home in Atripalda, where he concerned himself with literary and, primarily, historical and antiquarian research.<sup>188</sup>

A large part of Belli's letters to Egizio trace his forays into the excavation of ancient Atripalda, the ruins among which he lived, and the surrounding sites, and his compilation of the inscriptions found on stones and monuments around the city. This antiquarian activity led Belli to critique and revise some of the extant scholarship on the history of his city: a recurrent theme here is his criticism directed towards Scipione Bellabona, the 17<sup>th</sup> century Franciscan from Avellino, author of *Ragguagli della citta d'Avellino*. Reacting to a faulty transcription of an inscription made by Bellabona, reproduced by Nicolo Carminio Falcone in his *Istoria di San Gennaro*, Belli goes directly to the cited inscription and makes a copy himself, which he sends to Egizio in appendix to his letter, explicitly stating the mistakes made by Bellabona, reproduced by Falcone.<sup>189</sup> The inscription, annotated with Belli's corrections to Bellabona's poor transcription, is deemed sufficient evidence; he doesn't lecture Egizio, but diligently reproduces and transmits the evidence, writing, "io no ardisco ne approvarlo, ne oppore, solo V.S. noterà la mia attentione".<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>187</sup>Osbat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli. Il processo agli ateisti, 1688-1697.*, 1974., on Belli, see in particular pp. 62-4, 88-96 – see introduction, part two.

<sup>188</sup> Most of Belli's works are now lost – see Raffaele la Sala, "Filippo Belli, l'illustre Letterato," *Il Sabato: Giornale Della Citta Di Atripalda*, January 3, 2015.

<sup>189</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 22. Feb. 1717, BNN MS XIII C90 5-21. Belli doesn't engage with the broader controversy surrounding Falcone's *Istoria*, surveyed here in chapter 7.

<sup>190</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 11.6.1713, BNN MS XIII C90 5.

This apparent pedantry aimed by Belli towards what he perceived as the poor scholarship of Bellabona was in reality the tip of a more substantial controversy regarding the contested excavation and representation of the history of Atripalda. Bellabona's 1643 *Ragguagli della citta d'Avellino* traced the city's history from its foundations amidst sacred antiquity to the present. A sprawling chronicle, Bellabona's book contained several specific arguments which raised some controversy: he exaggerated the historical extent of ecclesiastical autonomy of the bishopric of Avellino, to encompass the sanctuary at Monte Vergine, a sacred site since antiquity. These politicized claims, challenging the ecclesiastical-jurisdictional architecture of the Italian south, and based upon contested historical documents, caused Bellabona's book to be initially suppressed, and it was only printed in 1656 in Trani, the year of the author's death.<sup>191</sup>

The element of Bellabona's account which led Belli to respond was his conclusion that Belli's city Atripalda had always been within the political jurisdictional limits of Avellino, though not within its ecclesiastical jurisdiction dominion; the transmission of the spiritual authority of Atripalda to that of Avellino was enacted by papal bull in 1585.<sup>192</sup> On this basis alone Belli might have felt compelled to critically interrogate Bellabona's account, but the historical claims made by Bellabona resurfaced in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the publication in 1709, in Naples, of *Avellino Illustrato da' Santi, e da' Santuari*, by the Jesuit Francesco de' Franchi. It was this text which drew Belli's interest back to Bellabona; looking at the relationship between Belli's excavation of local antiquity and his criticism of de' Franchi's *Avellino Illustrato* helps situate the critical method of the local antiquarian in concrete context.

De' Franchi's *Avellino Illustrato* captures the union of local patriotic history and devotional sacred history commonly deployed through the early modern period: Avellino was founded not by Greek colonists, but by the Sabine people, descendants of Gomer, son of Japheth, son of Noah.<sup>193</sup> In substance de' Franchi's *Avellino Illustrato*

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<sup>191</sup> Salvatore Ussia, "Bellabona, Scipione," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 7, (1970).

<sup>192</sup> In Bellabona's *Ragguagli* see: ragguaglio vii, "dell'edificazione d'atripalda", pp. 48-56; ragguaglio viii, "come atripalda se bene fu levata dal temporale dominio d'Avellino, non pero dal spirituale della Parocchia", pp. 57-64; and ragguaglio ix, "della renoncia della Parocchia d'Atripalda, che fecero l'Avellinesi a beneficio de'Tripaldini", pp. 65-77; this extended to Bellabona claiming key features of Atripaldan heritage, for instance the illustrious poet Andreano di Rogiero d'Atripalda, as in fact recognizing Avellino as his 'patria', 263-319.

<sup>193</sup> *Avellino Illustrato*, p. 22.

appears as a devotional ode to the sacred sites and figures of the city, listing the city alongside great urban centres of antiquity, and noting and elaborating its sacred origins, bound to sacred geography via speculative etymology. De' Franchi also discussed at length the city's role in the formation and advancement of the primitive church in the first three centuries after Christ, primarily in the life of San Sabino and then the martyr-saints Modestino, Fiorentino and Flaviano.<sup>194</sup> His key sources were Paolo Regio, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century ecclesiastical historian, but above all, Bellabona, whose *Ragguagli* is a constant point of reference for de' Franchi, who reproduced many of Bellabona's historical arguments alongside his exposition of Avellino's sacred sites.

Belli first wrote to Egizio about de Franchi's *Avellino Illustrato* in a long letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 1717. In his letter, Belli lists "gli errori più gravia del d.o Libro", suggesting that Egizio attain a copy so that they can cross-reference and compare. Among these errors, Belli lists:

quello sproposito che Avellino fu Repubblica libera sino al terzo secolo di saluta, l'etimologia di Santo Abele che fu fonduta dagli Aborigini, che l'astile fu destrutta a tempi d'Annibale, e fondata da nuova, che Virgilio d'accordare il verso in luogo d'Abellini, disse Abelle, e che così l'astile sempre chiamossi, onde la moderna si appello Abellino, anche dalla dea Bellabona. Ma ridicolo è quello, che i peregrini, distorcendo il viaggio da Benevento per equo Tutico si ponnevano a visitare il tempio delle de Cibeles in Mte Virgine, luogo sacro degli Avellinesi con l'autorità dell'itinerario d'Antonino, che non mai si sogno tal distorcimento di strada.<sup>195</sup>

Belli's criticism largely is based around the distorting of historical facts to fuel de' Franchi's claims, which are deemed, damningly, "tutta scorretto, mischiandoci un vocabolo Tedesco, o Turco".<sup>196</sup> Belli's authority to make such accusations stems from his own familiarity with the artefacts and ruins concerned: de Franchi's errors are proved by "i marmi poi tutti si veggono dichiarati al roverscio, sino a non saperli trascrivere, anche la nostra dissertazione".<sup>197</sup> De' Franchi's history of Avellino, replete

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<sup>194</sup> *Avellino Illustrato*, Book II, pp. 191-370.

<sup>195</sup> Belli to Egizio, 08.03.1717, BNN MS XIII C90 11 – underlining in original.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

with errors, is therefore the context which encourages Belli to proceed with his 'dissertazione' of Atripalda, researched and composed in dialogue with Egizio.

In the spring and summer of 1717, the dissertation on the antiquity of Atripalda was exchanged between Belli and Egizio. In his letter on the 5<sup>th</sup> July Belli informed Egizio of his intention of including an appendix to this dissertation confronting directly de' Franchis' *Avellino Illustrato*, and the works which it imitated "l'opera del P. Beato Barese, della med.a Compagnia, e del Bellabonda d'Avellino, l'uno e l'altro scritt.e apassionati, ha prego molti sbagli" but also in defence of the reputable scholars, namely "Bollando" – Jean Bolland – and "P. Giordano Cronista di Mte Vergine" – the Benedictine monk Gian Giacomo Giordano, whose accounts of the lives of San Sabino are condemned by de' Franchi. Here, as elsewhere, Belli gives Egizio license to integrate his addition where the latter feels it to be appropriate;<sup>198</sup> Belli's dissertation could be seen as a collaborative project, and Belli acknowledges Egizio's role in its composition: "perche ad V.S. solo ben noti quello favori amendare la mia, o dir meglio, la tua, dissertazione in quello vi sarà di buono".<sup>199</sup>

If part of Belli's criticism of de' Franchi and Bellabona, countered in his unpublished dissertation, orientated around their distorting facts to privilege a local history rendered devotional, it is also simply their dogmatic regurgitation of earlier errors, rather than consulting the original, which invites critique. This latter criticism is captured well in a letter dated 28 August 1717: on the sources of de' Franchi's errors, Belli writes:

gli abbagli del P.re Franchi p. aver seguito l'errori del P. Bellabona e del Vescovo Ruggiero di cui non si trova nei originale ne copia ne solo alcune notizie, com'egli med.o cotesta è cascato in mille abbagli, molti de' quali potra chiarirli con la sola ispezzione oculare, e pure la distanza da cotesta Citta in queste con strade è da 20 miglia, picciolo incomodo ad uno scrittore, e Giesuita.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 23.01.1719, BNN MS XIII C90 21.

<sup>199</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 08.03.1717, BNN MS XIII C90 11.

<sup>200</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 28.12.1717, BNN MS XIII C90 15 – underlining in original.

An ‘ocular’ inspection could have easily corrected many of de’ Franchi’s corrections, Belli asserts, if he had bothered to make the short journey to the ruins themselves. This accusation of indolence is folded into one of Jesuit laxity.<sup>201</sup>

A third line of criticism concerns the intentions and political forces underpinning scholarly production. A long aside in Belli’s lengthy letter to Egizio on the 8<sup>th</sup> March elaborates on the local political context in which de’ Franchi’s *Avellino Illustrato* was commissioned, funded and attained its form and meaning. De Franchi’s *Avellino Illustrato* was initiated and supported by the Amoretti family, which had supplied Avellino with several of its mayors in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The family, praised in the preface to de’ Franchi’s book, “avendo speso del peculio universale della Citta d’Avellino dal cinquecento nella stampa del d.o libro”, both funding and promoting the work, presumably as a mechanism with which to promote the grandeur of their city, and specifically above those others in the region.<sup>202</sup> Belli is here partly objecting to the interference of political interests into antiquarian scholarship – though of course the outcome of this political-antiquarian collaboration challenged Belli’s own convictions about the historical autonomy of his own ‘patria’ Atripalda.

For these three reasons, in Belli’s view, de’ Franchi’s Amoretti-funded *Avellino Illustrati* deserved criticism, via recourse to serious unaffected study of the artefacts, inscriptions and ruins of local antiquity. Belli offered a case in such an approach. Having excavated and then cleaned a marble block discovered in Atripalda (following Egizio’s directions: “si sta pulendo nella maniera V.S. ne diede la norma”), “il marmo Tatiano”,<sup>203</sup> and made a transcription of the words inscribed on its surface, Belli claimed that it gives evidence that Atripalda was, in classical antiquity, legally and administratively distinct from Avellino: “Avendo autorità bastevole, che Tripalda nel tempo dell’antico Avellino avea il suo essere, ed era come un vico di d.a Citta”.<sup>204</sup> The refuting of poor scholarship should proceed by hard evidence transparently presented. As such, when Modestino d’Angelis composed a critique of de’ Franchi’s *Avellino Illustrato*, Belli was torn; the work was deemed “una buona critica”, but “scritto con affettazione, o vanità”, and tackled the “buggia della d.a famiglia Amoretti, ch’io lo stimo non critica, ma bensì

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<sup>201</sup> On anti-jesuitism in Egizio’s Italy, See chapter 6.

<sup>202</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 8.3.1717, BNN MS XIII C90 11.

<sup>203</sup> A Roman local magistrate, identified as “decuriones tripaldenses”.

<sup>204</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 26.6.1713, BNN MS XIII C90 6.

satira". Not only was this a poor way to proceed, from Belli's perspective, it was often counter-productive, especially seeing that "I raggiri Amorettieschi sono infiniti".<sup>205</sup>

Belli's dissertation, edited by and composed in collaboration with, Egizio, was not published, and appears to have been lost;<sup>206</sup> his letters to Egizio give insight, however, into the stimulus for and direction of his criticism of the local histories composed by de Franchi and, by extension, of Bellabona. Criticism of those authors, along very similar lines to those mapped out by Belli, became increasingly a feature of local histories of Avellino and Atripalda; from this perspective, despite not publishing his antiquarian studies, Belli can be seen as working in a critical antiquarian tradition which would become embedded and extended in local 18<sup>th</sup> and then 19<sup>th</sup> century histories.<sup>207</sup>

#### Antiquarianism as Cultural History: Religion and Materiality

The polemic context to antiquarianism in the case of the local history of Atripalda offers an opportunity to consider and compare practices and epistemologies, and specifically to expose Belli's critical method. Even when there was no such polemical drive, antiquarian practice in Egizio's circle was seldom solely an encyclopedic compilation of objects and inscriptions. Belli's attentiveness to the situating of an inscription afforded not only the capacity for critical pedantry, but also insight into the legal and administrative structures of classical antiquity; in his case he deployed this insight as evidence with which to dispute a specific claim, but the materiality of artefacts generally afforded different kinds of historical inquiries to those raised by textual sources. As well as legal, political and administrative structures of antiquity, archaeological practices could raise questions about the built environment of the past, cultural practices as well as religious customs.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples 8.3.1717, BNN MS XIII C90 11.

<sup>206</sup> Cited by Theodor Mommsen, see article by la Sala, *op. cit.*

<sup>207</sup> Sabino Barberio, *Dissertazione Critico-Storica del Tripaldo e suo celebre Santuario*, Napoli, 1778, extends Belli's polemic, pp. 4-5. Criticism of de' Franchi is recurrent, as is praise of "il celebre Matteo Gizzio" (p. 6), though there is no mention of Belli. In his 1829 contribution Serafino Pionati (*Ricerche sull'istoria di Avellino*) compared the laxity of Bellabona and de' Franchi with the hypercriticism of Barberio and de Mansi (Niccolo Maria Mansi, *Critiche Riflessioni sulla vita, e more di S. Modestino, S. Fiorentino e S. Flaviano...*, Napoli 1793, p. xii.

<sup>208</sup> This is one of the key arguments made by Momigliano, extended by Miller, that antiquarianism established a kind of proto-cultural history – see Miller and Burke, *Momigliano and Antiquarianism*. The

Several cases might be gathered from Bianchini's letters to Egizio. Bianchini wrote to Egizio in February 1708 informing him about a recently acquired artefact, "un tubo di piombo d'acquedotto, scavato accanto alla chiesa di Lorenzo extra Muros". On the side of the pipe was stamped "SALVI PAPA IOHANNE / STEFANUS PP REPARAVIT", which Bianchini interpreted as signifying the date – the reign of Pope John I, "che fu nel fini del regno di Teodorico", and that the aqueduct was restored by the factory of Stefanus.<sup>209</sup> The roman aqueducts were explored with particular zeal by Roman and Italian antiquarians, relying upon both monumental ruins and fragments such as that found by Bianchini to understand the infrastructure of ancient Rome.<sup>210</sup>

Inscriptions placed in situ could also provide the platform for enquiries into the customs and rituals of antiquity. Exploring the vast collection of artefacts amassed in the Palazzo Farnese, Bianchini recalled to Egizio finding "il famoso Calendario di Giulio Cesare" about which he wrote a "nuova spiegazione in quell libro che ha veduto stampato fino della Pasqua antecedente". Unlike the calendar's previous inclusion in the compendium of Gruter, Bianchini was careful to "indicare nella figure che saran il mio libro letta è ammirata la bellissimo iscrizione sepolcrale".<sup>211</sup> The book in question was Bianchini's 1703 text *De Kalendario et Cyclo Caesaris ac De Paschali Canone S. Hippolyti Martyris*, the first dissertation of which offered an interpretation of Caesar's Julian calendar, which it reproduced, in dialogue with astronomical and astrological reflections. The practical concern was with establishing the Church's Easter calendar; the antiquarian concern was with the transition from a calendar based on lunar cycles, as established by Numa, to one based on the sun, a reform brought forth by Caesar and chronological problems this transition may raise.<sup>212</sup>

Antiquity stimulated reflection on ecclesiastical norms elsewhere in Bianchini's letters to Egizio. In a letter dated 23 August 1704 Bianchini responded to Egizio's query about a passage in Bianchini's new book; it comes in chapter seven of the first dissertation of

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method of the antiquarian has also been seen as informing the formation of the history of art and architecture as distinct disciplines: most explicitly Da Costa Kauffman, "Antiquarianism, the History of Objects and the History of Art before Winckelmann".

<sup>209</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples 21.02.1708, BNN MS XIII C.90 33.

<sup>210</sup> Rafaelle Fabretti, *De aquis et aquaeductibus veteris Romae*; on Fabretti and his *De Acquis* see Evans, *Aqueduct Hunting in the Seventeenth Century*.

<sup>211</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 21.02.1708, BNN MS XIII C90 26.

<sup>212</sup> On Bianchini's astronomy, see John Heilbron, "Bianchini as an Astronomer," in *Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) Und Die Europäische Gelehrte Welt Um 1700*, ed. Valentin Kockel and Brigitte Solch (De Gruyter, 2011), 57–80.

Bianchini's *de Kalendario*, concerned with the posthumous apotheosis of Antoninus Pius, and based on a reading of an inscription from the base of a recently discovered column. Egizio's question appears to be about the funeral customs applied to Antoninus Pius – Bianchini replies: "si trace il tempo delle consecraz.e legittima secondo il rito descritto da Servio ne' funerali de Romani".<sup>213</sup> This then led Bianchini to directly compare the funeral rites of the Romans with those of his own time:

Quanto alla brevità dell'intervallo tra la morte e la conserv.e di Antonino Pio, non vedo ripugnanza al definire lo spazio di sett' giorni p. fare la pira e gli altri preparam.i vedendo noi bastare ancora a' di nostri un sì corto intervallo p. i funerali dei Papi ne quali oltre il catafalco si lavora il Conclave e si fanno per Roma tanti altri mani fattore con tutto che la potenza temporale di magistrati non sia paragonab.e a quella de Cesari eredi dell'Imp. defonto, che molto più agevolm.e potevano esigere macchine grandiss.e nello spazio di pochi giorni.<sup>214</sup>

This kind of comparison of customs across ages, between secular and religious traditions, without necessarily pursuing any polemical end, is representative of Bianchini's, and to an extent Egizio's, engagement with antiquity.

As this case indicates, the religious customs of antiquity, their substance but also their context, were of intense interest to historians and scholars, and here again material remains could offer privileged insight. Excavations starting in 1693 at the site of Pozzuoli, just north of the bay of Naples, made a significant impression on Neapolitan scholars. In October 1700 the Florentine librarian and scholar Antonio Magliabechi received a letter from Giacinto di Cristofaro, a mathematician and philosopher who as we saw had been embroiled in the Trial of the Atheists. Here de Cristofaro described a marble plaque found at Pozzuoli, relocated to the Church of Sant'Antonino in Pozzuoli:

la dette iscrizioni sta nel prede d'un marmo molto grande... a destra di esso è scolpito il sole con la testa coronate e radiante, a sinistra la luna con figura di donna con le spalle rivolte, fra 'l mezzo del sole e della luna vi è un bue con un figura di sopra che tenendo quello per la corona sta in atto di ammazzarlo, quasi

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<sup>213</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 23.08.1704, BNN MS XIII C.90 27.

<sup>214</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 23.08.1704, BNN MS XIII C.90 27.

quello sacrificasse, intorno poi vi sarò due figure con parole accese e altr'animali scolpito<sup>215</sup>

De Cristofaro associates the image with the “favula solis mithrae” and compares it with inscriptions he has in Giovanni Antonio Summonte’s *Istorie di Napoli*.<sup>216</sup> Ultimately the inscription is a difficult for Di Cristofaro to understand: “su di esso riferisce molte cose confusamente e discordinamente, donde partimente noitizie di altri consimili marmi”<sup>217</sup>. The Neapolitan Carmelite monk Girolamo Maria di Sant’Anna also wrote to Magliabechi about the site, as did Timothy Agnellini, also known as Timothy Karnoush, an eastern christian based in Naples around 1700, who was asked by Antonio Bulifon to “interpretatre molti marmi epitaffi in lingua Arabica”.<sup>218</sup> Bulifon had published in 1694 a report of the initial discoveries at Pozzuoli, and was clearly still engaged in their study.<sup>219</sup> Several years later Bianchini wrote to Egizio enquiring into the discovery of a temple at Pozzuoli, but was more interested in its built form, dimensions, material and cost: “V.S. stima potrà riflettere in quella quali consiglio ricercassero que’ di Pozzuoli nella fabbrica d’un tempietto d’Ercole per la spesa di soli 1500 sesterce, apponendovi leggi distinte e petti della misura dell’ante, travature, e di tutti i materiali della fabbrica.”<sup>220</sup>

Religious themes reappear at some of the more substantial excavations in Southern Italy in the first decades of the eighteenth century: those directed by the Lucanian priest Carlo Danio in his home town of Saponara, the site of ancient Grumentum around the year 1713, and participated in and promoted by Egizio. Carried out systematically and recorded in great detail - in part in Danio’s letters to Egizio but most significantly in the published letter addressed to Egizio by Giacomo Antonio del Monaco, entitled *Lettera Intorno all’Antica Colonia di Grumento, oggidi detta la Saponara*, published in 1713 – the

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<sup>215</sup> De Cristofaro, Naples to Magliabechi, Florence, 19.10.1700, Michele Rak and Amedeo Quondam, eds., *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*. (Napoli: Guida, 1978), pp. 398-9.

<sup>216</sup> *Istorie di Napoli*, 1675; the work is edited by Antonio Bulifon, who seems to have co-ordinated some of the excavations at Pozzuoli.

<sup>217</sup> Di Cristofaro, Naples to Magliabechi, Florence, 2.10.1700, 19.10, 1700, *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, vol. 1, pp. 396-99.

<sup>218</sup> Agnellini, Naples to Magliabechi, Florence, 28.4.1698; Sant’Anna to Magliabechi, 23.12.1697, in Rak and Quondam, *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*. Vol. 2, pp. 1178-80; 629-30.

<sup>219</sup> Bulifon, *Ragionamento intorno d’un’Antico marmo scoperto nella Citta di Pozzuoli*, 1694.

<sup>220</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 16.5.1705, BNN MS XIII C90 29.

excavations at Saponara offer valuable insight into the methods of the serious early 18<sup>th</sup> century antiquarian, and the variety of their interests.

### Carlo Danio, Giacomo Antonio del Monaco, and the Excavations at Saponara

Through the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century one of Egizio's longest and most intimate correspondents was Carlo Danio, a priest from Saponara in Basilicata (today Nova Grumento).<sup>221</sup> Having studied in Naples, where his uncle Amato was a senior lawyer and political figure, Danio relocated to Rome in 1698, to take up minor ecclesiastical office in the curia. Danio's letters to Egizio between June 1698 and May 1700 show the former engaging enthusiastically with the cultural and intellectual milieu afforded him by Rome during these years; in Rome Danio associated with Gianvincenzo Gravina, Giusto Fontanini and members of the Arcadian Academy, as well as the Dutch antiquarian Ghisbert Cuper and the Prussian scholar Gottfried Christian Goetze. It was probably Danio's illness in 1699, and perhaps also the ailing health of his uncle Amato, which led Carlo to move back, somewhat begrudgingly, to his provincial home in Saponara, in the position of Arciprete.<sup>222</sup>

Deprived of the cosmopolitan intellectual and erudite milieu of Rome or Naples, far from the circulation of books and new publications, and bound to his ecclesiastical office, which "purtroppo grave peso alle mie spalle",<sup>223</sup> Danio filled his spare time by exploring the ancient sites and artefacts of the Roman settlement of Grumentum. In the first years after his return, he narrated his initial finds to Egizio, his discovery of:

iscrizzioni e medagli... le iscrizioni finora non sono più che sei, della quali una sola intera, l'altre si possono frammento, ma che danno materia da filosofarci, per esserne divise in militari, testamentari, e votivi – fra le medaglie una vi è

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<sup>221</sup> Danio's correspondence with Egizio and its archaeological features has been studied recently by Myriam Pilutti Namer and Alfredo Buonopane, "Quest'Africa Mi Da Sempre Cose Nuove: Le Epistole Di Carlo Danio a Matteo Egizio Sulle Antichità Grumentine (1700-1729)," *Rivista Di Archeologia* 34 (2010): 144–55. The survey is thorough, though the context is very much the pre-history of archaeology, and so rather lacking in context or theoretical insight.

<sup>222</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 29.5.1700, BNN MS XIII C90 148, describing his arrival back in Saponara.

<sup>223</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 29.3.1704, BNN MS XIII C90 154

considerabile da derivare – ella e della forma grandezza, simile quelle che da noi si legano alle corone, ripiena da segni, e ne votivi di carattere ebraici.<sup>224</sup>

From the spring of 1704 Danio decided to invest in his antiquarian activities, beginning the construction of a 'studiolo', "di continuara il lavoro delle Scanzie in una stanza lunga venti palmi, larga diece, e alta dodici, e mezo, esposta a mezzogiorno, con un giardinetto non dispregiabile, ornata di venerande reliquie di antichità", into which he assembled his modest library ("miei libretti, avvegnache non molti, siano buoni"<sup>225</sup>) which he expanded constantly with new deliveries from Naples and Rome. He inscribed above the door of his 'studiolo' Seneca's famous lines: "Non refert quam multos libros, sed quam bonos habeas". This study was where Danio planned to work, assemble his finds, and welcome his friends and colleagues.<sup>226</sup>

In December 1704 one such friend, Giacomo Antonio del Monaco, made the long journey to Saponara to accompany Danio on one of his antiquarian forays. Del Monaco (1680-1736) was a scholar from the Calabrian town of Altomonte, and in 1704 was working as the personal secretary to the Principe di Bisignano.<sup>227</sup> Danio described Del Monaco to Egizio as "mio sommo amico non meno che gentilissimo letterario" and described some of their preliminary finds. Danio exchanged sparsely with Egizio over the following nine years (one letter in January 1707, and one in February 1710). We might assume, however, that during this time Del Monaco continued his interest and excavations in Saponara, as when Danio resumes his correspondence with Egizio his letter concerned the preparation of a study of the ruins of ancient Grumentum, by Del Monaco, in the form of a published letter addressed to Matteo Egizio. We see here Egizio playing a similar role as he had with Belli. Danio's letter asked Egizio to pause the publication, as he had revisions "in risposta de dubbi fatti alla iscrizione di X Bruttio".<sup>228</sup> Further details arrived in a week: having received word from Danio, Del Monaco "portatosi ad osservare le nostre antichità di nuovam.e" to hone his interpretation. Danio's concern was to avoid publishing sub-standard scholarship, "indegne del palato de moderni

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<sup>224</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 6.5.1703, BNN MS XIII C90 151.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 25.5.1704, BNN MS XIII C90 155.

<sup>227</sup> On del Monaco see the short biography in Giuseppe M. di Ferro, *Biografica degli uomini Illustri trapanesi*, Napoli 1831, pp. 185-190; also the footnote in Tommaso Piedo, *Istoria Della Storigrafica Lucania* (Bari, 1964), p. 50, note. 2; in 1720 Del Monaco would become librarian of the Oratorian library in the church of S. Filippo Neri, Gerolamini, which housed the vast library of Giuseppe Valletta.

<sup>228</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 30.7.1713. BNN MS XIII C90 159.

critici”, which would damage the reputation of all involved. Acknowledging a degree of uncertainty was deemed preferable to making strong claims which might be proved false, and Danio and Del Monaco “cercasse di fare una picciola appendice alla sua lettera, nella quale ponendosi in dubbio la lettura del terzo verso”. Sensitivity to accuracy was integral to the dramatic force Danio perceived in their antiquarian practice: with a precise dissertation, he hoped to “eccovi alzato il velo alla scena, la quale desidero, che p l'onor dell'amico, resti sepolta in un eterno silenzio”.<sup>229</sup>

Del Monaco's letter to Egizio was published in late 1713, entitled *Lettera Intorno all'Antica Colonia di Grumento, oggidì detta la Saponara, indirizzata al signor Matteo Egizio*; the preface to the work was composed by the Lucchese priest – based in Naples for much of the 1710s – Sebastiano Paoli, who also seems to have taken an interest in the excavations.<sup>230</sup> Drawing out some of the key themes and cases from Del Monaco's *Lettera*, almost ten years in the making, depicts the nature and diversity of the Neapolitan antiquarian's historical inquiry.

After describing in brief his visit to Saponara, and being guided around the ruins by Danio, Del Monaco offers a brief history of the settlement. This is based on classical sources, principally Strabo's *Geografia*,<sup>231</sup> a manuscript copy of the *Atti di S. Laviero Martire*, a local saint and martyr, possessed by Carlo Danio, inherited from his uncle Amato,<sup>232</sup> and the study of local inscriptions; like Bianchini earlier, Del Monaco criticizes the false reproduction of one such inscription by Gruter.<sup>233</sup> Still, a large amount of Grumento's history, and especially its founding, was obscure and poorly established; better understood was the destruction of the ancient city “da saracini sotto il ponteficato di Giovanni VIII”<sup>234</sup> and the founding of the new city Saponara, on a hill half a mile away, during the papacy of Leo VIII. The new city, it is claimed, was named after the deity Serapide, a temple of whom existed on the site; Del Monaco drew upon a

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<sup>229</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 6.8.1713, BNN MS XIII C90 160.

<sup>230</sup> The importance of Paoli in the publication of Del Monaco's *Lettera* is stated in the review of the *Lettera* in the *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, vol. 20, 1714, p. 28; Paoli also wrote to Muratori in Modena from Saponara, on 26.7.1716, describing “alcune piccolo reliquie d'antichità”, including the proposed site of the baths, of two ‘cessi’, as well as a number of medals and inscriptions. – BEUMo AM 74-27.

<sup>231</sup> Also listed as classical sources are Ptolemy, Appian, Diodorus Siculus, Livy, Pliny, Seneca, Macrobius.

<sup>232</sup> The manuscript is critically discussed in Danio's letters to Egizio; Del Monaco notes a reference to the manuscript by Luca Holstenius in his *not. Ad. Italia antiqua Cluverii*.

<sup>233</sup> Del Monaco, *Lettera*, p. 10.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

recently discovered marble inscription “col rilievo di un sacrificio, che faceasi ad Apollo con la vittima del toro” now kept among Danio’s growing collection. Still on the identification of Apollo with Serapide Del Monaco was reluctant to commit; this remains a hypothesis.<sup>235</sup>

After this brief introduction, the bulk of Del Monaco’s *Lettera* was concerned with the ancient city’s ruins. These included the ruins of aqueducts, running for two miles around the city, several buildings identified as factories, and two amphitheaters “uno di forma più grande, e l’altro piu picciolo”, sites, he notes, not mentioned in the survey of Justus Lipsius, who noted only three amphitheaters in Southern Italy outside of Rome. The cultivation of the site for vineyards by the citizens of Saponara unearthed substantial number of artefacts, many of which Danio had collected in his studiolo; Del Monaco notes coins and bronze medals, as well as a large number of amphorae urns, and containers, some described and admired in detail. Other curiosities found include “un pezzo di dente di elefante di un piede di lunghezza”, on which basis Del Monaco speculates the site to have been the location of one of Hannibals’s battles against the Romans.<sup>236</sup> The artefacts in which Del Monaco is most interested, however, are those relating to the religious practices of Grumentum’s ancient inhabitants. Among the coins he finds “un idoletto d’argento dorato di once tre di peso, rappresentante Apollo co la faretra, e con l’arco”, and he recounts discovering similar figures always in groups of uneven size – one, three, five, seven, or nine. This, Del Monaco speculates, could reflect their use as “Dii Mani”, idols to worship the gods and their ancestors, for which he cites Virgil “Numero deus impare gaudet”, and the authority of Cardinal Noris: “quando fosse vero che il volgo de’ Pagani intendea per li Dij Mani le anime de difonti.”<sup>237</sup> Other small statues are interpreted as representing Cynic philosophers, on account of their posture, full beard and clothing.

Larger statues and temples also provided material with which Del Monaco could reconstruct the religious customs of ancient Grumento. A statue, “si crede esser di un sacerdote di Apollo”, was discovered, six feet tall, “avendo nella destra un pomo, ed a piede un serpe”; a statue and engraving of a priestess, the latter, “con un cucciario nella sinistra, creduto strumento de sacrifici” are now in the “giardino del Sig. Arciprete”. Also

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-16.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., pp. 19.

in Danio's garden are other statues identified as Apollo, "un Ercole nudo di mezzo rilievo, assai bello, alto da piedi due e quattro onces... che con la sinistra ritiene per un corno il Toro Maratornio, e a piede a la clava, e la pelle del leone Nemeo"<sup>238</sup> Another statue was identified as Giove, "se pure non era di Serapide, o Apollo che qui veneravasi, come abbiam detto".<sup>239</sup>

A striking feature of Del Monaco's account of the site of ancient Grumentum was his commitment to not only describing the intricate artefacts discovered, and the features of antiquity of particular interest, such as those relating to religious customs, but also his description of the ancient city's built environment, its streets and buildings, many of which were presented with precise measurements, both of their physical size, and their depth *in situ*. In one such passage Del Monaco described excavating "una strada ben ampia di sedici piedi di larghezza" made of large paving stones. Inscriptions used in collation with the excavation of the road were then used to conjecture about the jurisdictional limits of ownership of the city's patrons. The excavation of the road was also a platform from which to reflect upon the city's infrastructure:

questa strada si va sollevando nel mezzo, per dar forse luogo che l'acqua piovana potesse scorrere per le sue estremità: nelle quali si veggono a quest'effetto ogni pochi passi de'canaletti cavati ne medesimi marmi, da quali l'acqua s'insinuava in alcuni luoghi sotterra, atti a ricevere la medesima: restando con quest'arte la strada sempre limpida e netta<sup>240</sup>

A "cannone di piombo", then drove the water underground into a nearby fountain. Uncovering and cleaning the road, Danio and Del Monaco also identified another large building, which they excavated.<sup>241</sup> Admiring the craftsmanship of this building, strongly and more elegantly built than the others, they speculated that it once had a vaulted ceiling and carved stone.<sup>242</sup> At the heart of the old city Danio showed Del Monaco a heavy set building with strongly fortified walls, divided into cells. Based on their excavation of the walls and the floor of the building, and the state of preservation:

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

si conghiettura che questo bell'edificio esser potesse un forte di ritirata, come situate nel mezzo dell'antica Citta: e parve che crescesse il motive di crederlo tale dall'avervi osservato da un lato come un ammaccatura con picciola lesione della muraglia, cagionatavi forse dalle percosse dell'ariete, o a testuggine<sup>243</sup>

Del Monaco's letter to Egizio presents himself and Danio as local antiquarians, working critically within a scholarly frame, and carefully expanding knowledge about a given site, through evidence and reasoned conjecture. As well as the particular interpretations about the function of specific buildings and artefacts from Grumentum, Del Monaco uses the evidence to posit alternative interpretations of the ancient settlement as a whole: "di queste iscrizioni avvengono alcune, dalle quali si può dedurre, esser stata Grumento non già semplice Colonia Romana, come sopra abbiamo detto, ma Colonia militare".<sup>244</sup> The wealth of sources excavated and critically assessed offers Del Monaco and Danio some claims with which to revise established accounts, for instance that of Gruter. At the same time the language of 'conjecture' and 'deduction' is accompanied with open doubts.

Del Monaco's *Lettera* was reviewed and praised in a thorough, if not very critical, article in the Venetian *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, a compilation of extracts.<sup>245</sup> Danio's excavations were still a work in progress, however, as his letters from 1714 evidence: Danio recounted discovering:

una statuetta assai buona ella è di pietra nostrale di del disegno alta tre palma... nuda con la destra mano regge un canestro che tiene su la spalla parim.e destra, mentre nella sinistra appoggiata su la coscia dell'istesso lato tiene un grossa palla, che sembra cadente, e di gran peso. Stimo sia la imagine del Genio<sup>246</sup>

This was only the most spectacular of Danio's recent finds, stating that "questa Affrica vi da sempre cose nuove".<sup>247</sup> Based on these new discoveries Danio himself was, in 1714, composing a dissertation of the inscriptions found at Grumento Nova. Danio sent his dissertation, under composition, to Egizio to be corrected; Danio was replete with self-criticism about his mediocre erudition: "la mia povera dissertazione... delle

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>245</sup> *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, Vol. 20, 1715, p. 28-42.

<sup>246</sup> Danio to Egizio, 16.2.1714, BNN MS XIII C90 161.

<sup>247</sup> Danio to Egizio, 16.2.1714, BNN MS XIII C90 161.

imperfezioni in tutto il corpo e nell parti". Nonetheless, Egizio's reply with a corrected version was deemed by Danio too harsh: "quello correzione è barbara: questa è pocolatina; quella nuova osservazione è frivola, la tale critica e falso, o e fredda, le digressioni sono troppo lunghe, o fuor di proposito, et in fine tutto il corpo e malamente composta."<sup>248</sup> After Danio's prickly response, no letters were exchanged between the pair until 1717, and Danio's dissertation appears to have remained in manuscript form.<sup>249</sup> Critique, though, was part of the antiquarian's practice, and upon receiving a letter in February 1717, regarding the interpretation of an inscription by Paoli, a friend of Egizio and Danio, Danio writes "conobbe non esserne stati raccomandati ad una statua antica, come falsam.e suppose sig. P.re Paoli. Che ti pare buon uomo mio?"<sup>250</sup>

Danio appears the archetypical provincial antiquarian; as a regional ecclesiastical figure he used his income, status and most importantly his network to recreate in microcosm the erudite environment he had experienced in Rome and Naples in his carefully designed and curated 'studiolo'. Danio's letters continue through to 1729, and while Egizio's scholarly interests diversified, and remained politically-engaged, there is a significant continuity in Danio's letters, always referring to local antiquities, his requests for specific books to be sent from Naples, and his gathering of local antiquarians at his house. In other words, their intellectual and social trajectories seem quite distinct - Danio wrote in 1721: "V.S. come sta? che fa? Come la passa? Pensa mai al suo Danio?"<sup>251</sup>

### The Antiquarian Collective: Sociability and Patronage

Looking in depth at the circumstances and activity underpinning Del Monaco's *Lettera* demonstrates, as do all the cases surveyed thus far in this chapter, how early modern antiquarianism was fundamentally a collective enterprise. This collaborative dimension can be elaborated through Egizio's correspondence in several ways. The act of encountering and excavating antiquity could be done collaboratively, as we saw with

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<sup>248</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 16.10.1714, BNN MS XIII C90 167.

<sup>249</sup> On the manuscript and its coverage by Theodor Mommsen see Pilutti-Namer and Buonpane, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-154; Danio's letters to Egizio in 1728 refer to his 'iscrizzioni', suggesting that he was trying once again to get them published - 20.2.1729, BNN MS XIII C90 183.

<sup>250</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 28 February 1717, BNN MS XIII C90 169.

<sup>251</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 10.november 1721, BNN MS XIII C90 170.

Danio and Del Monaco. Upon leaving Rome for his home city of Verona for five months in 1705, Bianchini takes the opportunity to show several letterati “i marchi di antichità quali ha riportato il dovuto applauso; vedendosi in quella costudito ogni lineam.e antiche e mirabilm.e applicato al costumi de tempi nostri”.<sup>252</sup> Such collective inquiry also extended beyond the site of the ruins themselves, as seen in Danio’s ‘studiolo’ and adjoining ‘giardinetta’, which functioned as a work place, as well as a show cabinet for artefacts, where Danio would host scholars as they came to visit him in Saponara. Many scholars housed artefacts in their homes and libraries; the ‘libreria’ of Sebastiano Paoli, involved with the excavations at Saponara, was “arricchita di libri, medaglie e vasi etruschi”,<sup>253</sup> while an impressive collection of 45 ‘etruscan’ vases were held in the vast library of Giuseppe Valletta; Egizio almost certainly had a small collection himself, and acquired several of Valletta’s after his death.<sup>254</sup> Writing from Palermo, Egizio’s Sicilian friend and scholar Giacomo Longo confirmed that he would add the books Egizio’s sends to him to his “picciolo museo”<sup>255</sup>. These were in a sense, semi-private collections, just as the libraries, salotti and studies of well-connected scholars were open spaces to their friends and associates.<sup>256</sup>

In the absence of sources to flesh out the informal and private places and sites of knowledge where antiquarians would both practice and discuss their craft collectively, letters themselves offer the greatest insight into how the culture of antiquarianism functioned. Analyzing letters exchanged between antiquarians demonstrates how archaeological activity could play an important role in sociability, and the establishment and strengthening of relations between scholars. This itself could take several forms. Writing to Egizio in 1707 Bianchini stressed how he would like to add an “erudita notizia” to his letter, itself a festive greeting, “col valesse secondo il costume antico di Censorino e d’altri letterati di serena natalizia da offerire a Padroni, che tanto aiutano

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<sup>252</sup> Bianchini, Verona to Egizio, Naples, 17.11.1705, BNN MS XIII C90 30.

<sup>253</sup> Maria Pia Paoli, “Paoli, Sebastiano,” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 81 (2014).

<sup>254</sup> See the entry on Giuseppe’s nephew Francesco Valletta in Giuseppe Castaldi, *Della Regale Accademia Ercolanese dalla sua fondazione sinora: con un cenno biografico de suoi soci ordinari* (Ercolano (Napoli): Accad. Ercolanese, 2006), pp. 245-48; also Maria Emilia Masci, “La Collezione Di Vasi Antichi Figurati Riunita Da Giuseppe Valletta: Identificazione Parziale Dei Pezzi Raccolti e Ricostruzione Della Dispersione,” *Annali Della Scuola Normale Di Pisa* 2 (1999): 555-93.; M. E. Masci, “The Birth of Ancient Vase Collecting in Naples in the Early Eighteenth Century: Antiquarian Studies, Excavations and Collections,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 19, no. 2 (September 18, 2007): 215-24.

<sup>255</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 142.

<sup>256</sup> In Naples see Claire L. Lyons, “The Museo Mastrilli and the Culture of Collecting in Naples, 1700-1755,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 1992).

che ha desiderio di approfittarsi nella cognizione delle antichità.”<sup>257</sup> As a note in his published letter to Egizio, Del Monaco states that Egizio may have seen the “idoletto d’argento... rappresentante Apollo” which he excavated, seeing as it was currently held “presso un commune amico, a cui da me fu donato”.<sup>258</sup> These cases – other similar examples abound in Egizio’s antiquarian correspondence – indicate how the discussion and exchange of antiquity could function as a mechanism to strengthen social ties between scholars.

In so far as an enthusiasm for antiquity was, in the manifestation it assumed in Egizio and his correspondents, generally framed as a critical scholarly activity, which could inform and lead into, but could also be kept relatively distinct from, other intellectual and political dynamics, it also provided the environment in which Neapolitan scholars could build ties with foreign protestant scholars. Through the 1710s, 1720s and 1730s Egizio maintained a correspondence with Phillip Stosch, the Prussian scholar and antiquarian who travelled extensively in Italy, probably spending some time before 1715 in Naples, sending Egizio letters from Rome through to 1731, after which point he corresponded from Florence.<sup>259</sup> Much of Stosch’s correspondence concerned the transmission of and news about books,<sup>260</sup> but they also discuss antiquities, medals and inscriptions. Here Stosch gives a similar judgement to that of Bianchini on the work of Hardouin: “la conjecture de Hardouin... est très mal fondée pour l’expérience de ceux qui le font donner la peine de confronter les medailles et les marques de monetaires”.<sup>261</sup> Stosch’s antiquarian conversation with Egizio acted as a conduit to introduce Egizio to other German and British scholars and antiquarians. In 1723 he put Egizio in touch with “sig. Danio Meicheluci di Wurtemberg” - probably the German scholar Daniel Maichel – “molte approvate da huomini di buon gusto”, who was en route to Naples;<sup>262</sup> in 1725 Stosch introduced Egizio to “Baron di Schonberg di Sassone” who was also coming to

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<sup>257</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 29.12.1707 BNN MS XIII C90 32.

<sup>258</sup> Del Monaco, *Lettera*, p. 17.

<sup>259</sup> On Stosch as an antiquarian, see Jorn Lang, “Eine Skizze Antiquarischer Interaktionim 18. Jh. Am Beispiel Des Phillipp von Stosch (1691-1757),” in *Netzwerke Der Moderne.*, ed. Daniel Scholl, Jan Broch, and Markus Rassiller (De Gruyter, 2007), 203–26. Egizio’s letters from Stosch on erudite and antiquarian matters were presented by Robert Engelmann, “Briefe von Ph. Von Stosch an Matteo Egizio in Neapel,” *Archiv Fur Kulturgeschichte* 6 (1908): 326–48.

<sup>260</sup> Of note, Stosch sends to Egizio a copy of a work by Giordano Bruno, which he knew was hard to find in the libraries in Naples, from Rome, 13.12.1715 BNN MS XIII C93 143.

<sup>261</sup> Stosch, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 10.1.1715, BNN MS XIII C93 142.

<sup>262</sup> Stosch, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 26.5.1723, BNN MS XIII C93 150.

Naples.<sup>263</sup> From 1730 Stosch and the British consul to Naples ‘Mr Allen’ collectively introduce to Egizio a “mons. Bruyne e Mons. Walpole”, interested in seeing “due pietre intagliate.”<sup>264</sup> In this way, Egizio’s relationship with Stosch provided the social frame for his continued encounters with scholars from the protestant world keen to come to Naples, to view its antiquities and meet its antiquarians.

Egizio was first put in touch with Stosch in spring 1715 by Giusto Fontanini, who wrote to Egizio on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, asking the latter to greet Stosch and his friend, and introduce them to other Neapolitan scholars, notably Giuseppe Valletta and Domenico Aulisio”.<sup>265</sup> Egizio fulfilled this role of regional guide well enough, as Fontanini wrote the next month with thanks.<sup>266</sup> Through Fontanini, Egizio may also have been in contact with the Prussian-British ecclesiastical historian David Wilkins, “studioso di lingue orientali” who in 1710 was in Rome manuscript hunting. Upon Wilkins’ request to explore Neapolitan archives, Egizio was Fontanini’s point of call: “fu pregio di far conoscere a V.S. Ill.ma... egli sopra ogni altra cosa bramerebbe di poter vedere i codici MS. di S. Gio. in Carbonara”.<sup>267</sup> Fontanini performed a similar task with a ‘S. Cunnigham, mio antico padrone ed amico” and several “cavalieri Inglesi” as they made their way south from Rome in 1711. Between the summer 1732 and spring 1733, an English antiquarian, Robert Smith, also acquainted with Fontanini and Giovanni Vignoli in Rome, exchanged a brief but dense series of letters with Egizio. Smith had just returned from Naples, where he had discussed the antiquity of the city of Capua with Egizio, and spent time with the young Neapolitan scholar Alessio Simacchio Mazzocchi.<sup>268</sup> Smith planned to consult the Maurist scholar Bernard de Montfaucon “sopra qualche iscrizione curiosa e dotta che so ne trova per il Regno”.<sup>269</sup> Alongside considerations regarding the destructive earthquakes which struck Southern Italy in 1733, Smith asked about antiquities collected from sites at Pozzuoli, Baia and Cuma.<sup>270</sup>

If Egizio was increasingly the point of reference for foreign scholars visiting Naples driven by erudite interests, this was as a result of the reputation and status he had built

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<sup>263</sup> Stosch, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 27.4.1725, BNN MS XIII C93 151.

<sup>264</sup> Stosch, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 30.9.1730, BNN MS XIII C93 155.

<sup>265</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 26.03.1715, BNN MS XIII C90 234.

<sup>266</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 19.04.1715, BNN MS XIII C90 235.

<sup>267</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 06.03.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 215.

<sup>268</sup> Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 21.06.1732, BNN MS XIII C93 51.

<sup>269</sup> Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 19.12.1732, BNN MS XIII C93 53.

<sup>270</sup> Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 4.4.1733, BNN MS XIII C93 55.

as an authority in the antiquity of the Italian South. While the relatively consistent style and content of much of the antiquarian scholarship surveyed thus far may suggest that the culture of antiquarian exchange was relatively 'flat', in reality it was a highly hierarchical system, both intellectually and socio-politically. There were substantial disparities between scholars who shared an enthusiasm for antiquity and recognition of these disparities framed the direction of information shared between scholars. It was firstly his intellectual reputation, and secondly his maintenance of an extensive regional network, which allowed Matteo Egizio to become, by the late-1710s, *the* senior Neapolitan antiquarian. Between 1718 and 1724 Egizio maintained a steady exchange of letters with Carlo Marocco, a minor noble with antiquarian interests from Caiazzo in Campania. Throughout these years Marocco regularly made copies of inscriptions from the ruins he found around his home town to send to Egizio; he also travelled to the nearby S. Agata di Goti performing a similar function. Along with inscriptions Marocco sent Egizio notes about manuscripts he found in local archives relating to medieval history, from 1722 deploying his sons to this task. Several of Marocco's reports also make notes of artefacts he found and excavations he oversaw:

nello scorso mese di Maggio si scoprivono circa un miglio lungi da questa citta antichi pavimenti interie, che con lavoro di minute pietre nere e bianche figuravano corpi umani... giuducati da prima essere stato il luogo casa di bagni, per essere della capacita di otto stanze, come le descrivono gli autori, cioe quattro p uomini e quattro per le donne... Mi conferma i tuboli di creta cotti ed alcuna quantita di piombo<sup>271</sup>

In other descriptions, the disparity in erudition between Egizio and Marocco is more plainly cited, with Marocco simply sending Egizio a 'scatoletto' of artefacts, relying upon Egizio's "dottrina ed erudizione" to identify them, Marocco himself "non sapendo io discernere, se sia cosa che vaglia".<sup>272</sup> Marocco represented one of Egizio's informants, keeping him aware of recent Neapolitan antiquarian proceedings. From 1725 Egizio received regular reports on excavations at S. Agata di Goti from Isidoro Rainoni, a local ecclesiastic figure and enthusiastic antiquarian, who wrote to Egizio initially how there was "non è angolo della citta ma che non si vegga sieno di marmi rotti".<sup>273</sup> As well as his

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<sup>271</sup> Marocco, Caiazzo to Egizio, Naples, 8.7.1723, BNN MS XIII C 91 122.

<sup>272</sup> Marocco, Caiazzo to Egizio, Naples, 1.7.1721, BNN MS XIII C 91 114.

<sup>273</sup> Rainoni, S. Agata di Goti to Egizio, Naples, 9.2.1731, BNN MS XIII C92 156.

excavations in Atripalda and Avellino, Belli also sent Egizio reports from the Campanian town of Mirabello, as well as from Baiano.<sup>274</sup> Antiquarian-themed writings in Egizio's posthumously published *Opuscoli volgari e latini* include inscriptions and descriptions of sites and artefacts from Serino in Campania, Portici and Resina around the bay of Naples, as well as Bovino in Puglia.<sup>275</sup> Whilst remaining sedentary in Naples for most of his life prior to the 1730s, Egizio was able to supplement his learning with a vast amount of information about the antiquity of the Italian South, information gathered from a web of personal contacts. He was able to critically assess the accounts he received based on the credibility of the source, as the sporadic annotations he added to the letters he received indicate, sometimes affirming and sometimes questioning the claims of his correspondents.

### Egizio and the Imperial Museum in Vienna

If we might see Egizio acting as the antiquarian patron for those amateur scholars in his regional network, he also sought to deploy his expertise to attain patrons of a more political variety. Hierarchical relations between scholars facilitated antiquarian scholarship and its affiliated culture; they also relied upon the patronage and support of institutions, aristocrats and monarchs as political and financial patrons. A case in point is Bianchini's reliance upon the vast collections held in the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, the inscriptions among which he drew upon extensively for his work, such as his research into the Roman calendar. In 1708 Bianchini was also busy acquiring artefacts to add to the Vatican museum – "il Museo di N. Sig.e" – the 'Museo Ecclesiastico' which he was influential in organizing.<sup>276</sup>

After taking possession of the Italian South in 1707, the Habsburg regime sought to develop the knowledge of the antiquity of Naples and its Kingdom. In the 1720s Egizio was approached by the Imperial court in Vienna to offer an interpretation of a Roman inscription on a bronze tablet, found in 1640 in Calabria. The inscription was a legal decree relating to the censorship of the Bacchanalia, a Roman nocturnal festival

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<sup>274</sup> Letters sent August and September 1718, BNN MS XIII C90 18-20.

<sup>275</sup> Egizio, *Opuscoli volgari e latini*, 1751.

<sup>276</sup> See the essay Paolo Liverani, "Il 'Museo Ecclesiastico' e Ditorni," in *Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) Und Die Europäische Gelehrte Welt Um 1700*, 2011, 207–34.

dedicated to a celebration of the god Bacchus. Previously, knowledge of the Bacchanalia had come entirely from the writings of Livy, so the discovery of an original document pertaining to the ritual and its legal repression stimulated curiosity. An adequate interpretation of the bronze tablet had been hampered by its poor condition, and also its singularity; previous readings by Jacobus Tullus, Carlo Maiello, Augustino Scilla and Scipione Maffei, the latter two drawing mainly upon the reading of Rafaele Fabretti, were deemed laudable but ultimately not sufficiently thorough.<sup>277</sup> Egizio's *Senatusconsulti de Bacchanalibus*, dedicated to Charles VI, opened with an extract from Livy, from book 39 of his history of Rome in which the Roman writer discussed the rite of the Bacchanalia and its persecution by Roman officials.<sup>278</sup> Egizio then offered his *Explicatio*, juxtaposing Livy's account with the record recovered from the bronze tablet, itself transcribed as it appeared on the artefact and then into more legible prose.<sup>279</sup> Egizio's 'explicatio' is concerned with establishing the procedures and norms of the legislative system under the Roman republic; the rituals of the Bacchanalia serve primarily as material with which to do this. He does, however, following Livy quite tightly, inquire into the superstitious nature of the Bacchanalia, and how it arrived in Italy – it was adjudged to be a foreign cult, originating in Egypt - where it disrupted the Roman civil religion, and so weakened the Republic.<sup>280</sup>

The stimulus for the explanation of the tablet came from the establishment in Vienna of an imperial museum, displaying objects gathered from across the Habsburg Empire, and especially its possessions on the Italian peninsula.<sup>281</sup> The project of reorganizing and making an inventory of the large and expanding imperial museum was begun in early 1726, directed primarily by the Italian contingent in Vienna: Apostolo Zeno, Giovanni

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<sup>277</sup> Egizio describes the circumstances of his work, and the artefact's previous interpretation, in the praefatio, ii, to *Senatusconsulti de Bacchanalibus*.

<sup>278</sup> Egizio, *Senatusconsulti de Bacchanalibus*, p. 1-13.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., pp. 138-9.

<sup>280</sup> Egizio's work received a positive review in the newly founded Swiss journal, the *Bibliothèque Italique*, 1730, tome vii, pp. 220-256, the editors stressing the work to be of relevance for "les theologiens, les politiques & les Antiquaires".

<sup>281</sup> On the formation of the museum and expansion of the library in Vienna see Giuseppe Ricuperati, "La Difesa Dei Rerum Italicarum Scriptorum Di L.A. Muratori in Un Inedito Giannoneano," *Giornale Storico Della Letteratura Italiana*, 142 (1965): 388-418. Ricuperati's main focus is on Giannone, Farelli, Forlosia, Lama and Garofalo, "il gruppo degli amici del Giannone rimasti a Vienna", p. 405 – and less on Zeno, Paoli and Egizio.

Battista Panagia,<sup>282</sup> Pio Niccolo Garelli,<sup>283</sup> as well as Alessandro Riccardi and Nicola Forlosia, who had inherited the position of director of the Imperial library from Gentilotti.<sup>284</sup> In his letters to his brother over much of 1726 and 1727, Zeno recounted the steady progress, and disruptions, of the “revisione del Museo”, assembled from the huge unsorted imperial collection:

siamo ancora nelle medaglie Latine Imperiali d’argento, e già siamo arrivati ad Adriano. Vi mancano pero molte teste, e moltissimi dei roversci piu rari. Puo esser pero che si trovino negli altri armadi, che ne rimane a vedere, i quali sono piu di 30. e ben grandi, oltre a quelle che sono ne’ sacchi<sup>285</sup>

Re-ordering the imperial connections was accompanied by a drive to expand their collection, especially drawing upon their relatively new Italian possessions. In dialogue with a series of Italian-based contacts, and through go-betweens travelling the peninsula, a project was begun transmitting manuscripts and artefacts from provincial Italian archives and museums to the imperial capital, where they were processed by the Vienna-based Italians.<sup>286</sup> This projects appears to have been affected by the personal and political tensions within the Italian community in Vienna; writing to his brother on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1727 Zeno recounted in detail the ingratitude with which Garelli and Panagia received the substandard and small number of artefacts recovered by Daniele Antonio Bertoli from the Museo Certosino in Rome; after which point Zeno “mi guarderò bene di praticare ne con l’uno, ne con l’altro, e prenderò un volontario esiglio sia dal Museo, che dalla Biblioteca Cesarea, per non aver occassione di essere o parlar con loro”.<sup>287</sup> While Zeno continued to report on the imperial museum, it appears that the divisions within the Italian antiquarian community in Vienna were significant, and perhaps ideological; he describes, in letter from 6 March 1728, the “avversari del

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<sup>282</sup> Abbate Giambattista Panagia was, in early 1727, elected Imperial antiquarian: see letter from A. Zeno to Lorenzo Patarol, in Venice, 7.1.1727, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 4, 1785, p. 166; in 1731, Giannone described being assisted by Panagia in his consultation of coins in the imperial museum, in preparation for a French translation of his *Istoria*: Giannone, *Vita scritta da lui medesimo*, chapter 8, book iii.

<sup>283</sup> B. Maschietto, “Garelli, Pio Nicola,” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 52, (1999).

<sup>284</sup> The initiation was described by Apostolo Zeno: A. Zeno to P.C. Zeno, 2.2.1726, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 4, 1785, p. 86.

<sup>285</sup> A. Zeno to P.C. Zeno, 23.3.1726, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol., 4, pp. 99-100.

<sup>286</sup> On the collection of Neapolitan manuscripts and artefacts in Vienna see B. Capasso, “Sulla Spoliazione Delle Biblioteche Napoletane Nel 1718,” *Archivio Storico per La Provinciale Napoletana* 3 (1878): 563–94.; on overview of the situation, see Ricuperati, “La Difesa Dei Rerum Italicarum Scriptorum Di L.A. Muratori in Un Inedito Giannoniano”.

<sup>287</sup> A. Zeno to P.C. Zeno, 2.8.1727, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol., 4, p. 199-200.

Bertoli”, led by Garelli, “declamando asprissimamente per tutte le conversazione contra il Bertoli, il P. Pauli, I P.P. Certosini, e me ancora”.<sup>288</sup>

As the latter group around Zeno appear, after spring 1728, to have played little role in the formation and expansion of the ‘museo cesareo’, the scholars associated with the imperial library, led by Garelli and Nicolo Forlosia, appear to have taken charge. If in the curation of the imperial collection the museum directors relied in part upon mobile figures such as Paoli and Bertoli, they also relied upon more stationary figures of regional expertise, for whom collaboration could function as a form of political patronage. It was in this capacity that Forlosia exchanged several letters with Egizio between 1728 and 1731. Forlosia wrote on 11 December 1728, in response to a letter from Egizio – Forlosia presents himself as writing in lieu of Garelli – regarding Egizio’s proposal of sending to Vienna a work describing a collection of medals recovered from the Italian south. Forlosia was awaiting Egizio’s “annotazione distintamente delle medagli, egli vi avea nella sua lettera descritte”<sup>289</sup>, as well as the ‘disegni’ of certain medals, which Forlosia and ‘Sig. Gio Panacia Antiquario di S.M’ need to proceed with their plans for the museum. Along these lines, Forlosia also requests Egizio to arrange for a collection of coins to be transmitted to Vienna to add to the Imperial collection:

Il numero degli esemplari e la forma, e ‘l disporne lo lascia egli tutto al vostro arbitrio e disposizione: e vorrebbe solo averne qui non più che cento esemplari, parte per dare ad alcun ministro, o uomo curioso di queste cose, e parte per riserbarli insieme col senatusconsulto nella biblioteca, perché se ne possa compiacere ad alcun letterato, o ad altri che saranno di passaggio per qua in appresso<sup>290</sup>

Forlosia is appreciative of Egizio’s description of the Senatusconsulto; he rejects, however, Egizio’s appeals to assist in the printing of the manuscript, completed in 1727, and not printed until 1730, when it appeared in Naples, in the printing house of Felice Mosca.<sup>291</sup> While Egizio’s *Senatus de Bacchanalibus* was not, then, to be published in the

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<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Forlosia, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, 11.12.1728, BNN MS XIII C90 240.

<sup>290</sup> Forlosia, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, 11.12.1728, BNN MS XIII C90 240.

<sup>291</sup> Forlosia’s argument is that he lacks the time to oversee the publication, and also because “sarebbe difficile il fare che verissimo giuste, essendo voi costa così lontani... perche sempre meglio il potra fare l’autore medesimo togliendone ed aggiungendone a suo grado”, *ibid.*

imperial capital, Forlosia and Garelli asked Egizio to write a description of “un’elegantissima e conservatissima medagli, che si ritrova nel museo Cesareo”, about which Egizio “potra ben criticare lo Spaneimo, il quale ne rapporta una mal concia, siccome potrete vedere”<sup>292</sup>.

Forlosia wrote again in 1729 thanking Egizio for the medals and inscriptions, offering to help distribute his dissertation in Vienna – he also noted once more of his appreciation of Egizio’s work, “degne opera faccia cresce l’onor di nostra patria”,<sup>293</sup> promoted in Vienna, “questa oziosa citta”.<sup>294</sup> On the basis of this relationship, Forlosia seems happy to act as a Viennese reference for Egizio, recommending him in 1731 to the influential Conte Muscettola.<sup>295</sup>

Briefly considering Egizio’s interactions with the Imperial museum in Vienna in the context of an interpretation of antiquarianism as a collective enterprise and form of patronage demonstrates how by the late 1720s Egizio’s learning and skill, but perhaps more importantly his network and reputation, carefully built up since the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was beginning to pay political dividend. If the emperor and viceroys represented the most obvious form of political power and valuable form of patronage, also of significant importance were the large number of noble and aristocratic families who tended to fill the key bureaucratic and diplomatic positions within the imperial and regional machinery. Forlosia’s positive referral of Egizio to Conte Muscettola might represent an attempt to strengthen such a tie. Furthermore, scholars at the Imperial court such as Forlosia could have political influence in and of themselves. In both cases, Egizio’s antiquarianism was a means for him to remain integrated into Imperial structures of patronage. This was clarified after the re-establishment of a Bourbon regime in Naples, when Egizio was appointed Royal Librarian, in part by virtue of his close relationship with the pro-Bourbon Principe di Torella.<sup>296</sup> From this point to his

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<sup>292</sup> Forlosia, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, BNN MS XIII C90 240 – this work remained unpublished.

<sup>293</sup> Forlosia, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, BNN MS XIII C90 241.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> A copy of the letter from Forlosia to Muscettola is included as an attachment to Forlosia’s letter to Egizio, sent in January 1731 - BNN MS XIII C90 242.

<sup>296</sup> Both Ceresa (“Egizio, Matteo.”) and Ussia (Ussia, *L’epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento.*) stress Egizio’s filo-Borbonico tendencies. See for instance the dedication to Principe di Torella in Egizio and Paoli’s letter to Valisnieri regarding the subterranean water in Caracciolo’s land in Puglia, dated 1723 – in Valisnieri, *Lezione accademica introno l’origine delle fontane*, 1726; Egizio also seems to have written a legal defence of Caracciolo in the same years, cited in letters to Egizio from Enrico Enriquez, BNN MS XIII C91 37, 26.2.1721 (“ho letto con tutto il mio piacere la Difesa del Principe di Torella...”), and by Stefano Manfredi, BNN MS XIII C92 45, 7.12.1722, (“come ancora se vi trovate due

death Egizio was officially Naples' leading antiquarian figure, expanding the royal library, directing the acquisition and curation of the kingdom's antiquarian collections, and taking part in the excavations at Herculaneum.<sup>297</sup> Egizio's ascent to this position was not arbitrary; nor did it rely solely on his political relations. His appointment to the prestigious post of Royal Librarian makes sense through the prism of his scholarly capital, itself the fruit of his extensive and intensive antiquarian activity through the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to shed light upon the figure of Matteo Egizio as an antiquarian through the prism of his correspondence. This is necessarily an imperfect exercise, and a one-size-fits-all model of antiquarianism is unsatisfactory. It has however identified some shared features of what constituted the antiquarian scholar in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Naples. To begin with, while antiquarian pursuits could, directly or indirectly, serve a political function, they were largely conceived by their practitioners as of value in and of themselves, reflecting a curiosity about the past. This acknowledgement stimulates a reflection upon the epistemological framework of antiquarian scholarship, as incorporating but not limited to questions of method. The authority of the antiquarian was underpinned through their commitment to first-hand 'ocular' inspection of artefacts and inscriptions, coupled with a critical approach to cross-referencing and reassessing established claims. They placed an emphasis upon unimpassioned study, and the avoidance of prejudice and bias, which tended to encourage a misreading or neglect of historical particularities. Theirs was a project of reconstruction and recomposition of the past from fragmentary evidence. Progressing in this mode, antiquarian scholarship relied upon a hierarchical model of knowledge exchange, based upon validation, credibility and trust. Correspondence networks, systems of patronage

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altri, o almen una copia della vostra allegazione in jure per lo sig. Principe della Torella"); in 1717 Egizio wrote the main contribution to a collection of poems written for the wedding of Anna Caracciolo to Andrea Imperiali Simana, Principe di Montefia, *Componimenti nelle Felicissime Nozze degl'Illustri ed Eccellentiss. Signori il Signor D'Andrea Imperiale Simiano Principe di montefia, et la signora D. Anna caracciolo de' Principe della Torella*, Napoli, 1717.

<sup>297</sup> See ch. 1

and loosely-organized institutions such as semi-private studies and museums provided the infrastructure in which this epistemology could function and be corroborated.

The antiquarian sensitivity to the quotidian – to the jurisdictional, social-economic and religious structures of life of the past – is represented in several strands of Egizio's correspondence. This did not usually lead into a substantive reading of a given historical narrative or any convictions about the laws of historical change. Establishing a 'more-true' interpretation of a historical artefact, monument or custom held, on the one hand, intrinsic value in its particularity and, on the other hand, as in Bianchini's *Istoria Universale*, it could contribute to a universal trans-historical view of the human past, the parameters of which were largely already established. Engagement with materiality and objects was central to the curation of this sensibility; at the same time, stressing its epistemological rather than purely methodological dimensions demonstrates its continuities with other scholarly activities, specifically with text-based historical research, philology and chronology. Ascertaining the semantic limits of 'antiquarianism' matters less than making sense of what scholars were doing, how they were doing it, and why, when they confronted the past.

By orientating more directly around Matteo Egizio and his historical scholarship in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the following chapter will extend this enquiry. In particular, it will demonstrate how the epistemological framework here associated with antiquarianism was challenged in historical writing, both in method, through the reduction of historical knowledge to data, and in application, through the explicit political instrumentalization of the past. Egizio's criticism of these tendencies can be interpreted as his defense of some of the key components of an antiquarian epistemology.



## Chapter Three - Matteo Egizio and Historical Method

In an introductory passage to his 2007 collection of essays on the *ars historica* in early modern Europe, Anthony Grafton makes the distinction between an ‘ancient’, humanist approach to history centred in rhetoric and structured around *production*, and a ‘modern’, critical approach to history structured around *consumption*.<sup>298</sup> This is a useful framework with which to think about the writing and thinking of history in specific contexts: the clarity of the distinction is, however, inevitably reductive. One of the key dynamics this chapter aims to articulate is the critical dimension of the ‘ancient’ production-oriented historical scholarship as it confronted what its practitioners saw as the reductive, polemical, uncritical and consumer-centric scholarship of the ‘moderns’ in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. In so doing, this chapter extends the trope of critical ‘antiquarianism’ developed in the previous chapter, while redirecting this epistemological framework to chronology, ecclesiastical history and text-based scholarship.

The community of antiquarians collaborating with and around Matteo Egizio in the Kingdom of Naples in the previous chapter celebrated historical knowledge of the particular over the universal, prioritized the certain over metaphysical truth, and understood scholarship as both a collaborative enterprise and an ongoing endeavor. They valued empiricism and a cautious, productive scepticism, an attitude that made ascertaining the credibility of texts and scholars crucial in establishing the authority of their claims. The capacity for a specific past to speak to a specific present stimulated their practice; at the same time, they envisaged scholarship as largely removed from the ideological ferment of the political and religious environment in which they lived and worked. This way the credibility of their scholarship was ensured, and the moral and intellectual virtues implicit within the act of historical scholarship might be cultivated.

This chapter will draw upon the correspondence of Matteo Egizio to assess how Egizio envisaged and presented himself as a defender of this ‘antiquarian’ historical method, in the face of its transgression by different parties in different ways. The first section will consider Egizio’s 1713 translation from French to Italian of Guillaume Marcel’s *Tablettes Chronologique contenant avec ordre l’État de l’Église en Orient et Occident* and Egizio’s

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<sup>298</sup> Grafton, *What Was History?*, p. 11.

commentary on the work, his *Serie degl'imperadori Romani*. The emphasis will be upon Egizio's objection to what he perceived as Marcel's universalising chronology, and Egizio's proposal of a critical chronological approach to ecclesiastical history, defined by a productive scepticism about the limits of historical knowledge. The second part will assess Egizio's role in the dissemination of ecclesiastical-historical scholarship in Southern Italy, focussing upon his correspondence with Enrico Enriquez in Puglia and Giacomo Longo in Sicily. One implicit objective here will be to demonstrate how historical scholarship, much like the machinery of antiquarianism, was a collaborative enterprise, while it will also consider the epistemological and political limits of Egizio's notion of 'buon critico', or good method. The third part will consider Egizio's role in two different scholarly polemics where the production-centric model of scholarship was undermined. Firstly, it will look at his 1738 commentary on Nicolas Lenglet Du Fresnoy's 1736 reprint of his *Méthode pour étudier la Géographie*, in the light of Dufresnoy's scholarly profile and activity. Secondly, it will assess Egizio's role in the criticism directed by Italian scholars towards Pietro Giannone's *Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli*, published in 1723. In the latter case, a key objective will be to use a fully developed understanding of Egizio's methodological convictions to reposition his encounter with Giannone in a primarily scholarly, rather than primarily political, context.

### Guillaume Marcel's "Reductions" and Egizio's Commentary

In early 1712, while on a winter retreat at Castellammare di Stabia, on the southern edge of the Bay of Naples, Matteo Egizio was approached by Padre Teodosio Romano, a senior member of the Minim Friars in Naples, to make a translation of a work of ecclesiastical chronology by the French scholar Guillaume Marcel, his *Tablettes Chronologiques de l'Histoire Ecclesiastique*. The friars thought it a useful work to have translated into Italian – they also offered to pay the costs of publication.<sup>299</sup> Egizio gladly agreed, read the book during his trip, and set to work writing a translation. Egizio's translation appeared the following year in 1713, printed in Naples. In his translator's

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<sup>299</sup> The circumstances surrounding Egizio's translation are described in the preface to Egizio's commentary on Marcel's *Tablettes*, Egizio, *Serie degl'imperadori romani*, 'al cortese lettore' (unpaginated).

introduction to the work Egizio stressed the value of his translation, making Marcel's chronology more widely available to an Italian audience. This value stems in part from the intrinsic value of a knowledge of ecclesiastical history – principally as a tool to refute heretics and to convince unbelievers – but also the specific value of a work such as Marcel's, “che tra per l'ordine, e seguentemente per la chiarezza, e tra per la copia in brevi parole di molte cose, utilissimo sopra ogni altro estimavano a tal bisogno.”<sup>300</sup>

Marcel's *Tablettes Chronologiques* first appeared in 1682, and was re-printed several times afterwards. Marcel (1647-1708) was a French 'avocat au parlement', and royal historian; most of his mature works were dedicated to Louis XIV. The *Tablettes Chronologiques* was not a conventional chronology or ecclesiastical history by 17<sup>th</sup> century standards, but rather an attempt to condense, simplify and make more widely available the progress made in historical scholarship and the science of chronology over the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>301</sup> The subtitle of the French original, not included in the Italian edition was “pour servir de Plan a ceux qui lisent l'Histoire sacrée”, and Marcel's preface, included in Egizio's translation, stresses man's natural inclination to learn, but also the obstacles which limit this capacity. These include the limitations on time, the interference of business, and also the human passions, which all prevent the scholar, and especially amateur scholars, from seriously reading and understanding the great swathes of literature available, amassed over the centuries. The condensation of knowledge responded to a practical problem, and can be beneficial to the time-pressed scholar – “J'avouë que ces reductions leur peuvent être d'un grand solagement... parce que le moindre mot est capable d'exciter en eux une grande suite d'idées”.<sup>302</sup> He is critical, however, of the utility of existing 'reductions', because within them “les matières y sont entassées sans ordre de temps, des lieux, ny de personnes, et sans plusieurs autres circonstances qui sont absolument necessaires pour les rendre

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<sup>300</sup> G. Marcello, *Memoriale Cronologico dell'istoria ecclesiastica*, from the unpaginated dedication to Egizio's translation., 'All'illustriss. Ed eccleentiss. Signor il signor D. Giovan-Giacom de Marini',

<sup>301</sup> On the trajectory of chronology through the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries see Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology." : The Rise and Fall of a Discipline', *History and Theory*, vol. 14, no. 2, 1975, pp. 156-85, and Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship. II: Historical Chronology* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1993); with a brief remark on Marcel, see, Daniel Rosenberg, *Cartographies of Time*, (New York : Enfield: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010); for a thorough overview of early modern chronology in general, see Benjamin Steiner, *Die Ordnung Der Geschichte Historische Tabellenwerke in Der Fruhen Neuzeit*, Norm Und Struktur, Bd. 34 (Köln Weimar Wien Böhlau, 2008).

<sup>302</sup> Marcel, *Tablettes Chronologiques*, preface, p. 1.

profitables”<sup>303</sup>. What is crucial for Marcel, therefore, is that knowledge is condensed, but also properly ordered and arranged; in this way, it can be set to memory, and also made useful, and applied.

Marcel presents his *Tablettes* as a new and innovative remedy for the condition of having ‘too much to know’.<sup>304</sup> The history of the church is identified as a subject “saint & curieux”, but primarily as material for Marcel’s method of data management. Nonetheless proposing to definitively ‘reduce’ the most contested historical narrative of early modern Europe added significance to his project. Marcel’s method is detailed concisely in the opening section of the work, titled *Instruction pour l’usage de ces Tablettes*, which lists sixteen points guiding the reader through the techniques deployed to display a huge amount of material in a short work: Marcel’s *Tablettes*, an entire chronology of the Eastern and Western churches, runs to only 105 pages, including the introduction and a thorough index. The *Tablettes* was also a physically small book, designed to be portable. This economy is achieved by a complex structure and system of abbreviations. Within a chronological frame each century takes up four pages, two of which offer a review of the key events relevant to the history of church, divided by category (such as the death of popes, ecclesiastical councils) and two of which proceed with a chronological review of the century. Each thematic is assigned a lettered code, and a key, detailing the meaning of each abbreviation, is mapped in a pull-out sheet at the beginning of the book, which can be returned to in reference as the book is read. All of these techniques allow Marcel to maintain that “le caractère qui distingue cet ouvrage de tous ceux qui ont paru sur le mesme sujet, est l’ordre & la brièveté avec laquelle on y a range toutes choses.”<sup>305</sup> The 1682 *Tablettes Chronologiques contenant avec ordre l’état de l’église* was envisioned as Marcel’s first deployment of this methodology, and he lists a catalogue of projected contributions which aim to extend the same technique of ‘reduction’ to other realms of historical and geographical knowledge. Most notable was his *Tablettes Chronologiques, contenant la suite des papes, empereurs et Rois* (first edition, 1682) and his work on the *Histoire de l’origine et du progrès de la monarchie*

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<sup>303</sup> Marcel’s *Tablettes Chronologiques*, p. 1.

<sup>304</sup> Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

<sup>305</sup> Marcel, *Tablettes Chronologique*, ‘Instruction pour l’usage de ces tablettes’, p. 2.

*française* (first edition, 1686), which followed the same model as the work on ecclesiastical history.<sup>306</sup>

As the large number of editions suggests, Marcel's *Tablettes Chronologiques* was very popular as a reference book, and was translated into English, German, Dutch, Latin and Spanish, as well as Egizio's Italian edition. In the dedication to his translation Egizio praised Marcel's work, principally due to its capacity to ward against errors stemming from poor scholarship, from the sheer volume of dense books to be surveyed, and from an inability to read across different languages.<sup>307</sup> During the composition of his translation, however, Egizio was stimulated to compose a commentary on Marcel's *Tablettes*, which he titled *Serie degl'Imperadori Romani... per maggior lume della Storia Ecclesiastica*, and which, in the subtitle, he described "per servire come di supplemento, o di correzione al Memoriale Cronologico di G. Marcello".<sup>308</sup> By considering in tandem the dense description of Egizio's stimulus for and intentions behind his *Serie* and the contents and form of Egizio's own chronology in dialogue with Marcel's *Tablettes Chronologiques*, it is possible to establish key features of Egizio's approach to and convictions about historical scholarship, and how these differed from those of Marcel.

Egizio claims his inspiration to add the *Serie* as a commentary on the *Tablettes* came from his reading of Antoine Pagi's *Critica historico-chronologica*<sup>309</sup> an extensive critique of the factual and chronological errors in the *Annales Ecclesiastici* of Cardinal Baronius. Invoking the critical spirit of works such as Pagi's, Egizio aims to "stenderla (the *Tablettes*), e stendendola a segnare alcuni Manifesti errori del Memoriale, e a farvi *summis digitis* alcune necessarie giunterelle".<sup>310</sup> Egizio's *Serie*, however, offered and theorised a specific form of criticism. Neither wholly systematic, nor wholly polemical, he explicitly presents his work as not offering a corrective to every single error made by Marcel in his *Tablettes*. Rather he offered a demonstrative exercise, resting upon the assessment of *certain* dates as imprecise, *certain* claims as ambiguous or unqualified, as a mechanism to critique the whole. This was a strategic choice, not a reflection of

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<sup>306</sup> Several of Marcel's planned 'reductions' didn't appear, principally his *Tablettes Cosmographiques contenant une description exacte de toutes le parties du monde, avec le particularités qui se trouvent dans les livres les plus entendus sur cette matiere*. This is probably because he died in 1708 from illness.

<sup>307</sup> *Serie degl'imperadori romani*, 'al cortese lettore', p. 1.

<sup>308</sup> Although the cover of Egizio's *Serie* shows is to be printed in 1713, in fact it didn't appear until late 1715 at the earliest; the date of Egizio's dedication is the 19. December 1715.

<sup>309</sup> ...in *Annales ecclesiaticos eminentissimi et reverendissimi Caesaris cardinalis Baronii*, 1698, 1705.

<sup>310</sup> Egizio, *Serie degl'imperadori romani*, 'al cortese lettore'.

Egizio's scholarly limits. Egizio suggests that he could have composed a systematic critique, in the mode of Pagi's against Baronius, highlighting Marcel's erroneous dating of the deaths of several patriarchs as an example, and citing the dates proposed by Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont and Daniel van Papebroeck, well-renowned ecclesiastical historians, as correctives, "e molte altre cose avrei potuto fare e dire".<sup>311</sup> This exhaustive and encyclopedic critique is not the kind of work Egizio set out to write.

This leaves his *Serie* imperfect and incomplete, and it does not present itself as a definitive authority. He is critical of the convoluted style of his discussion about the problems of dating ("è scritto frastagliatamente"<sup>312</sup>). Similarly, he recognises the imprecision with which some of the dates are proposed. Egizio notes at length the limitations of the utility of his work, both for the 'dotti' and the 'ignoranti'. The 'ignoranti' may learn the dates and events 'con ordine', and may take extensive notes of the bibliographical references; still, however, "si faranno una Idea del tutto, come i principianti in Cosmografia fanno coll'aiuto di una picciola sfera armillare". In contrast, for the 'dotti' Egizio's *Serie* will mainly contain information they already know; the best it can offer is to recall specific features of history to their memory: "appunto come una Colonna, un ponte, un casolare suol'esser cagione che I viandanti si ricordino della strada alter volte fatta".<sup>313</sup>

As this analogy of monuments to facts suggests, there is a specific epistemology behind Egizio's self-criticism.<sup>314</sup> Egizio compares his *Serie* to "le Carte Geografiche" in so far as "ognuno le truova difettose ne' luoghi a se noti" – each finding it defective, inaccurate or imprecise in the areas he knows best. We might see here a stress on the futility of absolute precision in historical-geographical knowledge; certainly he is working in a different mode to Marcel, the dates and facts of whose *Tablettes* were presented as definitive. This is clarified, and should be connected with Egizio's critical antiquarianism, in the following passage.

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<sup>311</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*.

<sup>312</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*.

<sup>313</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie* – the 'antiquarian' analogy here is of note. To further establish the character of his work, Egizio reworks a famous quotation from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, ("Amphora coepit institui; currente rota cur urceus exit?") – Egizio stating about his own *Serie* that, in contrast, "urceus coepit institui, exivit amphora".

<sup>314</sup> "che pure e un gran difetto; e la colpa e mia", 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*.

chi stende materie universali malagevolmente può scendere all'investigamento de' particolari. La vita non basterebbe: come nemmeno sarebbe bastata a me se avessi voluti riscontrare tutti i luoghi degli Storici citati dagli Annalisti<sup>315</sup>

Claims of individual scholars to universal and absolute knowledge tend to be unfounded; in them, the particular gets lost, and a rationalist and universalist conceit prevails. Indeed, it is precisely this attempt to claim more knowledge than one's experience would admit which is the cause of the demise of the standards of scholarship "comeche siami avveduto che pochissimi Autori han letto gli originale, e che tutti si copiano l'un altro". Modest, moderately skeptical and recognizing its limits, Egizio primarily envisages his *Serie* as testament to its inheritance from previous generations of the scholars; on the work's limitations he concludes: "A me non conviene altro dire: e l'uso farà consocere quanto quest'Opera sia da anteporsi a molte altre, che sono avidamente ricercate."<sup>316</sup> In its abstract claims to universal precision, Marcel's *Tablettes* represents a quite different conception of scholarship. It is telling, then, that Egizio concludes his methodological preface by stating: "se avessi a ricominciare, non tradurrei il Memoriale: ora ti potrà servir come Indice".<sup>317</sup> Preferable to Marcel's universal chronology, for Egizio, is "le Raccolte di fatti e detti" which is how he conceives of his own historical practice.<sup>318</sup>

Navigating the "vasto e sterminato pelago della critica cronologica"

Looking in depth at how Egizio presents his commentary on Marcel's *Tablettes* is useful because it is one of the few moments where he writes an explicit statement about how history should, and should not, be written. Of general value for making sense of the rest of his scholarly activity and output, it is also of specific value in interpreting and understanding the main substance of his *Serie*. In sharp contrast to the complex and technical delineation of different chronological and thematic streams presented by Marcel, Egizio's *Serie* offers a single chronology, incorporating ecclesiastical and civil

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<sup>315</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*.

<sup>316</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*. Egizio here references the five volumes of the *Gran Dizionario* of Louis Moreri (1643-1680), which still has much to add, and also much to correct; yet still, even their arch-critic, "il dotissimo Bayle... troverem debitore in pi di una partita".

<sup>317</sup> 'al cortese lettore', *Serie*.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

narratives, combining the births and inaugurations of popes and emperors alongside notices about more mundane events and processes. Alongside the New Testament and ecclesiastical and imperial narratives, also prominent are the advent of heresies, repressions of Christians in Europe and further afield, as well as political events, conflicts, and the publication of important books. Following this style, the first 139 pages are each titled ‘Serie degli Imperadori Romani’, which takes the chronology through to 800 AD. After this point, pages switch between being nominally focused on the Eastern and Western parts of the Roman Empire, although in practice the vast majority of information is on the ‘Occidente’, and the distinction is used in a loose way. This proceeds until page 334, 1453 AD, at which point the fall of Constantinople signals the ‘Fine dell’Imperio di Oriente’. The remaining 85 pages trace the Holy Roman Empire through to 1711. The strong Imperial narrative might suggest a political argument is at play: it is otherwise unclear why Egizio would, in his correction of Marcel’s rigidly ecclesiastical chronology, chose instead to use the lives of the Emperors as the works golden thread. The formal chronology of the *Serie* finishes in 1700, after which the only additional dates are the coronation of Emperor Joseph in 1705, and Charles VI in 1711, listed as the 112<sup>th</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> Holy Roman Emperors respectively, followed by “OMNIA JUDICIO SANCTAE CATH. ROM. ECCLESIAE SUBMISSA SUNTO”<sup>319</sup>

Within this structure Egizio’s *Serie* proceeds as a critical assessment of the notable events which take place in each year, with disagreements about the dating and substance cited, and divergent authorities referenced. Egizio’s sources are vast and eclectic, drawing together ancient and modern authorities; a prevalent theme, as proposed in his preface, is an elaboration of the criticisms made by Antoine Pagi of the *Annales Ecclesiastica* of Cesare Baronio. Indeed Egizio rarely cites Baronius as an authority, though the continuation of his *Annales* by Odorico Raynaldi is drawn upon, for the years after the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. Besides Pagi, Egizio also cites at length the work of Urbain Chevreau and Tillemont, especially for the first centuries of the church. Other modern sources upon which Egizio repeatedly draws are works by Claude Fleury, Noël Alexandre, Jean Mabillon and Jean Bolland. Obviously competent in the French language to conduct the translation of Marcel’s *Tablettes*, Egizio is also obviously working within the frame of 17<sup>th</sup>-century critical French ecclesiastical-historical scholarship, sensitive

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<sup>319</sup> Egizio, *Serie*, p. 418.

to its political and theological implications. This also overlapped confessional boundaries, with French Protestant scholars also cited, notably David Blondel and Etienne Morin, though often in critique, their names preceded by the pejorative 'Calvinista'.

Within this critical mode, Egizio turns over and assesses doubts and contested facts in the history of the Church. A few case studies demonstrate Egizio's method. For instance, he interrogates the case of the supposedly female pope, Joan, succeeding Leo IV in 855, a thesis proposed by "alcuni storici di poco senno".<sup>320</sup> Recent discreditors of this claim were, Egizio cites without reference, David Blondel, "quantunque Calvinista", and Jean Le Clerc "che passa per Socciniano." According to Pagi, Chevreau and Leone Allacci, the origins of the rumour lie in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Century and the weak constitution of pope Giovanni VIII, for which he was "motteggiato quasi femma", for his youth and effeminate behaviour.<sup>321</sup> A statue believed to be the Papessa used to be in Lucca – now lost, according to Mabillon – but Egizio also judges that this was just a statue of John VIII, again wrongly recognised as woman by later generations.

Extending this point, Egizio argues it is equally false that it was this erroneous appointment of a female pope that led to the custom of newly appointed popes sitting on a chair, the 'sedia stercoraria' with a hole, through which the pope's gender could be ascertained. This is discarded as 'favola', initially drawing upon Mabillon's claims that, while such chairs did exist, they were not designed for this purpose and instead have a more ancient origin, and were likely prized because of the nobility of their stone – porphyry – and not for their form. But, Egizio adds, "questa congettura e troppo debole" because it seems unlikely that the papacy would re-use chairs from Roman bath-houses – the ancient use claimed for the stone chairs by some antiquarians – for ceremonies. Furthermore, given that only three such chairs were known, only two are made of porphyry, and the third, in the atrium of the Lateran, is made of white marble, it seems unlikely that they were widely used in antiquity.<sup>322</sup> Besides, given the number of Roman baths explored by antiquarians, it seems unlikely that only three such chairs would have been discovered. In conclusion, Egizio discards, along with the legend of the

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<sup>320</sup> *Serie*, p. 154

<sup>321</sup> *Serie*, p. 154

<sup>322</sup> *Serie*, p. 155

papessa, the ancient function of the 'sedia stercoraria' – they were simply "Sedia Vescovile"; the function of the hole is left unexplained.

In arriving at this partial resolution, Egizio drew upon Protestant and Catholic sources, and praises the work of scholars such as Blondel. Other passages in his *Serie*, however, have a more explicit confessional dimension. Egizio attaches a long discussion to the year 602, the ascent to the throne in Constantinople of the Emperor Photius.<sup>323</sup> Several historians, notably Blondel, propose that Photius requested from the Pope the title 'Vescovo Universale', to take precedence over the Patriarch of Constantinople. But this, Egizio states, "è un ignorare affatto l'istoria". This is based, first of all, on principle – "è manifesto che i Sommi Pontefici Romani esercitarono il dritto di Primazia tosto che fu renduta la pace alla Chiesa dagl'Imp. Cristiani". It is also based on evidence, showing the long history of Roman authority in confrontation with heresy, and the recognition even by heretics and heresiarchs alike, of the principle of Roman precedence: "l'istesso Fozio, autore dello Scisma de' Greci, non rifiutava di ubbidire a Papa Niccolo I, quante volte questi per la pace della Chiesa rendeagli il Patriarco di Constantinopoli".<sup>324</sup> In the following year, regarding the arrival of Saint Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury Egizio similarly counters the claims of Protestant scholars, that from its origin the Church in England didn't recognize the supremacy of the pope: "i protestanti dicono che i arcivescovi della Brettagna non riconobbero il primate del Papa: ma sono confutato dallo Schelestrate, dal Baronio, e dal Pagi".<sup>325</sup> In Egizio's chronological method, there is no contradiction between critical scholarship and confessional identity.<sup>326</sup>

### Strategic Ambiguity in Egizio's Chronology

The clarity of Egizio's conclusions in these two confessionally sensitive case studies is less present in his chronology of the earliest centuries of the Church. This is most evident in his reluctance to offer a clear and definitive chronology of the early Popes.

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<sup>323</sup> *Serie*, p. 112

<sup>324</sup> *Serie*, p. 112 – Egizio's key sources are here the French historians Alexandre Noel and Emmanuel Schelestrate.

<sup>325</sup> *Serie*, p. 112-114.

<sup>326</sup> In this sense Egizio accords well with the model of the pious Catholic scholar set forth by Bernward Schmidt, "In Erudition There Is No Heresy". The Humanities in Baroque Rome," in *The Making of the Humanities. Vol. II*, ed. Rens Bod, Jaap Maat, and Thijs Weststeijn (Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 177-96.

This chronology is of particular importance, Egizio stresses, given that the ‘eretici’ – Protestants – contest the notion that in the earliest years of the Church the position of Pope existed at all. Confronted by a mass of divergent opinions, from reputable sources, which he presents and assesses in ordered fashion, Egizio is forced to agree with Tillemont, that “fino a S. Ponziano la Cronologia de’ Pontefici Romani è tanto piena di oscurità e di dubbi, che difficilissimo è sembra di farne un Sistema che regga a Martello”. Egizio vows to reflect this ambiguity in his chronology, recognizing “che tanti dotti uomini, e versatissimi in queste cose, in cui noi siamo novizi, non hanno potuto determinare”.<sup>327</sup> The chronology and dating of St. Peter’s arrival Rome is itself unclear: in 58, “forse in quest’anno S. Pietro venne o torno a Roma. *Tillem.*”<sup>328</sup>, though on the previous page it is proposed that he came in 42, and then again in 54. In the same vein, Egizio puts into doubt key hagiographical and martyrological accounts, not through a polemical interpretation or manipulation, but just by confronting diverging accounts in the available sources.

If the structures and events of the primitive church are obscure, the primitive church is also depicted as in a state of theological mutation and reform, the interpretation of which is contested.<sup>329</sup> Reflecting upon the first century, Egizio considers the figure of Saint Barnabas, and the status of his ‘Letter’ – “Tra gli Scrittori di questo primo secolo si dee forse dare a S. Barnaba il luogo che gli han voluto corre i Sociniani, a cagio che dalla Epistola che di lui abbiam si pruova chiaramente la divinità di Gesu-Cristo.” The ‘Letter to the Hebrews’ attributed to Saint Barnabas was appealed to through the 17th century as supporting the orthodox view of the Trinity; to this end it was published by Isaac Vossius in 1646, annexed to his edition of the Letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch.<sup>330</sup> On the validity of the letter, Egizio is not forthcoming; he is aware of the controversy

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<sup>327</sup> *Serie*, p. 17-18.

<sup>328</sup> *Serie*, p. 13.

<sup>329</sup> Much of this concerned the contested status of different church fathers : authoritative on this, see Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les pères de l’Eglise: un retour aux sources (1669-1713)* (Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1999) and Jean-Louis Quantin, “Philologie et Theologie: Les Texts Patristiques Dans Les Controverses Religieuses (Xvi – Xvii Siècle),” *Studia Borromaeica* 21 (2007): 93–128.

<sup>330</sup> I. Vossius, *Epistolae Genuinae S. Ignatii Martyris... adduntur S. Ignatii Epistolae... adhaec S. Barnabae Epistola*, 1646, pp. 207-254. The letters of St Ignatius and St Barnabas were disputed in the context of anxiety about anti-trinitarians, principally the Socinians cited by Egizio – see Hugh de Quehen, “Politics and Scholarship in the Ignatian Controversy,” *The Seventeenth Century* 13, no. 1 (March 1, 1998): 69–84; on Henry Dodwell’s engagement with the Church Fathers, including Ignatius and Barnabas, see Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) pp. 382-3.

surrounding its credibility: “il P. Alessandro la dice apocrifa. Il P. Pagi sta in pendente. Il dottissimo Ab. Bencini l’ha per genuine nella sua *Idea primi Saeculi*, stampata in Roma nel 1707”.<sup>331</sup> From a doctrinal perspective, Egizio maintains the importance of the letter: “ne puo dubbitarsi ch’ella non sia degna di somma venerazione, e almeno cosa del II. Secolo”.<sup>332</sup> He is candid, however, about the ambiguities in the historical record.

If descending into the first centuries of the church leads to a clear acknowledgement of the obscurity of antiquity, and the great difficulty – if not impossibility – of concisely compiling the historical record, this is best presented in Egizio’s composition of the key dates in the life of Christ, as well as his general remarks about the challenges of chronology, which initiate his dissertation proper. These sections ought to be seen as setting the tone for the rest of his *Serie*. The first three pages of Egizio’s *Serie* offer not one chronology but three, the first based on the age of the earth, the second on the years since the founding of Rome, and the third on the years before and after Christ.

According to the work’s schema, the first date is the establishment of the Roman Empire by Caesar, dated the year 3928 of the world. Egizio adds, though, that this date is “secondo il compiuto di *Chevrau* e di altri. Perche quando noi diciamo gli anni del Mondo, non intendiamo di decidere una questione d’impossibile scioglimento, e che variamente di ciascun Cronologo vien resa ad esaminare”.<sup>333</sup> Relying upon Chevreau’s *Histoire du Monde* and Vallemont’s *Elements de l’Histoire*, Egizio cites the difference of 3244 years between the two dates at either extreme of scholarly opinion,<sup>334</sup> the 70-year discrepancy between the Hebrew text and the Latin and Greek Bible, and the problematic chronologies “di altre nazioni Orientali.”<sup>335</sup>

The chronological ambiguities are applied most forcibly to the date of the birth of Christ – “infinite difficultadi sono ancora intorno all’anno della nascita del REDENTORE, che sarebbero materia di un giusto volume”. Egizio uses the date of the year of the world 3970, following Chevreau, though he does so with little conviction, both stating explicitly that “resta libero a ciascheduno di seguire quale altra sentenza piu gli piaccia

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<sup>331</sup> The work is Francesco Domenico Bencini’s *Christiani primi saeculi, idea historiae sacrae, ac ecclesiasticae...*, 1707.

<sup>332</sup> Egizio, *Serie*, p. 41.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7, italics in original.

<sup>334</sup> Christ’s birth dated to 3740 by Rabbi Nahson, and 6984 in the Alphonsine tables of Johann Muller.

<sup>335</sup> Egizio is here referring the chronological problems raised by the claims of Chinese antiquity: on these problems, see, for instance, Elisabeth Quennehen, “Lapeyrère, La Chine et La Chronologie Biblique,” *La Lettre Clandestine* 9 (2000): 243–55.

de Cronologi, e secondo quella riformare tutti gli altri computi, e notarglisi qui nel margine”<sup>336</sup> and listing the various positions maintained by the most prominent scholars of the 16th and 17th Centuries. Pagi and Tillemont are given greatest authority, but their accounts and chronology are also criticized, for discordance with scripture and with passages in the Church Fathers. The question is assertedly left unconcluded and open, to which he concludes: “Noi, per non confonderci, e per non inoltrarci nel vasto e sterminato pelago della Critica Cronologica, volontieri ci atteniamo all’opinion commune”.<sup>337</sup> It is, then, from the stance of attending to ‘opinion commune’, and not from absolute precision and certainty, that the rest of Egizio’s chronology proceeds.

Egizio’s *Serie*, presented as a ‘supplemento, o di correzione al Memoriale Cronologico di G. Marcello’, makes no direct reference in its chronology to the French scholar’s *Tablettes*. It offers, however, a fundamentally different perspective on how history should be studied and presented, as well as what history is for. This is true both of Egizio’s methodological reflections in his note to the reader, and of his scholarly practice, evidenced above by a brief analysis of several extracts from his chronology proper. Whereas Marcel presents his *Tablettes* as precise and complete, objective and universal, their utility stemming from the accuracy of the information and the simplicity of their form, Egizio’s *Serie* appears as an antidote to this conception of historical knowledge. He both theorises and practices a rigorous empiricism founded upon a productive skepticism, where evidence is analysed, reputable sources collated and cross-referenced, and doubts are raised, confronted, and sometimes left intact. History is complicated, scholarship is collective and the particular is wrought sacred. Furthermore, learning about the past primarily concerns judgement, of both the writer and the reader. The scholar should be frank where certainty cannot be established, should cite differences of opinion, and should ultimately pay deference to the ‘opinion commune’, while not challenging key tenets of Catholic orthodoxy, which erudition ought to support. Confrontation with the encyclopedic and universalizing form of Marcel’s *Tablettes*, transgressing these methodological norms, leads Egizio to lay out and provide an exemplar of his interpretation of good historical scholarship.

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<sup>336</sup> Egizio, *Serie*, p. 9.

<sup>337</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

## Egizio's *Serie* in the 'Republic of Letters'

For Egizio, for whom historical facts are not abstracted or final, the scholar must practice and revise his convictions, not just memorize information and monumentalize data. The *Serie* is explicitly presented as a work in progress and not definitive, and Egizio appears to have taken this conception of his work seriously. The existence of a half-annotated version of the first half of the *Serie* held in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, gives insight into the process of ongoing correction and elaboration.<sup>338</sup> The first three centuries of the church, presented with the least certainty in the *Serie*, have few annotations; the vast majority of the annotations and corrections, deletions and additions, relate to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Many concern amendments to claims made about the policy of the early Christian emperors towards the treatment of the Church and towards other religions, heretics, and especially the Jews, as well as the shifting theological views formulated at the ecclesiastical councils during these years. Some annotations simply serve to increase the ambiguity of the content: on the death of Emperor Teodosio, cited as 395, Egizio adds, simply, "secondo altri piu giovane; e second altri più vecchio."<sup>339</sup> The rate of annotations reduces drastically through the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and the final annotation is in year 565. As the corner of the page is folded over, this might indicate this is simply as far as the annotator/Egizio reached.

It is difficult to make any meaningful interpretation of the annotated copy of Egizio's *Serie*, besides the fact that it suggests he continued to work on the subject. This is also confirmed by several extracts from Egizio's correspondence, which similarly show how Egizio's scholarship relied upon his scholarly network. On the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1715 Egizio received a letter from the Rome-based scholar Francesco Domenico Bencini; Bencini was a well-respected scholar, close to Giusto Fontanini as well as other Neapolitans in Rome, principally Biagio Garofalo and Celestino Garofalo, and learned in ecclesiastical history.<sup>340</sup> In his letter Bencini apologized for not yet having read Egizio's *Serie* but

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<sup>338</sup> The annotator remains anonymous in the manuscript itself, but is indicated in the manuscript catalogue to be Egizio himself – the notes are also in Egizio's hand; 'Marcello G. Memoriale Cronologico dell'Istoria Ecclesiastico trattato in Italiano da m. egizio –Napoli, 1713, in 4.o – e alligato, Egizio, M., Serie degli Imperadori Romani, Napoli, 1713, in 4.o, con aggiunte autografe di M. Egizio.', BNN MS XI C63.

<sup>339</sup> BNN MS XI C63, f. 164v.

<sup>340</sup> On Bencini see Guido Quazza, "Bencini, Francesco Domenico," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 8 (1966). See also Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione: mondo newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo Settecento* (Napoli: Jovene, 1982), p. 368.

states he had discussed it at length several times with 'Sig Abb.e Garofalo'. Bencini was responding to a request from Egizio regarding the "Catalog de Patriarchi Orientali", which Bencini confirms "è difficile rintracciarlo ancora da questi vescovi". Regarding the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bencini suggests that "nel Collegio della Nazione Greca vi potesse essere alcune che ne avesse la serie" though he has been unable to identify anyone particular. The people Bencini spoke to at the Greek College suggested, however, that Egizio might get in touch with the Greek 'Papasso' in Venice, and other orthodox Christians in Venice, "Scismatici si da l'adito di esercitare le proprie funtioni, e in queste si ricorda il Patriarcha loro."<sup>341</sup>

Later in August 1715 Egizio received a letter from Carlo Maiello, a Neapolitan priest based in Rome following his effective expulsion from Naples in 1710 in the wake of strident pro-curial polemics with senior Neapolitan defendents of civil jurisdiction.<sup>342</sup> In Rome Maiello became Vatican librarian, which meant he had access to and familiarity with the Vatican's collections. Maiello wrote to Egizio in August responding to a similar request to that sent to Bencini earlier that year, about the ecclesiastical councils of Italy, and for the catalogue of the Eastern patriarchs. Maiello was substantially less helpful than Bencini: regarding the "notizia dei concili d'italia che v.s. stim.a desidera non si puo sperar niente della nostra Bibl.a, essendo ella avere molto di codici antichi, ma poco fonti di moderni"; regarding the 'Apostoliche' Maiello states he will do some research to find the appropriate person, which regarding the "ultimi patriarchi... i quali si mutano quest'ogni giorno... credo che nasca la difficolta di averne il catalogo esatto".<sup>343</sup> None of Maiello's later messages refer to Egizio's research on ecclesiastical history.

Given the ambiguity regarding the actual publication of Egizio's *Serie* – the formal date of publication dated to 1713, the note to the reader dated 19<sup>th</sup> December 1715, and the license from the state censor dated 15 November 1714 – it is difficult to ascertain whether Egizio's research regarding the chronologies of the patriarchs was conducted during or after the finalization of the analysis in his published *Serie*. Little insight is also

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<sup>341</sup> Bencini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 10.5.1715 - BNN MS XIII C 90 113.

<sup>342</sup> Maiello, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 17.8.1715, BNN MS XIII C91 86 - Egizio received 29 letters from Maiello, all from Rome, between 1711 and 1728, mainly concerned with curial politics; on Maiello's curial polemics in Naples, see Colapietra, *Vita Pubblica e Classi Politiche Del Viceregno Napoletano (1656-1734)*, pp 181-2, note 14; see also the entry on Maiello's close friend Giovanni Bortoni, Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Bortone, Giovanni," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 13 (1971).

<sup>343</sup> Majello, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 17.8.1715, BNN MS XIII c91, 86.

given by the appreciative yet brief review the *Serie*, and Egizio's translation of Marcel's *Tablettes* received in the *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*. The review was included in the letterarie novella section of volume 30, published in 1718; it cites that the work was published "già passati alquanti anni"<sup>344</sup> – the work was described as a "lucidissimo compendio di tutta la storia ecclesiastica e civile, disposta con ordine cronologico esattissimo, secondo i tempi che regnarono gl'Imperadori di Roma; e autenticando i suoi racconti con citazione d'autori, pressoché tutti di fede incontrastabile", while the work's author is described as "del cui sapere e buon gusto in ogni sorta di letteratura se n'ha più d'un saggio ne nostri Giornali." Similar sentiments are echoed by the Rome-based Dominican Tommaso Maria Minorelli who wrote to Egizio in praise of the *Serie*, "un opera di ottimo gusto, e singolarmente necessario", and also passed the work on to Biagio Garofalo, a common friend.<sup>345</sup>

Although brief, the review of Egizio's books and the praise for his scholarship in the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* both reflected and actively consolidated his standing amongst ecclesiastical historians working in Italy, and especially in the Italian south. Several of Egizio's earlier scholarly correspondences reflect his engagement with ecclesiastical and sacred history. His exchanges with Carlo Danio, the Basilican antiquarian, show the latter both enthusiastically discussing and exchanging books of ecclesiastical historical genre – most notably, perhaps, John Selden's *De Diis Syriis*<sup>346</sup> works of Isaac Casaubon, and of Denis Petau.<sup>347</sup> Danio later tried to attain a license for the reading of prohibited books, to further Egizio's scholarship.<sup>348</sup> In the same years, Egizio's exchanges with the anti-curial abbot Francesco Bellisomi, just prior to the latter's imprisonment by the Inquisition for possessing Protestant literature, also indicate Egizio's engagement with the more controversial dimensions of ecclesiastical-historical scholarship.<sup>349</sup> Some of Bellisomi's earlier letters to Egizio concern attempts to publish Giuseppe Valletta's 'fatiche' on his "sentimenti ch'ella ha per beneficia della propria Patria e di tutto la nostra Italia... necessari dal pretesto di Religione", for which

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<sup>344</sup> GII, vol. 30, 1718, p. 415.

<sup>345</sup> Minorelli, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 7.5.1718, Rome to Naples, BNN MXIII C92 105.

<sup>346</sup> Danio, Rome to Egizio, Naples, BNN XIII C90 130, 26.7.1698.

<sup>347</sup> Danio, Rome, to Egizio, Naples, BNN XIII C90, 20.9.1698; *ibid.*, BNN XIII C90 136, 10.11.1698.

<sup>348</sup> *ibid.*, BNN XIII C90 134, 20.9.1698 - "ho trattato di havere la licenza de libri proibiti per me et V.S. ill.ma pche non alora dottori ne siamo stati esclusi".

<sup>349</sup> On Bellisomi, see Adelisa Malena, "Ecclesia Universa: 'Imparizalita' Confessionale e Transfer Culturali Tra Sei e Settecento. Note Su Una Ricerca in Corso", in *Ripensare La Riforma Protestante: Nuove Prospettive Degli Studi Italiani*, ed. Lucia Felici, 2015, 283–309, pp. 303-8.

Bellisomi supplies a long list of Protestant publishers, in England, Germany and the Netherlands.<sup>350</sup> In a long letter, Bellisomi's final to Egizio before his imprisonment, dated 11 June 1701, he recommended a series of authors who have written on the 'ornamenti degli Tempii', scholars and books dealing with the jurisdictional history of the church. These include the Jesuit scholars Giacomo Lobbezzio and Francesco Ribera - "hanno difesa il culto esterno delli Tempii adversus seculi petulantes licentiate" - the French Gallican historian Jean de Launoy, and a range of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century jurist-historians.<sup>351</sup> This bibliography, seeming to refer to a request for sources from Egizio, indicates the latter's long-standing interest in political-theological scholarship, but also more broadly the landscape of ecclesiastical erudition of the 17<sup>th</sup> century which informed Egizio's *Serie*.

#### Egizio as Enriquez's Mentor: On Sources and Method

After the publication of his translation of Marcel's *Tablettes* and his extensive critical ecclesiastical chronology, the *Serie*, Egizio became an important point of reference in Naples for the discussion of and circulation of books pertaining to the history of the Church. This is evident in Egizio's later letters from Danio, where Egizio supplies his isolated friend, now living in Saponara, with works on request: for instance, in a letter dated 2 December 1725, Danio asks Egizio to send him a copy of Jacques Gautier's *De Veteri Iure Pontifici* and a copy of William Owtram's *De Sacrificiis*.<sup>352</sup> The most insight into Egizio's role as an authoritative figure in ecclesiastical historical scholarship comes from his extensive correspondence with Enrico Enriquez (1701-1756), which runs from April 1719 to October 1740.<sup>353</sup> This correspondence spans Enriquez's ecclesiastical career, initially in the Apulian town of Squinzano to 1721, then relocating to Campi, until moving to Rome sometime between 1725 and 1726 to continue his studies, before taking up ecclesiastical positions in Ascoli, Civitavecchi and Perugia. Of greatest interest

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<sup>350</sup> Bellisomi, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 27.03.1700, BNN MS XIII C90 104.

<sup>351</sup> Bellisomi, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 11.6.1701, BNN MS XIII C90 111: among others, Charles Emmanuelle Borjon, and the Spanish trio Juan de Solorzano, Francisco Salgado and Gonzalez Salcedo.

<sup>352</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 2.12.1725, BNN MS XIII C90 178.

<sup>353</sup> On Egizio's letters from Enriquez, see Salvatore Ussia, "Le Lettere Di Arrigo E a Matteo Egizio," in *Pietro Giannone e Il Suo Tempo: Atti Del Convegno Di Studi Nel Tricentenario Della Nascita : Foggia-Ischitella, 22-24 Ottobre 1976*, ed. Raffaele Ajello (Jovene Editore, 1980), 707-62.; see also Pietro Messina, "Enriquez, Enrico," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 42 (1993).

here are Enriquez's letters between 1719 and 1723, during which time Egizio acted as a sort of informal mentor to a young scholar keen to pursue a career in the Church, and recognizing the importance of learning ecclesiastical history to this end.

In summer, 1719, Enriquez wrote to Egizio with a request: the "*Instituzioni Ecclesiastiche* del Fleurico, procurri V.S. farmene avere un corpo".<sup>354</sup> This was the *Institution du droit ecclésiastique* of Claude Fleury, placed on the Index in Rome in 1693, for the author's suspected Gallican sympathies, and it was on Egizio's advice that Enriquez studied the work. Enriquez received the work the following year, suggesting perhaps that Egizio had to locate the book – Enriquez also moved on to studying Fleury's "storia della Chiesa in diciannove tome".<sup>355</sup> Grounding himself in the most recent scholarship on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Enriquez then asked Egizio for advice about what to read next. Enriquez was explicit that his objective was practical, not curious or erudite: he wanted a reading list to "isporre le decretale o altro libro del Corpo de Canonici... dobbiando io, come spero senza fallo, applicarmi per la Carriera di Roma".<sup>356</sup> In a letter from the following February, we have some insight into Egizio's guidance, with Enriquez receiving "da Napoli il corpo del Ius canonicum del Van Espen in due tomi, impresso in Colonia"<sup>357</sup>, that is the *Ius Canonicum Universorum*, the work of the Louvain-based Zeger Bernhard van Espen, another scholar whose work was prohibited by Rome, on account of his Jansenist and Gallican leaning. Enriquez himself had struggled to attain the work, "ne sono stato privo per cagion della licenza de libri vietati, che ho dura fatica per poterla ottenere da Roma". His esteem for Van Espen's work led Enriquez to revise his assessment of the works of 'Gonzalez' which now appear "senza ordine, con un metodo increscevole, e piendo di termini e formalità scolastiche... ed in altre quanto all'ecclesiastica giudirizione assai adulatore".<sup>358</sup>

In his next letter, Enriquez asked for Egizio's advice on the next author he should study: Cesare Baronio, or Noel Alexandre. He appeared to be favouring Baronius, but, cognizant of the extensive criticism which had been directed to Baronius's *Annales Ecclesastica*, Enriquez appeared wary of proceeding without the appropriate critical and

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<sup>354</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 27.7.1719, BNN MS XIII C91 9.

<sup>355</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 21.6.1720, BNN MS XIII C91 16.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.

<sup>357</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 14.2.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 19.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

historiographical frame: “immagino che la lettura del baronio richiega quella del P. Pagi: se ciò sia, me lo potrà ella significare... la storia del Fleuri mi potrebbe servir di guida anco a conoscere alcun fallo del sopradetto Autore.”<sup>359</sup> This was the path Enriquez elected, stating the superiority of Fleury in no uncertain terms: “egli poi, come quegli che scrive in un tempo piu rischiarato, non si fa vincere dalla passione della Corte, ed usa magg.e Critica nei fatti di quello non fa il Baronio”<sup>360</sup> After tackling critically Baronius, Enriquez hoped to move on to Noel Alexandre, another Gallican scholar whose works had been Indexed in the 1680s. Enriquez’s exchanges with Egizio demonstrate how, both in terms of his scholarly profile and capacity to offer advice, and his scholarly connections and ability to source difficult-to-find, and prohibited, literature, Egizio acted as an intellectual authority and go-between for aspiring scholars in Southern Italy. They also present him as repeatedly promoting and distributing the work of Gallican scholars whose ecclesiastical-historical scholarship had been prohibited by Rome. Enriquez is explicit in his condemnation of the Index as an institution, complaining in a later letter: “vostran vietare tutto ciocche è vero e far correre solamente i libri pieni di favole e di adulazioni”.<sup>361</sup>

As this suggests, Enriquez’s letters also demonstrate ho a discussion of prominent ecclesiastical historians took place in a distinct theological and epistemological frame. In his early letters to Egizio Enriquez praised “tanto da pii e dotti Jansenisti, impugnato contro i moderni casuisti”, and then stated “mi fa d’uopo servirmi del sentiment di Pascale”.<sup>362</sup> In a later letter Enriquez applauds Egizio’s role in a legal controversy, as having “confutare con lo spirito dell’Autore delle Pistole Provinciale”<sup>363</sup>, that is, Pascal. Enriquez’ enthusiasm for Port-Royal scholarship is invoked specifically in his criticism of Giambattista Vico’s ‘metafisica’, a critique probably stimulated by the circulation of Vico’s ‘sinopsi del diritto universale’, the treatise underpinning his treatise on Universal Law, itself prefiguring some of the key arguments of his *Scienza Nuova*.<sup>364</sup> Vico and

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<sup>359</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 28.2.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 20.

<sup>360</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 28.4.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 21.

<sup>361</sup> Enriquez, Campi to Egizio, Naples, 31.10.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 26.

<sup>362</sup> Enriquez, Gallipoli to Egizio, Naples, 21.7.1719, BNN MS XIII C91 8.

<sup>363</sup> Enriquez, Campi to Egizio, Naples, 26.2.1723, BNN MS XIII C91 37.

<sup>364</sup> Vico himself cites the opposition of some Neapolitans to his *Sinopsi*, see Giambattista Vico, *The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 158; his basic epistemological stance is cited in Giambattista Vico, *Il Diritto Universale: Sinopsi e De Uno* (Laterza, 1936), p. 5.

Egizio had a disagreement in 1720, concerning, in part, method in scholarship.<sup>365</sup> The specific nature of their confrontation is unclear, but possibly followed similar lines to the *Giornale de Letterati's* condemnation of Vico's *Antiquissima* in the early 1710s: Vico's use of sources and language was unconventional and deemed insufficiently rigorous, and his arguments were obscure.<sup>366</sup> Here not only had the writer of the *Giornale's* second article, in response to Vico's own reply to the first, explicitly referenced the Port-Royal *Art de Penser* as exemplary practice in critical method, but also in Vico's second *risposta* he directly implicated Matteo Egizio in managing the exchange, describing him as "più di tutti il conosceva ben affetto alla vostra assemblea".<sup>367</sup>

The question in Egizio and Vico's divergence related to the relationship between method and metaphysics. Egizio, working with a method close to that advocated by the editors of the *Giornale*, recognised the need to decouple metaphysical speculation from the sober project of systematic and critical philological-historical scholarship. Following the guidelines of the Port-Royal logic, philosophy was important for developing a critical method with which to practice philology, but the dynamic of influence went one way. For Vico this approach could only lead to anachronism; his deployment of philology to propose a "metafisica della menta umana" manifest in human history itself<sup>368</sup> – to reunite erudition and philosophy in a 'scienza nuova', a project already announced in the 1720 *Sinopsi* and presented in the 1721 *De Constantia Iurisprudentis* – jarred with Egizio and the Venetian *Giornale's* concept of good method. To Egizio's community of scholars and critics, it seemed as though Vico was readmitting 'through the back door' the kinds of universalising and rationalising tendencies which they systematically opposed in scholastic reasoning. Once more, these tensions had been latent in the 1711 debates between Vico and the *Giornale*, where Vico elaborated upon

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<sup>365</sup> See Ussia, *L'epistolario di Matteo Egizio e la cultura napoletana del primo Settecento*, p 58; Vico sent Egizio a letter in 1720 thanking him for dinner, which has been interpreted as signalling the end of their disagreement: Barbara Ann Naddeo, *Vico and Naples the Urban Origins of Modern Social Theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 105-8.

<sup>366</sup> On Vico's dispute with the *Giornale* see F. M. Crasta, "Un Dialogo Interrotto: Il *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, Vico e Le Polemiche *Sl de Antiquissima Italarum Sapientia*," in *Il "Giornale de" Letterati d'Italia" Trecento Anni Dopo: Scienza, Storia, Arte, Identità (1710-2010) : Atti Del Convegno, Padova, Venezia, Verona, 17-19 Novembre 2010*," ed. Enza Del Tedesco (Pisa, 2012), 115–24.; 'Secondo Articolo', *Le Polemiche relative al De antiquissima italarum sapientia*, edizione elettronica a cura di Alessandro Stile, «Laboratorio dell'ISPF», III, 2006 p. Xxxi.

<sup>367</sup> Vico, 'Seconda Risposta', Alessandro Stile, ed., *Le Polemiche Relative Al De Antiquissima Italarum Sapientia* (Laboratorio dell'ISPF, 2006), p. Xxxix.

<sup>368</sup> An ambition fully presented in the 1725 *Scienza Nuova*, paragraph 40.

the limits of the Cartesian method advocated by Italy's critical philologists: "io concedo quell metodo esser buono a rinvenire I certi segni ed indubitati del mio essere, ma non esser buon a ritrovarne le cagioni".<sup>369</sup> The 'clear and distinct' knowledge of historical certainties was a poor substitute for the truth which Vico sought.<sup>370</sup>

In confronting Vico's work, and discussing it with Egizio, Enriquez falls definitively on the side of Vico's critics, declaring:

mi studierò d'intenderlo (Vico's "metafisica"), non sì per seguitare in metafisica suo intendimento, ma per conoscere a quanto falli può cadere la nostra debolmente, e com'egli, uomo altronde dottissimo ed umanissimo, voglia con alquanto latini motti il saper tutto de Francesi, e massimamente di Arnolfo, contestare.<sup>371</sup>

In Enriquez, and we might assume Egizio's, view, Vico's "troppo viva immaginazione"<sup>372</sup> would be contained and disciplined by the epistemological norms insisted upon by Antoine Arnauld and his followers, "il saper tutto de Francesi". Port-Royal critical epistemology and method, as manifest in the *Grammaire... ou l'art de parler* (1660), the *Logique... ou l'art de penser* (1662), and the wider oeuvre of Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole provided a key resource for Jansenist theologians and Gallican historians, but also for the broader community of critical historians working in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. They offered a tempered Cartesianism rendered applicable to the project of scholarly clarity.<sup>373</sup> Other passages in Egizio's correspondence mark him out as possessing, promoting and disseminating these French works in 1712. Egizio tried at length to acquire from his friend and correspondent Biagio Garofalo in Rome a copy of Arnauld's *Nouveaux Éléments de Géométrie*, envisaged as a guide to mathematics, logic, and the foundations of the Cartesian system of learning.<sup>374</sup> Significantly an un-dated note at the end of Garofalo's correspondence lists 'La Geometria di Arnolfo' transmitted in the same package as that containing "il secondo tomo della Storia di M. Chevreau... non

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<sup>369</sup> Vico, Seconda risposta, Stile, *Le Polemiche Relative Al De Antiquissima Itolorum Sapiencia*. p. Lv.

<sup>370</sup> Vico polemicized explicitly against Arnauld in his early essays on philosophical method, his *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione dissertation*, published in 1709; D. Marshall, *Vico and the Transformation of Rhetoric in Early Modern Europe*, 2010, p. 91-2; see C. Megale\*, "THE NEW RATIO STUDIORUM.", pp. 841-56.

<sup>371</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 14.2.1721, BNN MS XIII C91 19.

<sup>372</sup> Enriquez, Squinzano to Egizio, Naples, 19.4.1720, BNN MS XIII C91 15.

<sup>373</sup> see, as a biographical case study, Bruno Neveu, *Un historien à l'école de Port-Royal: Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont 1637-1698* (La Haye: M. Nijhoff, 1966).

<sup>374</sup> Garofalo, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 17.9.1712, BNN MS XIII C91 182; a confirmation its transmission, *ibid.*, BNN MS XIII C91 191.

abbiano ne il primo”,<sup>375</sup> the work which provided a recurrent touchstone in Egizio’s *Serie*. A decade later, Egizio also appears to have played a role in publishing, or at least helped distribute, the first Italian translation of the *Grammaire* of Port-Royal, which appeared in Naples in 1722 under the title *Nuovo Metodo per apprendere la lingua Latina, trattato dal Francese nell’Italico idioma*, a work which included, as well as the entire *Grammaire*, several shorter tracts on poetry and language.<sup>376</sup> Egizio was sent several letters in 1721 from his Palermo-based correspondent Giacomo Longo regarding the progress of the Italian *Grammaire*; Longo, probably like Egizio, possessed a French version of the text, but he was enthusiastic about its translation into Italian: “server solo per li maestri del buon gusto per farne uso a suoi scolari”. In Longo’s view, the dissemination of the practices of Port-Royal constituted a key element of the maintenance of an anti-jesuit and anti-scholastic scholarly culture: “ma non mai alle scuole della Compagnia intestate col lor Emmanuele, dove li poveri scolari hanno d’apprendere la lunga Latina che latino”.<sup>377</sup> Writing later that month, Longo again asks, once the translation is finished, for Egizio to send a copy to him in Palermo.<sup>378</sup>

### The Political Appropriation of Critical Scholarship: Egizio and Giacomo Longo

Egizio’s dense exchanges with Longo between 1721 and 1726, with most of his letters falling between the summer 1721 and the spring 1723, demonstrate the political context of ecclesiastical historical discourse between Naples and Palermo during these years. They give further insight into the breadth, but also the specificity, of Egizio’s scholarly sources, and the literature with which he was engaging and distributing in Southern Italy. Longo was a Sicilian lawyer from Messina; he had served as an official under the short-lived Savoyard control of Sicily between the Treaty of Utrecht (1713)

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<sup>375</sup> Garofalo, Rome to Egizio, Naples, undated, BNN MS XIII C91 233.

<sup>376</sup> This work was preceded three years earlier by a publication by D. Mattio Cervellini, titled *L’Erudito nelle due lingue Latina, ed Italiana, in cui oltre cide che s’insegna comunmente, per render facile l’acquisto della Lingua Latina, vi e raccolta quasi tutto Porto Reale Grande, con molte riflessioni nuove, e nuovo Metodo; colla Poetica Latina, e Volgare, e con un saggio della Lingua Greca*. Napoli, 1719. As well as extracts from the Port-Royal *Grammaire*, the work also included criticism on extracts from the *Gramatica* of Pergamini, and from several works by Daniel Bartoli. These both followed a Latin edition, Arnauld’s *Logica, sive ars cogitandi*, published in 1718, see Stone, *Vico’s Cultural History*, p. 270.

<sup>377</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 1.10.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 145.

<sup>378</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 27.11.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 147.

and the Treaty of the Hague (1720).<sup>379</sup> He was a reformer and regalist, resisting papal interventions in Sicily through 1710s, and, from 1720, was keen to cultivate political ties with Vienna, as a means to revive his 'patria'. Longo's first letter to Egizio included in attachment a 1720 edict clarifying the transition of civil jurisdiction from Savoy to Austria, and Longo's letter states his commitment to "acquistar nuovo Padrone in cotesta citta" - that is Vienna - chiefly through his friendship with Domenico D'Almarza who, with his brother Pietro, represented the sharp-end of pro-Habsburg Sicilian politics in the 1720s.<sup>380</sup> Longo's attempts to cultivate new Viennese patrons seem to have been successful, with Longo's final letter to Egizio, in January 1726, informing Egizio of his appointment to the 'Sacra Regia Coscienza', the highest form of civil governance in Sicily.<sup>381</sup> As well as promoting legal and institutional reform in Sicily in the 1710s and 1720s, Longo also promoted intellectual reform and renewal, based on his contention of Sicily's 'backwardness' relative to the rest of Europe and the Italian peninsula. Longo was one of the initiators and first director of the Palermo 'Accademia del Buon Gusto' with which he hoped to "introducendo il buon sapere della buona critica, che anzi credea essersi dilatator il buon gusto" a method to overcome the learning "degli antichi, che regolarmente erano intestate ne pregiudici con la mente storpia dalla passione".<sup>382</sup>

The project which for Longo drew together these attempts at jurisdictional-political reform and cultural-intellectual renewal was the composition and publication of a new definitive history of Sicily, "che in vero languisce in non aver un corpo di Storia perfetto."<sup>383</sup> This was to be the *Biblioteca Historica Regni Siciliae*, published in 1723 by Giovanni Battista Caruso, but which was, as we see in Longo's letters, in fact a collaborative effort with Caruso and Longo working extensively with Giovanni

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<sup>379</sup> On Longo see F. D'Avenia, "È Tempo Di Rimedio per Le Coscienze, per Il Stato e per Le Regalie". Giacomo Longo, Giudice Della Regia Monarchia Di Sicilia Negli Anni Della Dominazione Sabauda," in *Couronne Royale: Colloque International Autour Du 300e Anniversaire de l'accession de La Maison de Savoie Au Trône Royale de Sicilie ; Annecy, 12 et 13 Avril 2013*, ed. Laurent Perrillat (Annecy: Acad. Salésienne, 2013), 105–33.; M. T. Rodriguez, "Un Episodio Di Censura Libraria Nella Sicilia Del Sec. XVIII: L'Abate Giacomo Longo e Il Suo Tentativo Di Riedizione Del 'Sicanicarum Rerum Compendium' Di Francesco Maurolico," *Archivio Storico Messinese* 72 (1996): 5–70.

<sup>380</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 3.4.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 141.

<sup>381</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 12.1.1726, BNN MS XIII.C.91 154.

<sup>382</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 21.8.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 143; On the Accademia del Buon Gusto Palermitano see *Saggi di dissertazioni dell'Accademia palermitana del buon gusto*, 1755.

<sup>383</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 21.8.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 143.

Giustiniani and Giovanni Filingeri, among others.<sup>384</sup> Longo's turn away from political life towards scholarship was probably initiated by his falling at first out of favour under the new Austrian governance of Sicily: "doppoche la lasciai di regno Consiglieri passai al sacerdozio, ho cercato travagliare nella storia ecclesiastica".<sup>385</sup> While, in Longo's view, the history of classical Sicily had been well documented by Greek and Roman authors, after it become merely a province its history becomes more difficult to accurately assemble: "abbiamo una lacuna dei primi tre secoli di Cristo"; "il tempo de saraceni, che corse per 232 anni, è così oscuro, che se ne perde il filo, ancor nelle cronache arabe"; and also the "storia oscura de secoli Normanni" needs to be recomposed. One problem, then, is an absence of sources. Here Longo and his collaborators are enthusiastic about their discovery and use of "una cronaca Arabica, in latino venutaci da Londra"<sup>386</sup>, and their recovery of other manuscripts, taken away from Sicily over the centuries by its foreign rulers: "cercamo rappezzare con alcune scintille, che ci portano li Forastieri, e con li scritti che hanno dispelliti modernamente li oltremontani."<sup>387</sup>

As well as drawing upon newly discovered manuscripts, Longo's approach to assisting in the composition of a newly authoritative history of Sicily also relied upon a critical revision of existing scholarship, works "così editi, ma rari". Longo had already contributed to such a project, with his 1716 edition of the *Sicanicarum Rerum Compendium* of the renowned 16<sup>th</sup> century scholar and historian from Longo's home of Messina Francesco Maurolico.<sup>388</sup> New and recovered sources encouraged the revision of previous authorities. Previous histories of Sicily, in Longo's eyes, were plagued by prejudice and errors; Longo's most recurrent target is the Abbot Rocco Pirri, whose

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<sup>384</sup> Maria Teresa Napoli, "Mito Normanno e Tradizione Giuridica Catalano-Aragonese: Alle Origini Della Regia Monarchia Di Sicilia," *Diritto e Religioni* 1, no. 2 (2006): 337–411, pp. 342-3; Longo and Caruso wanted to avoid the fate of Louis Ellies Dupin, whose anti-papal polemic, *La Défense de la Monarchie di Sicile*, 1716, sponsored by Turin, was widely recognised as such. See Mario Condorelli, "Carusi, Giovanni Battista," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 21 (1978).

<sup>385</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142.

<sup>386</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142. This was the manuscript acquired by Thomas Hobart in Cambridge, and translated by Giuseppe Simonio Assemani – on the manuscript, see: Cristina La Rosa, "L'arabo Di Sicilia Nel Contesto Magrebino: Nuove Prospettive e Nuovi Approcci Metodologici" (Universita Venezia Ca' Foscari, 2014), ch. 3, 'La Cronca di Cambridge', pp. 99-128.

<sup>387</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 21.8.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 143.

<sup>388</sup> Rodriguez, "Un Episodio Di Censura Libreria Nella Sicilia Del Sec. XVIII: L'Abate Giacomo Longo e Il Suo Tentativo Di Riedizione Del 'Sicanicarum Rerum Compendium' Di Francesco Maurolico."; Longo sent Egizio a copy in early 1722, along with a 'casella mia legale, di quando ero al secolo regio Consigliero, toccato nella Biblioteca Mongitore'. In his letter Longo describes his attempts to remain anonymous editor – his name is included neither on the frontispiece, nor under his long introduction to the work. In the review of the work in the GLI, tom. 29, pp. 395-6 the work is accredited solely to Caruso.

“Serie de Vescovi che fece il Pirri, ricco di adulazione pregiudizi, ed un scrittore gli ha raccolto cinque cente di errori”. Longo explicitly presents his history, therefore, as an “opera critica, che toglie li pregiudizi di molte scrittore, e precisamente dello Abbate Pirro”, while he is also critical of the prejudiced scholarship of the Neapolitan Jesuit historian Niccolo ‘Partenio’ Giannettasio, his 1713 *Historia Neapolitana*.<sup>389</sup> The authority to offer such a critical revision comes from Longo’s method, but also from the consultation of a wide range of bibliographical resources. This is where Egizio’s role in the composition of Longo’s critical history becomes most explicit; Egizio is one of Longo’s key suppliers of ecclesiastical historical scholarship, supporting the composition of his *Biblioteca*. Just as, in Longo’s words, Sicilian erudition languished behind the rest of European scholarship, so too does Longo present his own personal library as limited and out-of-date. Over the duration of their exchange, Longo requests from Egizio a large number of books pertaining to ecclesiastical history and scholarly method.<sup>390</sup> These were either transmitted directly, or otherwise exchanged by go-betweens, the Salerno-based scholar Tomasso Alfani, or the Neapolitan Giovanni Acampora, both spending time in Palermo in 1722 and 1723.

In the hands of Longo and his collaborators, the project of revising and recomposing the history of Sicily was an exercise aimed at once at building and consolidating a Sicilian historical narrative, reconstructing Sicily’s ecclesiastical history *and* tackling and confronting the claims made by the papacy to jurisdictional authority in Sicily. This was not a secular move: on the contrary, Longo presented it as a transition from the “Regio Consiglieri” to the “sacerdozio”, underpinned by his desire to “infarinarmi in qualche maniera del Dogma, tutto che conosco questo studio convenire piu presto alla eta giovanile, che alla mia cadente consumata nei Tribunale”.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142; on Longo’s criticism of Giannettasio, see Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142; 21.8.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 143; .10.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 145.

<sup>390</sup> As well as the Port-Royal translations, these included the *Collectio maxima conciliorum omnium Hispaniae et novi orbis*, 1686 by Cardinal Aguirre, several works by Camillo Pellegrino, the *Teatino Antiqui* by Antonio Caracciolo, Jacques Hyacinth Serri’s *Exercitationes*, P. Graveson’s *De Armis e misteris Christi*, several books by Stefano Balluzio, and their commentary by P. Pearson, the *Mémoires* by Tillemont and a ‘traduzione di P. Lami’. These also include several un-named ‘raccolta de Concili di cotesto regno, ‘notizie de nostri sinodi e diocesani’, ‘le pistole drizzate alla Sicilia’, delivered to Longo by Tomaso Alfani, Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 23.7.1723, BNN MS XIII.C.91 149.

<sup>391</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142.

As in Naples, political disruption had led to an intensification of the confrontation between civil and ecclesiastical authorities over the question of benefices and the extent of the authority of archbishops. This had come to a head initially in the so-called Lipari controversy in 1711, named after the Bishop of Lipari, who had disputed the claims to civil authority.<sup>392</sup> The then-Savoyard ruler of Sicily had commissioned the Gallican historian Louis Ellies Dupin, in 1714, to write a historical work defending the royal jurisdiction against Rome: the work appeared in 1716 as *Défense de la monarchie de Sicile contre les entreprises de la cour de Rome* and then in 1718 as *Histoire de la monarchie de Sicile, servant de défense contre les intrigues de la cour de Rome*.<sup>393</sup> Longo had purportedly played a direct role in confronting the intervention of the church in his bureaucratic capacity.<sup>394</sup> Despite a convergence, then, of political objectives, the kind of nakedly ideological history presented by Dupin was not the agenda of Longo and his collaborators; the unimpassioned and critical nature of their history, rather than its polemical argument, was its greatest source of political authority. Several remarks in Longo's letter confirm the extent to which his historical project was aimed squarely at challenging papal jurisdictional claims in Sicily. In criticizing an un-named work published on papal history, Longo accused the author of "tengo per un adulazione de Romani", and not properly recognizing the delegation of ecclesiastical authority to the monarchs of Sicily by past Popes. He also claims that the Sicilian metropolitan archbishoprics were established by the island's civil rulers, under the Normans, not the papacy in Rome.<sup>395</sup>

Painstakingly recomposing Sicily's obscure medieval history was then a deeply political project, and a political project which Egizio was cognizant of, and facilitating, though we cannot know whether he approved of or supported its objectives. Egizio certainly, however, supported the scholarly regime upon which Longo's political objectives

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<sup>392</sup> The Bishop Tedeschi published the *Istoria della pretesa monarchia in Sicilia*, in 1715 – the episode, the 'controversia liparitana', was chronicled by the Sicilian novelist Leonardi Sciascia in his *Recitazione della controversia liparitana dedicata ad A.D.*, 2006; Napoli, "Mito Normanno e Tradizione Giuridica Catalano-Aragonese: Alle Origini Della Regia Monarchia Di Sicilia.", especially pp. 339-340, note 6.

<sup>393</sup> Caruso (*Discorso Istorico-Apologetico della Monarchia di Sicilia*) and Longo (*Dissertatio de Legatia Sicular. Discorso legale per sostenersi senza scrupoli l Tribunale della R. Monarchia in vista della bolla abolitiva*) both wrote manuscripts, Caruso's being published in the 19th century [1863], Longo's remaining unpublished.

<sup>394</sup> See, for instance, the citation and context in Giuseppe Bertini, *Storia Di Sicilia Dal 1556-1750* (Palermo, 1836), pp. 256-9.

<sup>395</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 27.11.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 147; Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 22.1.1722, BNN MS XIII.C.91 148.

rested. Carefully assessing Egizio's relationship with Enriquez and Longo, in the light of his *Serie* and commentary on Marcel, demonstrates his centrality to the infrastructure of ecclesiastical-historical scholarship in the Italian south during the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### In Defence of the Particular: Egizio vs Du Fresnoy

Among the works transmitted from Naples to Palermo to fuel Longo's scholarship was Egizio's own translation of and commentary on Marcel's *Tablettes*. Egizio sent a notice of his *Serie* to Longo in early summer 1721, to which Longo replied enthusiastically, "col desirio di ammirarne la erudizione di V.S. ill.ma tutto che fosse provisto del Baronio con li 4. Tomi della Critical del Pagi, del Natale di Alessandro, del Tillemont, del Flori ed altri". Longo suggests that Egizio send two copies, one for himself, and one to be sent on to Antonio Mongitore, "la cui amicizia vuol acquistare".<sup>396</sup> Upon receiving the *Serie*, Longo offers a few critical comments regarding some of the points raised by Egizio himself in his note to the reader.<sup>397</sup> In general though, Longo esteems the work highly, stating "in vero la fatica e degno di tutta la lode... vi è il buon gusto, il buon critico, e la citazione de gli Autori di gran sollievo a giovani".<sup>398</sup> Focussing upon a specific aspect of Longo's praise for the *Serie* brings this chapter back to Egizio's method as a scholar, which introduces the two controversies with which this chapter will conclude.

In praising Egizio's *Serie* Longo lingered upon the passage in the work's preface where Egizio compared universal histories to maps of the world, in which each reader is drawn to his own country, the part of the world he knows best, and generally better than the chronologist, or cartographer.<sup>399</sup> Longo confessed to having himself done this - "ed ecco m'è caduto in cio" - correcting Egizio on several points relating to Sicilian history. As evidenced by unpacking Egizio's methodology and practice in his *Serie* in the first half of this chapter, this should not be interpreted as pedantic critique, but rather as Longo's contribution to the collective enhancing of the project of historical scholarship through

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<sup>396</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142. Mongitore was probably Sicily's most well-known contemporary scholar, if politically disinclined to collaboration with Longo.

<sup>397</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1721, BNN MS XIII.C.91 142.

<sup>398</sup> Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 22.1.1722, BNN MS XIII.C.91 148.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

place-specific knowledge. This is also evidently a critical sensitivity which Longo shares, stating “conosco ciò esser storia troppo particolare per un Cronista, ma la mia passione me lo fa toccare”.<sup>400</sup>

This same sensitivity and practice, though deployed in polemic form, rather than between friends, can be seen as the core of Egizio’s second commentary on a French chronology, which he penned in the following decade: his 1736 criticism of Nicolas Lenglet Du Fresnoy’s *Méthode pour l’étudier la Géographie*. A complex figure in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century Du Fresnoy (1674-1755) has been appropriated by historians of radical enlightenment as a “deist”, “Spinozist” and “champion of free thought”, amassing and distributing clandestine literature as an influential node in the spread of Spinozism through the Republic of Letters.<sup>401</sup> Studies less oriented around modern philosophy and more sensitive to the history of literature and erudition have offered more nuanced interpretations. These have presented Du Fresnoy instead as a bibliophile and bibliographer, author of a huge and eclectic volume of texts and compilations, most of which were derivative, and many of which deployed paradoxical reasoning and ironic rhetoric, not obviously directed towards a clear ideological end.<sup>402</sup> Among Dufresnoy’s more popular works were his bibliographical and pedagogical works: his *Méthode pour étudier l’histoire*,<sup>403</sup> his *Méthode pour étudier la géographie*;<sup>404</sup> and his *Tablettes chronologiques de l’histoire universelle*.<sup>405</sup> These large multi-volume editions are mainly composed of bibliographical lists and extracts from other works; they also included, and were supplemented by, methodological and pedagogical essays, particularly aimed at the education of children, and structured around techniques for assigning information to memory. Du Fresnoy’s oeuvre also included more polemical publications, often anonymous, which, on the one hand applied and promoted a critical-historical approach

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<sup>400</sup> Ibid.

<sup>401</sup> Davide Arecco, “Itinerari Libertini Tra Parigi e Vienna. L’abate Lenglet Du Fresnoy Dalla Storia Erudita All’ermetismo,” *Montesquieu.It* 4, no. 1 (December 1, 2012); Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 65, 68, 566-71; Du Fresnoy certainly was engaged with a more ‘radical’ milieu, collaborating with Henri de Boulainvilliers and printing and circulating works on Spinoza; though it’s not conclusively clear that he was “one of the most notorious French deists of the 1720s and 1730s”, Israel, p. 568.

<sup>402</sup> Geraldine Sheridan, *Nicolas Lenglet Dufresnoy and the literary underworld of the ancien régime* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1989), whose account is more balanced; see also, on Dufresnoy’s historical scholarship, Borghero, *La certezza e la storia.*, pp. 391-407, presenting the different, contradictory, dimensions of De Fresnoy’s scholarship, his earnest historical writing colliding with his “spirito rabelasiano”, p. 406.

<sup>403</sup> initially published in 1714, and then expanded and reprinted in 1729, 1735, 1737, 1740 and 1772.

<sup>404</sup> first published in 1716, then reprinted in 1718, 1736 and 1742.

<sup>405</sup> first published in 1729, and also reprinted in 1744, 1763 and 1778.

to controversial themes,<sup>406</sup> and on the other espoused a deep scepticism towards the plausibility of attaining and using historical knowledge.<sup>407</sup> It was the paradoxical and ironic nature of Du Fresnoy's engagement with historical scholarship, his extensive plagiarism, and his circulation of, and so affiliation with, clandestine texts, rather than any coherent ideological stance, which could make his scholarship controversial among citizens of the early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Republic of Letters.

Extracting Du Fresnoy from a rigidly libertine-Spinozist context and considering instead his contributions to the pan-European debate about the limits and nature of historical knowledge, clarifies why Egizio was compelled to compose a polemic against one of Du Fresnoy's works.<sup>408</sup> Egizio's *Lettre amiable d'un Napolitain à M. L'Abbé Lenglet Du Fresnoy*<sup>409</sup> was published anonymously in Paris in 1738, but the hundred page letter is dated from 30 August 1736, also from Paris. Following the transition of power in Naples from the Habsburg viceroy to the Bourbon king Charles, Egizio was appointed as secretary to the Neapolitan ambassador to the French court, the Principe di Torella, and it was in this capacity that he found himself in Paris and encountered Du Fresnoy work.

As presented in the first pages, Egizio's *Lettre* was a response to the 1736 edition of Du Fresnoy's *Méthode pour etudier la Géographie*. A brief analysis of Du Fresnoy's *Méthode*, subtitled "où l'on donne une description exacte de l'Univers, formée sur les Observations de l'Académie Royale des Sciences" sheds light upon the rationale behind Egizio's critique. Du Fresnoy's ambitions were clear and explicit: to produce simple and definitive accounts of universal themes which could be widely read, and importantly, widely *used* – the *utility* of history and geography for a range of practices is repeatedly stressed by Du Fresnoy: here we might see his compendium as an extension of that of

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<sup>406</sup> *Recueil de dissertations anciennes et nouvelles sur les apparitions, les visions et les songes*, 1751; he also reproduced large extracts from the *Abregé de l'histoire universelle* of Henri de Boulainvilliers, a work which has been associated with a challenge to orthodox assumptions about biblical history. He also published in 1731 an edition of *Refutations des erreurs de Spinoza*.

<sup>407</sup> See, for instance, his *De l'usage des Romains*, and in defence of its censorship, his *Histoire justifiée contre les Romains*, works which, in paradoxical ways, engaged with the debate about the authority of fiction and history, taking up opposing sides of the argument; Borghero, *La certezza e la storia*.pp. 400-406.

<sup>408</sup> Aspects of the confrontation between Du Fresnoy and Egizio have been studied thoroughly by Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Giannone e i Suoi Contemporanei: Lenglet Du Fresnoy, M. Egizio e G. Grimaldi," in *Miscellanea Walter Maturi* (Torino, 1966), 55–87. Ricuperati tends to view the confrontation through the prism of Pietro Giannone. The purpose of this section is to view Egizio's criticism of Du Fresnoy in the context of Egizio's scholarly profile.

<sup>409</sup> *par laquelle il est prie de corriger quelque endroit de sa Géographie, touchant le Royaume de Naples*, 1738.

Marcel.<sup>410</sup> The first book of the *Methode* first presents a lengthy *Discours sur l'étude de la Géographie*,<sup>411</sup> on the utility of Geography as a discipline. An image of a globe divides this from the first book proper, itself introduced by a *Géographie des Enfants*<sup>412</sup> which traces the nations and places of the world, offering basic information about them, concluding “on doit faire la répétition de la dernière semaine: & si l'on veut passer encore une semaine a faire repasser les endroits les plus necessaires de la Géographie”.<sup>413</sup> The books which follow the *Géographie des Enfants* offer more information on each region, interspersed by maps, and long bibliographical reference lists, but always deploying the same definitive tone. The final fifth book is dedicated to “l'Ancienne Géographie”, envisaged as a tool to assist in the writing of ancient history. In general, we should see Du Fresnoy's *Geographie* as a commentary on knowledge, envisaged as working in tandem with his extensive bibliographical and encyclopedia publications on history, *Méthode pour l'étudier l'histoire*.<sup>414</sup> In Du Fresnoy's presentation, historical and geographical knowledge is both rendered universal, and reduced to facts, to be learned systematically, including by children, in order to be applied. For Egizio this represented a complete dislocation of historical knowledge from its production, and demanded condemnation.

The note ‘Le libraire au lecteur’ opening Egizio's *Lettre* traces the work's formulation, and the thrust of its argument. Mirroring the preface to the *Serie*, the presentation of the work is here both self-deprecating and cautious, viewing the *Lettre* as an exercise in academic censorship, a service to “Les jeunes gens, & la plupart des demi-Scavans” who may be seduced by the false clarity of Du Fresnoy's ‘reductions’ and his plagiaristic scholarship.<sup>415</sup> The publisher offers a warning reflective of Egizio's constructive scepticism: “il vaut mieux ne rien sçavoir, que d'être mal instruit ; tout de même que le papier blanc doit être preferé a ce lui qui a été chiffonné mal a propos.”<sup>416</sup> Accordingly Egizio eschews the form of a rhetorical or literary critique, and instead offers a

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<sup>410</sup> Du Fresnoy's own *Tablettes*, in 1743, are compositionally similar to those of Marcel.

<sup>411</sup> Du Fresnoy, *Méthode*, p. i-clxviii.

<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1-153.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153; this extract was also published separately, titled *Géographie des enfans, ou Méthode Abregée de la Géographie, divisée par leçons, avec la liste des cartes necessaires aux Enfants*, 1737.

<sup>414</sup> Subtitle: *Ou apres avoir etabli les principes & l'ordre qu'on doit tenir la lire utilement, on fait les remarques necessaires pour ne se pas laisser tromper dans sa lecture: avec un catalogue des principaux historiens, & des remarques critiques sur la bonte de leurs ouvrages, & sur le choix des milleures editions*

<sup>415</sup> Egizio, *Lettre*, p. 5-6.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

systematic condemnation of the factual errors in just one extract of Lenglet's *Méthode*. To apply the "goût délicat de notre siècle", in accordance with the logic described by Longo upon reading Egizio's *Serie*, the passage criticized by Egizio is that in which describes Egizio's own *patria* – the Kingdom of Naples.<sup>417</sup>

In his *Lettre* Egizio presents a systematic account of the errors made by Du Fresnoy in his description of Naples and its Kingdom, as well as the key points which are inexplicably absent from Du Fresnoy's description. At other points Egizio explains how Du Fresnoy's explanation is simply too simplistic, and that the historical and/or geographic situation is far more complex. About a quarter of the way through, Egizio's *Lettre* turns from discourse into a list of "vous dites que... mais...", with especially the final quarter taking the form of a list. Within this format Egizio also tends to lapse into patriotic outbursts: "il ne suffit pas de dire que la Ville Capitale est une des plus grandes, & des plus belles de l'Europe... Il faut ajoûter qu'après Londres & Paris, il n'y a pas de Ville en Europe si peuplée & e si bien bâtie que Naples".<sup>418</sup> At the same time, however, within Egizio's pedantry an alternative 'méthode' of geographical and historical knowledge is expressed, one based upon experience, preferably personal, and if not then derived from a reliable source, itself critically assessed. In other words, Egizio's method essentially undermines Du Fresnoy's claims to provide "une description exacte de l'Univers".<sup>419</sup>

As a case in point, Egizio ironically challenges Du Fresnoy's description of the port of Naples:

Je vous remercie, Monsieur, de m'avoir appris qu'il y a un beau Port à Naples: je ne le conoissois pas. Je sçavois seulement qu'il y a une Darse, qui peut contenir une quinzaine de galères... Il est vrai que Cluvier a cru que Naples avoit un grand Port ; & il l'a cru sur les témoignage de Tite-Live, qui l'appelle *Portum capacissimum* ; mais ce qui pouvoit être vrai du temps de cet Historien, n'est pas vrai aujourd'hui.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

The geography of Naples, principally its port, has changed, with the old port area being filled in, a result of development, erosion and a growth in population. Inheriting knowledge about geography from historical sources, in this case Du Fresnoy uncritically referencing the Dutch historian Philipp Clüver, himself falsely drawing upon Livy, is problematic when the environmental and social reality of the world is subject to change over time.

Egizio refers repeatedly to the authority of 'les antiquaires', and the sources with which he refutes Du Fresnoy are not only textual or canonical, but also inscriptions, medals and archaeological sites, many of which mirror those we find in his correspondence. Furthermore, Egizio calls for a rigorous *situating* of the past, criticizing the placelessness of Du Fresnoy's narrative:

Ma première observation, monsieur, est sur ce que vous avez négligé de marquer les latitudes des endroits considérables, dont vous parlez. Avez quelques pages de plus, vous auriez pu suppléer à ce défaut : car quoique vous n'ayiez prétendu nous donner qu'un Abrégé, il me paroît nécessaire, que ceux qui le sçavront par cœur, puissent montrer sur un Globe tous les lieux dont on leur demandera la position. Sans cela, ils n'auront la tête chargée que de noms qui y causeront une véritable confusion<sup>421</sup>

In short, it was Egizio's intimate first-hand, substantiated and place-specific knowledge of Naples which gives him license to critique Du Fresnoy's account. Egizio's defence of Neapolitan specific knowledge doesn't only stem from a parochial defence of his 'patria' or from a simple pedantry, but rather from assertions about *how* the scholar ought to practice, a defence of a certain *kind* of scholarly knowledge, where historical facts and certainties are bound to the processes of historical research and observation through which they are uncovered. Emphasising the sense in which Egizio's critique might be seen as that of a defender of an 'antiquarian' approach to historical knowledge, his essay was published in Italian in 1750, the year after Egizio's death, with an exchange of letters with Baron Giuseppe Antonini, one of the kingdom's senior archaeologists.<sup>422</sup> Antonini's two letters, dated 1739, almost extend Egizio's mode of critique of Du

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<sup>421</sup> Ibid., p. 10-11.

<sup>422</sup> Antonini, *Lettera di D. Matteo Egizio al signor Langelt du Fresnoy... con due lettere sulla stessa materia del Barone Giuseppe Antonini al signor Egizio, e con una risposta di questo*, in Napoli, 1750.

Fresnoy in microcosm, applauding Egizio's criticism of Du Fresnoy's universal history, but correcting Du Fresnoy *and* Egizio on points pertinent to the history of Basilicata, or ancient Lucania, the history of which Antonini was an authority. In his reply Egizio disputed some of Antonini's points, and accepted others – this was an exchange between two scholars who agreed on the principles and method of historical knowledge, and could both oppose that of Du Fresnoy.

Considering Egizio's 1736 criticism of Du Fresnoy in the light of his earlier work demonstrates a significant degree of continuity in his conviction about the practice of the historian and the nature of historical knowledge. The strategy of pedantry he deployed against Du Fresnoy differs in form from his commentary upon Marcel. Both, however, reflect the presentation and defence of a coherent historical epistemology, and undermine the flawed universalism of the French scholars.

#### Questions of Method in the Italian Reception of Giannone's *Istoria*

Another Neapolitan wrote a letter in criticism of Du Fresnoy's bibliographical-historical compilations: Pietro Giannone. Giannone's letter to Du Fresnoy criticized the French bibliographer's inclusion of his 1723 *Istoria Civile* in his 1729 edition of the *Méthode pour l'étudier d'histoire* on several grounds.<sup>423</sup> Du Fresnoy, in the third book of his 1729 *Méthode* wrote the following notice about Giannone's *Istoria*: "GIANNONI, Historia del regno di Napoli, in 4. In Napoli 1724. 3. Vol., Cet Auteur est sçavant & hardi, & même extrêmement téméraire; comme l'Inquisition alloit le faire arrêter il a eu la précaution de s'évader ; & son Livre est devenu très rare en peu de tems".<sup>424</sup> Giannone objected on several grounds: Du Fresnoy had wrongly dated Giannone's book to 1724 instead of 1723; he had written the wrong title, missing out the indicator 'civile', vital in Giannone's conception of his work as a historical genre; and he had also written that Giannone fled Naples on fear of the inquisition, whereas Giannone objected that he had elected to travel to Vienna to present his *Istoria* to the emperor.

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<sup>423</sup> Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1750, though presumed 1730, is in BNN MS I D 12, *Opuscoli vari di Pietro Giannone*, ff. 9-11, cited in Ricuperati, "Giannone e i Suoi Contemporanei: Lenglet Du Fresnoy, M. Egizio e G. Grimaldi."; p. 61; Giannone's remarks to DuFresnoy are included in S. Sergio Bertelli, *Giannoniana* (Milano: Ricciardi, 1968), p. 71-2.

<sup>424</sup> Du Fresnoy, *Méthode pour l'étudier l'Histoire*, 1729, vol. 3, p. 361.

Du Fresnoy had few critical remarks to make about the substance of the *Istoria*, but the work had presented a significant problem for the Neapolitan and Italian community of critical historians. On the one hand, the *Istoria* appeared as an extensive and thorough historical account of the Kingdom of Naples and its relationship with the papacy, especially during the medieval period. Giannone drew upon an esteemed scholarly tradition, and provided material and arguments for jurists and historians aiming to bring the past to bear in the negotiation between Naples and Rome, and between spiritual and civil authority. On the other hand, the work transgressed the limits of scholarly acceptability, in its virulent anti-clericism, as well as its naked anti-curial tone. In its polemical composition, the *Istoria* no longer maintained the image of being, first and foremost, a serious scholarly work; instead it appeared to subordinate historical scholarship to political ends.<sup>425</sup>

The combination of enthusiasm and anxiety with which Giannone's *Istoria* was met by established scholars can be seen in the correspondence between Ludovico Antonio Muratori in Modena and Costantino Grimaldi in Naples. Regio Consigliero on the Consiglio Collaterale from the 1710s, and a leading figure among Naples' anti-curial critics of ecclesiastical intervention in Neapolitan affairs, Grimaldi also played a role editing, acquiring licenses for and generally overseeing the publication of works in accordance with this intellectual stance in Naples.<sup>426</sup> Grimaldi wrote to Muratori first in September 1722, informing the Modena-based librarian and scholar of the imminent publication of Giannone's *Istoria*. Having read the manuscript of the work he described the text in positive terms, as a work "fatto con buon sapore, con critica, e spassionatezza, dicendo le cose snocciolatamente come si ricavano dagli Istorici contemporanei".<sup>427</sup> It is unclear whether Muratori responded to this judgement,<sup>428</sup> but

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<sup>425</sup> Giannone's qualities as a historian have been discussed at length. For the main positions, see: Giovanni Gentile, "Pietro Giannone, Plagiario e Grand'uomo per Equivoco," *La Critica. Rivista Di Letteratura, Storia e Filosofia Diretta Da B. Croce* 2, no. 0 (1908): 216–51; Marini, *Pietro Giannone e il giannonismo a Napoli nel Settecento.*, but more precisely Carmelo Caristia, *Pietri Giannone e l'Istoria civile e altri scritti giannoniani*. (Milano: A. Giuffrè, 1955). casting doubt upon Giannone's credentials as a historian, and Brunello Vigezzi, *Pietro Giannone Riformatore e Storico*. (Milano, 1961). who seeks to defend Giannone as a historical scholar. Summing these debates up see Giuseppe Giarizzo, "Alle Origine Della Medievistica Moderna, (Vico, Giannone, Muratori)," *Bullettino Dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo* 74 (1962): 1–43.

<sup>426</sup> On Grimaldi see F. A. Meschini, "Grimaldi, Costantino," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 59 (2002). Grimaldi had also helped the anonymous publication of Muratori's works in Naples in the 1710s: see chapter four.

<sup>427</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 22.9.1722, BEUMo AM 67.40, letter 17.

<sup>428</sup> Some of Muratori's letters to C. Grimaldi are preserved in his archive in Modena, but it is not a complete record.

Grimaldi wrote again in April 1723, as Giannone's *Istoria* was published, describing how the work has "svegliato tutti gli ordini di ispezione, poiche taglia a tono qualunque genere di persona e preciso gli Ecclesiastici".<sup>429</sup> Grimaldi repeated his praise, though acknowledging the work to have "in picciolo cose che prende e qualche abbaglio... fatto con troppo libertinaggio" and that it is "una sorte de libri che non e anco uscito da questo Paese", meaning that Giannone has already been compelled to compose an *Apologia*, "giustificando di molte imutazioni che l'han fatte e precisamente ai frati."<sup>430</sup> Muratori replied enthusiastically, having heard of the controversy from another correspondent, and curious about the "liberi di Partenope" who "dee condonare qualche verita detta a visiera calata".<sup>431</sup> Grimaldi's letter from the following month clarifies the outcome of the ecclesiastical objection to the *Istoria*: Giannone had been excommunicated, on the grounds of publishing his book without the ecclesiastical censors, this in spite of having adhered to the state censor, which usually suffices, "poiché in Napoli non mai sono stati in vigore queste leggi ecclesiastiche". Prior to his formal excommunication, Giannone had fled to Vienna "a piede del Padrone", and Grimaldi's resistance to the church and clerics is piqued: "iddio voglia che colla abbia di buoni incontri, perche i Frati ed i Preti si spandano dovunque vogliono... certo e un gran pregiud. al diritto Reg. se in questa cosa non si risiste".<sup>432</sup>

At this point Muratori asked Grimaldi to arrange for him to receive a copy of the *Istoria*, remarking that another printer would do well to publish the work, its controversy ensuring sales.<sup>433</sup> By July Grimaldi had begun arranging for a copy of Giannone's *Istoria* to be sent to Muratori; Giannone's *Apologia* was also being printed clandestinely in Naples, while Grimaldi assures Muratori that Giannone had been well received in Vienna, "senza le proccupazione che ha provato nel suo Paese".<sup>434</sup>

Muratori's reception of Giannone is difficult to interpret; he doesn't appear to have written to Grimaldi with his private judgement, and resisted judgement prior to having read the entire work, though he had heard from other sources that it was an impious

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<sup>429</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 6.4.1723, BEUMo AM 67.40, letter 20.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Muratori, Modena, to Grimaldi, Naples, 19.4.1723, BEUMo AM 46.75, f. 2.

<sup>432</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 25.5.1723, BEUMo AM 67.40, letter 21.

<sup>433</sup> Muratori was unsure about the prudence of Giannone's decision to head to Vienna, remarking: "Intanto l'Autore ha dovuto levarsi di costa; e Vienna non sara buona da acconciare i suoi affari", Muratori, Modena, to Grimaldi, Naples, 2.7.1723, BEUMo AM 46.75, f. 3.

<sup>434</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 12.7.1723, BEUMo AM 67.40, letter 22.

work: “mi scrive che è Opera empia; chi diversamente ne giudica. Ma io non so profferir sentenze di libro da me non veduto finora”.<sup>435</sup> Muratori had been involved in historiographical conflicts pitting him against ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the previous decades. He was also, however, highly devout, and wedded to an ideal of incremental religious reform, as well as the sacredness of scholarly truth. Giannone’s *Istoria* was probably problematic on both counts.<sup>436</sup>

The difficult reception of Giannone’s *Istoria* is evidenced in several strands of Egizio’s correspondence. Predictably, perhaps, a position not far from Grimaldi’s regarding Giannone’s *Istoria* was shared by Giacomo Longo in Palermo, who wrote to Egizio on 31 March 1723, seemingly in response to Egizio’s reference to the work. Unlike Egizio, at this point,<sup>437</sup> Longo had read Giannone’s work, which he received from the Abbate Almarza, a pro-Viennese Sicilian figure, and has some praise, recognising the work “sarà applaudita dai regalisti e curiosi... con di più qualche notizia recondite”.<sup>438</sup> Longo also recognised the *Istoria*’s flaws (“È vero ancora, che spesse l’arte esce dal suo argomento e pure potesa lo Autore dire lo stesso con penna più Civile, trattando una Storia Civile”) the inevitability of the *Istoria*’s negative reception (“scritta, specialmente su le contese giurisdizionali con la Chiesa, altre si riuscirà noiosa a Roma”), predicting with some confidence that the work “sarà posta nei proibiti di prima classe”.<sup>439</sup> As the controversy regarding Giannone’s *Istoria* broke in early 1723, several of Egizio’s other correspondents wrote to him, asking for his thoughts on the text, or for him to send them a copy from Naples. The Prussian antiquarian Baron Phillip von Stosch asked Egizio to send him a second copy of the *Istoria* from Naples; Stosch already possessed an initial copy, which he found in Rome, and judged “mi farà piacere”.<sup>440</sup> A second letter two months later restated Stosch’s request; Egizio appears not to have replied. Egizio’s student Enrico Enriquez, interested in his pedagogue’s response to the *Istoria*, wrote on 16 April 1723. Enriquez’s own judgement was guarded and contested. While the book is

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<sup>435</sup> Muratori, Modena to Grimaldi, Naples, 20.8.1723, BEUMo AM 46.75, ff. 3-4.

<sup>436</sup> Sergio Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia in Ludovico Antonio Muratori* (Napoli: Nella sede dell’Istituto italiano per gli studi storici, 1960); Edward Cochrane, “Muratori: The Vocation of a Historian,” *The Catholic Review* 51, no. 2 (1965): 153–72.; Bruno Neveu, “Muratori e l’historiographie Gallicane,” in *Erudition et Religion Aux 17. et 18. Siècles*, 1994, 105–74.

<sup>437</sup> According to Longo’s letter: “L’opera del P. Pietro giannone, che ancor V.S. ill.ma non avea veduta mi fu rimessa dal P. Abbate Almarza”, Longo, Palermo to Egizio, Naples, 31.3.1723, BNN MS XIII.C.91 152.

<sup>438</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>439</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>440</sup> Stosch, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 20.3.1723, BNN MS XIII C93 149.

initially judged “essere un libro di profonda erudizione, e chi di tutte le cose dicea la verità” it was also written in a “maniera di dire le cose troppo liberamente” and “contenea degli molti falli, come che per questo non fosse da riputarsi per di utile, avuto risguardo alle molte cose buone, che conteneva”.<sup>441</sup> Given that “tutta cotesta citta rivoltata contra dell’Autore” Enriquez suspected the work to “contenere rea dottrina”, and received that week a letter from Niccolo Rozzi, “una de furiosi disapprovatori del libro” making the point that the work was of a “spirito poco Catolico”.<sup>442</sup> Enriquez appeared unsure how to proceed, with what criteria to judge the *Istoria*, and is here, as elsewhere in their correspondence, asking Egizio’s advice and guidance.<sup>443</sup>

Egizio sent a “lunga lettera” to Enriquez in a letter replied to on the 16th July, which contained “alcune sue opposizione all’Opera del Giannone”, which Enriquez suggested “servirà per mio ammaestramento e regola nel portar giudizio”.<sup>444</sup> Egizio’s letter in judgement of Giannone’s *Istoria* was not designed only for personal and private reflection, but was part of his commission by the Neapolitan viceroy, to assess the suitability of the *Istoria* for publication.<sup>445</sup> Not bearing the ecclesiastical censor, and given the tone and subject matter of the work, the church’s prohibition of the *Istoria* was inevitable and uncontestable. In Naples, however, the royal censor mattered too. The Neapolitan viceroy Wirich Philipp von Daun initially supported Giannone and his *Istoria*, though recognizing the controversy that surrounded the tone of the work.<sup>446</sup> As the criticism of the *Istoria* by the Neapolitan ecclesiastic community intensified, and in the light of Giannone’s excommunication, the civil license previously granted to the *Istoria* was reassessed, and revoked. At this stage, Egizio’s objections appear to have

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<sup>441</sup> Enriquez, Campi to Egizio, Naples, 16.4.1723, BNN MS XIII C91 39.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Enriquez, Campi to Egizio, Naples, 18.6.1723, BNN MS XIII C91 40.

<sup>444</sup> Enriquez, Campi to Egizio, Naples, 16.7.1723, BNN MS XIII C91 41.

<sup>445</sup> In an undated letter with no provenance, Stefano Manfredi writes to Egizio, starting his letter “sento che avete alle man l’indegna storia di Pietro Giannone, per rivedere di commessione della Citta”, Stefano Manfredi to Egizio, Naples, BNN MS XIII C92 66; The other censor was Niccolo Galizia, of the same generation and intellectual upbringing as Egizio, though substantially more integrated with anti-curial and pro-Imperial communities in Naples.

<sup>446</sup> On the judgement of the ‘consiglio collaterale’ see: Scipione Volpicella, “Parere Del Collaterale Sui Tumulti Avvenutio per La Pubblicazione Della Storia Civile Di Giannone,” *Archivio Storico Napoletano* 1 (1876); Gentile, “Pietro Giannone, Plagiario e Grand’uomo per Equivoco.”, p. 221; documents from the case, taken from the ‘notamenti del Collaterale’ meetings in July and October 1723, are included in Bertelli, *Giannoniana*., pp. 42-48.

been instrumental in the viceroy's decision to align with the ecclesiastical censors and prohibit the book.

Egizio's judgement of Giannone's *Istoria* appears to have remained private or for bureaucratic counsel, but quickly public critiques of the work emerged. Several of these assumed an explicitly pro-curial tone. Filippo Anastasio, Archbishop of Sorrento, published in 1724 his *Apologia di quanto l'arcivescovo di Sorrento ha praticato cogli economi de' beni ecclesiastici della sua diocesi*, confronting Giannone on the question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Jesuit Giuseppe Sanfelice published in 1728 his *Riflessioni morali e teologiche sopra l'Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli*, aimed more polemically at Giannone's work itself. Both works received responses from Giannone, while the first was also countered with an anonymous *Difesa della real giurisdizione intorno a' regi diritti su la Chiesa collegiata appellata di S. Maria della Cattolica dell citta di Reggio*, in Naples, 1727. Sanfelice's polemical work was prohibited by the royal censor in Naples. These polemics more or less accord with the pre-existing fault-lines between curial and anti-curial parties in Naples, which the Neapolitan viceroys were, at this point, trying to calm.

#### Egizio and the *Annotazioni Critiche*

More interesting for our present concerns, and the point at which Matteo Egizio resurfaces, is to consider the criticism Giannone's *Istoria* received in an anonymous work titled *Annotazioni critiche sopra il nono libro dell'Istoria civile di Napoli*, published in 1731. The work was quickly attributed to the then-Vienna-based scholar-priest Sebastiano Paoli, and constituted of a list of 68 errors of erudition in just a single book of Giannone's multi-volume work. The tone of the *Annotazioni's* criticism is captured in the citation on the first page from the 1700 Antwerp edition of Augustine's Letter against the Manicheans (tome VIII, p. 106): "Offundit nebulas imperitis. Quis feret tantam fallaciam, tantamque superbiam? Non modo non exhibiet scientiam, atque veritatem, quam promittit, sed ea dicit quei vehementer sunt scientiae & veritati contraria". The *Annotazioni* was countered by a *Riposta alle Annotazioni Critiche sopra il nono libro della Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli* accredited to Giannone. The *Risposta* essentially

identified Paoli as the author, and represented a lively polemic, repsonding to each of Paoli's criticisms.

Both works, however, appear to have multiple authors, or at least represent behind-the-scenes machinations, an inquiry into which can illuminate some of the fault lines which divided erudite and scholarly cultures. Giannone's status as the composer of the *Risposte alle Annotazioni* has been cast in doubt; Gentile refers to a copy of the *Risposte*, the frontispiece of which is edited to indicate the author to be Nicolo Capasso or Nicolo Cirillo.<sup>447</sup> Doubts were also raised by Muratori, sent to Costantino Grimaldi, regarding the work's author, remarking "Mi scrive ella che il signor G. ne'e l'autore. Non l'avrei creduto, che lo stile mi pare assai diverso."<sup>448</sup> Paoli spent extensive periods of time in Vienna through the 1720s and early 1730s, as imperial theologian and historian; as we saw in the previous chapter, he was involved in the project of expanding the imperial library and museum, and, along with Apostolo Zeno, fell out with the directors of those projects, principally Nicolo Forlosia, Garelli and Gentilotti. After the death of Alessandro Riccardi, Giannone relied upon Forlosia and Garelli as key points of entry to patrons in Vienna. According to one account, Paoli, described as "amico piu tosta del Giannone"<sup>449</sup> approached the exiled Neapolitan in 1730 with a series of "revisione ed alla emendazione del suo libro", for which Giannone was grateful. Instead of sending Giannone a list of suggested ammendments, however, Paoli elected to publish his criticism anonymously, Panzini claims, in Rome.<sup>450</sup>

At this point, Giannone suspected other forces to be at play. He wrote to Niccolo Cirillo suggesting that Apostolo Zeno may have collaborated with, if not directed, the *Annotazioni*. Other letters to Cirillo present Egizio as the key intellectual force behind the work attributed to Paoli. Although Giannone was dissuaded from these assumptions, neither seems so unlikely.<sup>451</sup> Zeno appears to have become bitterly opposed by 1730 to

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<sup>447</sup> Gentile, "Pietro Giannone, Plagiario e Grand'uomo per Equivoco", cites the MS as BNN MS 54 B 62, p. 225.

<sup>448</sup> cited in Gentile, p. 225; the full letter is in Panzini, *Opere postume di Pietro Giannone*, vol. II, 1777, 'Vita di P. Giannone', p. 116. The manuscript, like most of the references in Panzini's biography, is unaccounted for – it is not held among the letters between Muratoria and Grimaldi at the BEUMo AM. On account of his friendship with Paoli, Muratori removes himiself from the controversy: "m'abbiano volute spettatore di questa zuffa".

<sup>449</sup> Panzini cites a letter from Giannone to C. Grimaldi, 29 December 1725, which is unaccounted for – *Opere postume*, vol. 3, p. 113.

<sup>450</sup> Paoli was at this point working on a bibliographical history of Malta. See Panzini, *Opere*, p. 113-4.

<sup>451</sup> Apparently by Garelli and Vincenzo D'Ippolito, see Panzini, *Opere*, p. 114.

Garelli and Forlosia, and was a good friend of Paoli, and close to Egizio, though his stance vis-à-vis Giannone is unclear.<sup>452</sup> Paoli and Egizio were closely affiliated through the 1710s and 1720s, collaborating on several scholarly projects.<sup>453</sup> In light of Egizio's objection to the *Istoria* in his commissioned review for the Consiglio Collaterale, and specifically in light of his broader approach to critical historical scholarship, collaboration in condemnation of Giannone seems a possibility.<sup>454</sup> Looking at several letters Egizio wrote and received in the years following the publication of the *Annotazioni* perhaps suggests the coherence of his position on the book, and the nature of his intervention.

Since the spring of 1731, Egizio had exchanged several letters with a Dominican priest from Puglia, Alberto Foscarini.<sup>455</sup> In a long letter sent from Trani, just north of Bari, on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1731, Foscarini offered Egizio his thoughts on the Giannone controversy, stimulated by his reading of Giannone's *Professione di Fede*. Foscarini was generally disapproving of Giannone's work, both because of its argument and its tone. Not only "scostumato" and offensive to Catholic Orthodoxy – Foscarini compared Giannone's position to that of Luther – Giannone's *Istoria* represented a challenge to political and jurisdictional norms more broadly conceived, and to the hierarchy and sanctity of the Church. Of note, Foscarini indicated a nuanced understanding of the 'civil' dimension of Giannone *Istoria*, criticizing his "tante affectate" account of the "solennita nell'incoronazione de Pontefici", concluding that "fa piu conto da Turchi del loro Mufti, che da letterati Cattolici del lor Papa"<sup>456</sup>

Egizio's response to Foscarini is difficult to gauge, but the Pugliese priest wrote again to Egizio on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1733, from his new teaching position in the seminary in Bari. He here offered a few brief remarks on the *Risposta alle Annotazione Critiche*, which he stated "ne fa V.S. Ill.ma l'autore, e ch'è l'obietto della maldicenza". It was suggested to Foscarini that Egizio was the author of the text, a suggestion which Foscarini himself

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<sup>452</sup> On Zeno's opposition to Forlosia and Garelli see the previous chapter. On his friendship with Egizio, see next chapter.

<sup>453</sup> See ch. 2 and ch. 7.

<sup>454</sup> The *Annotazioni* also references Egizio's *Serie dei Imperadori Romani* twice in correcting Giannone's errors of erudition, see p. 12-13, and p. 45-46.

<sup>455</sup> Egizio appears to have met Foscarini in Naples, and their correspondence consists of discussion of regional ecclesiastical politics, and a description of Foscarini's work teaching in seminaries, in Taranto, in Trani, in Molfetta and then in Bari, and confronting the superstition of the rural Pugliese: BNN MS XIII C. 90 243-9.

<sup>456</sup> Foscarini, Trani to Egizio, Naples, 30.6.1731, BNN MS XIII C. 90 245.

appears to dismiss, “non fa credere l’opera parte di V.S. Ill.ma da me specificamente ugualmente dotto e pio”.<sup>457</sup> One of Foscarini’s friends, who suggested that Egizio was the author of the *Annotazione Critiche*, may have been the recipient of the letter Egizio sent on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1731, probably to an ecclesiastical figure, probably in Puglia – the letter was found among the papers of Celestino Galiani, and refers to the appointment of the new Archbishop of Taranto, an issue of regional concern.<sup>458</sup> Here Egizio was critical of Giannone’s tone and style, his “spirito contumace superbo e niente rispettoso alla Santa Sede”, his tendency to “accomodare i dogmi alle sue passioni”, and most forcibly the damaging influence of Giannone’s popularity upon young scholars in Naples, “guasto la mente di molti giovani, i quali manchevoli di buone conoscenze, e d libri, ammirano in Giannone la copia delle cose, da essi affatto ignorante”. Dated July 1731, Egizio’s letter is contemporary to the release of Paoli’s *Annotazioni*; his explicit directions for how Giannone’s damaging scholarship might be countered, as well as the general tone of the letter, focussing on Giannone’s second-rate scholarship, rather than his ideology *per se*, indicates that if Egizio didn’t play a role in the composition of the *Annotazioni*, it at least well reflected his position: “Il modo di correggerli sarebbe di mostrare un per uno gli errori, gli abbagli, le false citazioni dell’uomo in cose non Ecclesiastiche.” Such a criticism must be short, to the point, and addressed especially to the young, and therefore accessible. While “gli uomini maturi discernono la verità”, the next generation of scholars must not be “nutricato di cattivo latte”.<sup>459</sup>

A similar disapproving judgment on Giannone’s scholarship is conveyed to Egizio by the English antiquarian Robert Smith, who had spent the previous year or so in Naples, travelling around Southern Italy with the scholar Alessio Simacchio Mazzocchi, and with the Benedictine monks at the monastery at Monte Cassino; in 1732 he had returned to Rome, where he was in contact with Giusto Fontanini.<sup>460</sup> Smith judged Giannone’s work similarly to Egizio and Foscarini, as being essentially scholarship of dubious quality, “un stilo ancora non troppo uniforme... un giudizio troppo temerario e precipitoso”,

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<sup>457</sup> Foscarini, Bari to Egizio, Naples, 7.2.1733, BNN MS XIII C. 90 249

<sup>458</sup> A transcript of Egizio’s letter is included in Giovanni Gentile, ‘Pietro Giannone, Plagiario’, pp. 223-224, who claims it was discovered by Fausto Nicolini, who then possessed the letter; its present whereabouts are unclear.

<sup>459</sup> Gentile, ‘Pietro Giannone, Plagiario’, p. 223.

<sup>460</sup> On Robert Smith and his antiquarian practice in Scotland see R. C. Bosanquet, “Robert Smtih and the ‘Observations upon the Picts Wall,’” *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian Society* 55, no. 1 (1956): 154–71.; cited in Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), p. 161-2.

tendencies leading to errors which “un giudizio più acuto, forte e sobrio avrebbe eliminare”.<sup>461</sup> A case of particular relevance is Smith’s objection to Giannone’s treatment of ecclesiastical history, and the nature and chronology of the corruption of the Catholic Church. This, “il ritorno al culto della Immagini”, Giannone situates in the 8th century, so as to align with the centralization of power in the papacy as an institution; Smith, on the other hand, sides with “i più grandotti e savi” who “hanno al contrario giudicato che attese lo gran corrozioni introdotti nelle Chiese in alcuni secoli precaduti”.<sup>462</sup> Nonetheless, Smith is happy to look beyond these shortcomings, judging that “I suoi vizzi vengono compensati con altre virtù”, and that “il suo disegno principale è molto nobile e ben eseguito”, in Giannone’s elaboration of the “usurpatione Romano... il troppo debole o nullo fondamento della loro giurisdizione sopra il Reame in tempi già passati”.<sup>463</sup> As a Protestant, sympathetic to Giannone’s criticism of the papacy, Smith was able to forgive and look beyond Giannone’s erudite shortcomings, or his wilful deployment of history to feed political strategy.<sup>464</sup> Egizio, on the other hand, was not; attention to detail, the particular, and a commitment to truth must be sacrosanct; competent scholarship should not be sacrificed for political ideology. Giannone’s disregard for scholarly propriety led Egizio to oppose him until the final years of his life. In a letter composed for Carlo Borbone, King of Naples, in 1742, in Egizio clarified the authority of civil jurisdiction of the papal investiture, he condemned the “falso immaginazione del moderno autore”, implicating directly the writer of the “Storia Civile”.<sup>465</sup>

## Conclusion

The limited extent to which Giannone can be considered a historian in the build of Muratori, Scipione Maffei or even Egizio, has been well discussed.<sup>466</sup> The view that the

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<sup>461</sup> Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples 23.8.1732, XIII C93 52.

<sup>462</sup> The other particular case Smith picks out is the passages where Giannone “parla una aria tanta fastidiosa et disprezenta sopra la riforma che fecoro i Protestanti”, Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples 23.8.1732, XIII C93 52.

<sup>463</sup> Smith, Rome to Egizio, Naples 23.8.1732, XIII C93 52.

<sup>464</sup> Smith asked, in conclusion of his letter, Egizio “perche l’Imperadore ha in 1722 voluto pigliarne di nuovo la Investitura, avendo avuta una occasione cotato felice per ospitarne anche la memoria, non che la pratica”.

<sup>465</sup> BNN MS XV B 23, *Dissertazione o memoria del 22 gennaio 1742*, f. 87v.; similar claims on f. 95v.

<sup>466</sup> See note 137.

*Istoria* “raised Neapolitan historical writing to a new level” is meaningful primarily if Giannone’s text is seen as a transition towards a different logic of historical scholarship, rather than a qualitative improvement of what was there before.<sup>467</sup> By the standards of late humanist 17<sup>th</sup>-century historical scholarship, Giannone’s *Istoria* was found lacking.<sup>468</sup> As this final section has demonstrated, it is important to view this qualitative dissonance in scholarly practice at the heart of one dimension of the critique Giannone received for his *Istoria*, and as distinct from, though not wholly unrelated to, the curialist attacks levelled at Giannone. Trying to substantiate the rival networks behind scholarly controversies demonstrates how, in the dense intellectual environment of Italian erudition, where politics and scholarship were closely connected, personal relationships could play a role in intellectual controversies. It has been argued that Giannone and Egizio’s disagreement was personal, that they didn’t like each other, and the criticism they levelled at one another – Giannone wrote in 1730 to the editor of the *Acta Eruditorum* in Leipzig in criticism of Egizio’s *Senatusconsulti de Bacchanalibus*<sup>469</sup> – had as much to do with this as deeper intellectual dissonance. In this context it has also been suggested that Egizio’s commentary on Giannone “passi da una posizione di obbiezione erudite a quella di opposizione, sia pure coperta, ma ormai decisa e continua”.<sup>470</sup> But the personal, the political and the scholarly cannot be separated so cleanly, and just as Matteo Egizio’s commitment to critical history emerged from and related to his contentions about theology and philosophy, law and cosmology, as well as norms of scholarly sociability and virtues, it similarly implied and extended to a distaste for attempts to disrupt the social order and thence political status quo. From this perspective, Ricuperati’s overall interpretation of Egizio as “un intellettuale moderato, che trova sospetto e instintivamente inaccettabile il tono violento della polemica giannoniana” remains convincing.<sup>471</sup> Crucially it undermines the rigid dichotomies

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<sup>467</sup> Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment Scotland and Naples 1680-1760*, p. 123; On the inheritance of Giannone, and his distinction from ‘antiquarians’, see John Robertson, “Gibbon and Giannone,” in *Edward Gibbon: Bicentenary Essays*, ed. J. W Burrow, J. G. A Pocock, and David Womersley (Voltaire Foundation, 1997), 3–19.

<sup>468</sup> Representing the sharp end of more teleological judgements is Brendan Maurice Dooley, “The Dangers of History,” *European Review* 19, no. 3 (2011): 433–43., which sees Giannone as unproblematically building upon the work of 17<sup>th</sup> century erudition and taking up an Enlightenment approach to history, his opposition coming only from “the ecclesiastical establishment” and “those who envied his success”, p. 438 – depicted as ‘darkness’ against Giannone’s ‘Enlightenment’, p. 433.

<sup>469</sup> Cited in Ricuperati, “Giannone e suoi contemporanei”, p. 71; the letter is found at Biblioteca Civica di Torino, Fondo Cossilla, mazzo XVII, 1-4.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.

latent in Cesera's reading of Egizio, as "allontanato da tempo dalle posizioni anticurialiste dei primi del Settecento e contava ormai amicizie tra i curialisti piu accesi".<sup>472</sup>

From this conclusion, it may make sense to see a relationship between Egizio's commitment to and practice of a critical erudition and a project of gradual incremental political reform, based on a 'tecnicismo' modelled largely upon the "vecchia giurisdizionalismo, a static understanding of political institutions and formations, rather than on a dynamic understanding of the state and society, "il spirit nuovo".<sup>473</sup> Egizio, however, was not solely, or primarily, defending a method of acting politically, and scholarship and erudition are not always, or even usually, fronts for ideological collision. Viewing Egizio's criticism of Giannone in the light of his background as a scholar demonstrates that he was, first and foremost, defending a method of *doing* history, which was equally a method of acting in the present, and a logic of how past and present might relate to one another. To an extent, Egizio and his colleagues might be viewed as "prigioniero di uno schema antiquaria", but within this epistemological schema they were defending the integrity of scholarship and the autonomy of history: as they saw it, it was less a prison than a fortress.<sup>474</sup> To return to Grafton's distinction proposed in the introduction to this chapter, for Egizio, if history was to be meaningful and credible, if it were to amount to anything at all, it had to be about *production*; Marcel, Du Fresnoy and Giannone's works all suffered the same flaw: they were composed to be *consumed*.

One of the methodological objectives in this chapter has been to shift the gravity of historical enquiry away from a political-philosophical agenda to one based on scholarly values, ethics and norms. As this conclusion demonstrates, however, this is largely a false dichotomy: instead what we require is a more nuanced mechanism with which to embed political-philosophical and scholarly-epistemic convictions into one another. The

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<sup>472</sup> Ceresa, "Egizio, Matteo".

<sup>473</sup> Ricuperati, 'Giannone e i suoi contemporanei', p. 64-5. As Ricuperati suggests, Egizio's position might then be seen as close to that of Costantino Grimaldi's son Gregorio, whose *Istoria delle leggi e i magistrato del Regno di Napoli* actively tried to make Giannone's work acceptable a vehicle for reform. It has also been suggested that Egizio helped Grimaldi with the corrections of his *Istoria* (L. Giustiniani, *Memorie Istoriche degli scrittori legali del Regno di Napoli*, vol. II, 1787, p. 145) though this is difficult to qualify. Muratori did certainly assist G. Grimaldi with his *Istoria*.

<sup>474</sup> Giarizzo, "Alle Origine Della Medievistica Moderna, (Vico, Giannone, Muratori).", p. 35.

next chapter will offer an attempt at this method, by interrogating a recurrent theme in the past two chapters, that of taste, 'gusto' or 'goût. As it was codified in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy, 'buon gusto' represented an aesthetic ideal which encompassed ways of thinking and writing, as well as behaving within the 'Republic of Letters'. Taking taste seriously will offer a means to understand the means and the rationale by which historiography was disciplined and reformed.



## Chapter Four - The Rehabilitation of Italian Erudition: 'Buon Gusto', the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* and Ludovico Antonio Muratori

The previous two chapters, centred on Matteo Egizio, his antiquarian collaborators and his participation in controversies in historical scholarship, have sought to formulate a specific kind of historical thought cultivated within this scholarly community of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italians, and to define its epistemological foundations. Working with a specific scholar, his corpus and his correspondents has allowed a point of entry into this culture of scholarship; it marks Egizio out as representative of and participant in a *regime of scholarship*. Establishing an understanding of this regime as a whole demands a methodological shift, initially orientating less around specific scholarly controversies and instead tracing the construction of scholarly norms, practices and 'orders', as they were bound up with epistemic virtues and aesthetic ideals. Envisaging scholarly production and communication as a process of intellectual institutionalization will enable, in turn, the sociology of erudition in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy – the 'Republic of Letters' as a social network, a system of intellectual production, and an imaginary – to be recomposed with greater nuance.

In form, this chapter will initially work backwards from Egizio's Naples as a contextualising mechanism, before in the latter part returning to Neapolitan scholarship in the 1710s. After briefly introducing the pertinent methodological and theoretical approaches at hand, the first part of this chapter will present Egizio as a regional 'editor-at-large' for the Venetian-based *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, primarily through reconstructing his relationship with Apostolo Zeno, the *Giornale's* main editor. This will then lead into a second section assessing the editorial policy of the Venetian *Giornale*, and its attempts to rehabilitate Italian scholarship, based on the reforming treatises of Ludovico Antonio Muratori in the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The third section will present the Italian refashioning of the concept of 'buon gusto', a compound of philosophical-theological, literary-aesthetic and scholarly-erudite norms, principally in Muratori's *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto* (1708). Proposing 'buon gusto' as the key 'mot d'ordre' in Italian scholarly reform, the fourth part of this chapter will return to Naples,

looking in depth at the context surrounding the Neapolitan publication of the extended 1715 edition of Muratori's *Riflessioni*, a project which bound together a regional community of advocates of scholarly reform.

The overarching objective of this chapter is twofold: firstly, to argue that behind scholarly practice and the writing of history was a contested complex of moral, aesthetic and epistemological ideals; and secondly, to show that the extension and success of this complex in redefining how scholars worked was not inevitable and structural, but was instead contingent, relying upon specific historical institutions, individuals, concepts and processes. In both cases this argument draws upon a history of knowledge with its theoretical base in the history of science. By making the regime of knowledge the key context for knowledge itself, the history of science offers alternate ways of assembling intellectual, socializing it, and tracing how it changed over time.<sup>475</sup> Here I will focus upon three key innovations offered by this methodological transition.

Firstly, the recognition that scholarly regimes are vertically as well as horizontally structured. Rather than solely hunt out innovation and 'new ideas', this insight instead proposes an historical sensitivity to the hierarchical and institutionalized systems of scholarship which determined the broader landscape of thought, demarcating the limits of what was socially and epistemically normalized. Secondly, and extending this point, the delineation and then dissemination of epistemic virtues and vices plays a central role in the process of intellectual production and the transformation of norms over time. Defining and promoting different visions of what constituted good scholarship, thereby establishing a "moral economy of science", or scholarship, was equally a contested process, which played out through the prism of intellectual sociability as well as concepts and ideas.<sup>476</sup> Thirdly, and drawing together these approaches, the concept of taste offers a powerful insight into how scholarly regimes are ordered, primarily

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<sup>475</sup> On this transition, see Introduction, part one.

<sup>476</sup> Shapin and Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump*; Shapin, *A Social History of Truth* – and especially its methodological introduction, pp. 3-41; Barbara J Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study of the Relationships between Natural Science, Religion, History, Law, and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Lorraine Daston, "The Moral Economy of Science," *Osiris* 10 (1995): 2-24; There is burgeoning research field on epistemic virtue and vice as key factors in intellectual production (e.g. the work of I. J. Kidd) emerging from studies in social epistemology, now being re-directed by intellectual historians: Herman Paul, "The Scholarly Self: Ideals of Intellectual Virtue in Nineteenth Century Leiden," in *The Making of the Humanities. Vol. II*, ed. Rens Bod, Thijs Weststeijn, and Jaap Maat (Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 397-411; Herman Paul, "Performing History: How Historical Scholarship Is Shaped by Epistemic Virtues," *History and Theory* 50 (2011): 1-19.

because it is usually implicit, or only explicated sporadically.<sup>477</sup> Through ideas of good and bad taste, knowledge practices are underpinned by notions of propriety, which are themselves in complex relationship with a set of cosmological, metaphysical and aesthetic assertions.<sup>478</sup> As a tool, orientating around taste is akin to orientating around ‘epistemes’: they benefit from being de-essentialized, and turned from monolithic periodization into contested discourses. In short, this methodological toolbox might allow the codification and dissemination of scholarly practices and ideals to be understood with greater nuance.

### Matteo Egizio, Apostolo Zeno and the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia*

On 7th June 1710 Matteo Egizio received a long letter from the Venetian scholar, librettist and founder and editor-in-chief of the newly launched *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia* Apostolo Zeno.<sup>479</sup> The letter is an important source for locating Egizio within the Italian culture of critical erudition in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, so needs to be first contextualised and then ‘unpacked’. Zeno’s *Giornale* was launched in 1710, in collaboration with his brother Pier Caterino Zeno, with Scipione Maffei and Antonio Vallisnieri, having been several years in production. The most basic ambition of the *Giornale* was to promote the communication, dissemination and discussion of scholarship on the Italian peninsula. In doing so, it saw itself as filling a vacuum, and

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<sup>477</sup> The relationship between taste and method is the point of departure, in fact, for A. Momigliano’s essay, Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian.”, pp. 285-315, pp. 286: “But the age of the Antiquaries meant not only a revolution in taste; it meant a revolution in historical method”. Momigliano’s failure to properly excavate the “philosophical implications of antiquarianism, or the antiquarian ‘lifestyle’” are pointed out by Miller in Peter N Miller, “Momigliano, Antiquarianism, and the Cultural Sciences,” ed. Peter N. Miller, *Momigliano and Antiquarianism*, 2007, 3–65, p. 29.

<sup>478</sup> Only relatively recently have intellectual historians or historians of science become interested in understanding taste outside of a narrowly aesthetic or literary context: see Steven Shapin, “The Sciences of Subjectivity,” *Social Studies of Science* 42, no. 2 (2011): 170–84; also some insightful remarks, on the context surveyed in this chapter, Quantin, “Reason and Reasonableness in French Ecclesiastical Scholarship.” pp. 426-8. Quantin equates taste with a kind of *habitus*, and it is of note that it is the conceptual disentanglement of taste from class-based social models, after Bourdieu, which represents the platform for deployment of the idea as tool by historians. In the British context see Christoph Henke, *Common Sense in Early 18th-Century British Literature and Culture: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Politics, 1680–1750* (De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 45-63.

<sup>479</sup> The letter is catalogued out of place, and so unidentified, among Egizio’s letters, BNN MS XIII c91 70, among the letters from Carlo Maiello, though its signature (A.Z.), provenance (Venezia) and the content combined with the date make its author clearly Zeno. None of Maiello’s letters suggest that he had passed the letter on to Egizio, though Maiello and Zeno were correspondents.

acting to both enact and promote scholarly renewal among Italian 'letterati'.<sup>480</sup> Other scholarly journals had been active in Italy since the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century: the *Giornale de' Letterati* active in Rome in the 1660s and 1670s, and the *Giornale de' Lettteriati* edited by the Benedictine scholar Benedetto Bacchini from Parma and then Modena in the 1690s. The *Galleria della Minerva*, also based in Venice, was published between 1696 and 1717, and was the *Giornale's* main rival in Italian journal publication.<sup>481</sup> Vallisnieri wrote to the Barese scholar Giacinto Gimma encouraging him to end his subscription to the *Galleria* and subscribe to the new Venetian *Giornale* instead. Gimma initially asserted that he would continue to subscribe to both:

mi fa ridere la gelosia, ch'egli ha del Giornale, noi baresi ci compravamo, o ci compararemo la Galleria ed il Giornale ancora, benche nella galleria si facesse menzione di quei libri, de quali si parlasse nel Giornale, e così faranno altri.<sup>482</sup>

One of the key factors leading to the short lives of Italian journals was the high cost of production. In a letter in 1708, as the Venetian *Giornale* was just being initiated, Gimma wrote to Vallisnieri, declaring his enthusiasm for the new Venetian initiative. He also described the collapse of a fledgling journal in Parma which had to close for lack of funds, and a wealthy enough patron. Gimma also describes how he once had a plan to start a journal from his home city of Bari. Even as he was able to assemble an editorial board and the support of the local Archbishop, Gimma's journal also failed to be realised for lack of funds, and because it couldn't be printed in Bari:

Ma non essendo la stampa in questa citta, e trattando d'introdurla a nostre spese per questo effetto, non fu possibile, tutto che il mio Archivescovo mi promettesse l'aiuto. Vi bisognava un buon capitale di moneta, che non ho potuto accumulare, e qualche negoziate, a cui prometteva parte del guadagno non volle concorrere, perche non ha inclinazione agli affari letterari.<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>480</sup> The intellectual agenda of the *giornalisti* will be discussed at length in the following section of this chapter. On the *Giornale* in general see Brendan Maurice Dooley, *Science, Politics, and Society in Eighteenth-Century Italy: The Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia and Its World* (New York: Garland Pub., 1991) and Enza Del Tedesco, *Il "Giornale de' letterati d'Italia" trecento anni dopo: scienza, storia, arte, identità (1710-2010) : atti del convegno, Padova, Venezia, Verona, 17-19 novembre 2010* (Pisa, 2012).

<sup>481</sup> Claudio Griggio, "« La Galleria di Minerva » e Venezia : « la più saggia, la più giusta, la più forte di tutte le Repubbliche », " *Cahiers d'études romanes. Revue du CAER*, no. 12 (2002): 13–24.

<sup>482</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 10.5.1710, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, Rovigo (BACR), Conc. 341.34 15.

<sup>483</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 1.12.1708, BACR, Conc. 341.34 5.

The other problem faced by prospective journalists was the enormous work-load directing a journal demanded. This meant both that many journals, such as Bacchini's *Giornale* and the *Galleria*, only published issues intermittently, which negatively affected their reputation. A lack of care could also lead to mistakes or poor formatting, which could also damage the reputation of literary journals. In 1709, as Zeno and Vallisnieri were preparing their *Giornale* for publication, Gimma described in detail in a letter to Vallisnieri, how, in his view, the index of journals ought to be organized, and has some disparaging words for the *Galleria*:

non aver l'indice delle cose notabili, e riesce assai scomod'andar ritrovando alcune cose particolari dentro i Tomi, ed alle volte non vi è questo tempo. Io lo dico per isperienza...<sup>484</sup>

As well as through his prodigious energy and dedication, and by establishing a strong editorial board and wealthy Venetian patrons, Zeno's strategy to ensure the vitality and regularity of the Venetian *Giornale* was to establish a network of regional distributors and 'editors-at-large' across the Italian peninsula. In this way, Zeno tapped into pre-existing intellectual networks between like-minded scholars; it's also important to recognise the active role the process of producing the *Giornale* played in strengthening these networks. Given his growing reputation as a scholar, and his contacts in Naples, Rome, and Venice it is perhaps not surprising that Matteo Egizio was among Zeno's key contact in Naples.<sup>485</sup> In the Italian South Zeno also distributed editions of the *Giornale* to Giuseppe Valletta and Biagio Maioli d'Avitabile in Naples, to Domenico De Angelis in Lecce and to Gimma in Bari.<sup>486</sup> That Egizio was the senior point of contact is perhaps suggested by Zeno remarking that "Vi ringrazio per la distribuzione che ne avrò fatto a S.S. Valletta, e de Angelis", while he also suggests Egizio sent a number of copies to Sicily, where Antonio Mongitore was Zeno's key distributor.<sup>487</sup>

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<sup>484</sup> Gimma to Vallisnieri, 15.6.1709, BAR Conc. 341.34 8; also 31.8.1709, 341.34.9; 25.2.1710, 34.34.11.

<sup>485</sup> Egizio was first put in contact with Zeno in 1702 by Egizio's long-term Venetian correspondent Bernardo Trevisan, a Venetian patrician, scholar and close friend of Zeno: see Trevisan to Egizio, 5.10.1702, BNN MS XIII C93 189; 20.9.1704, BNN MS XIII C93 208; and 19.8.1705, BNN MS XIII C93 211,

<sup>486</sup> As evidenced in the administrative papers of Zeno, studied by Brendan Dooley at Zeno's archive at the Biblioteca Marciana (Mss. Ital. 490-1 (=1727-8), Dooley, *Science, Politics, and Society in Eighteenth-Century Italy*, pp. 181-185. These only cover the first few volumes of the *Giornale*, though we can be sure by correspondence that Egizio continued his important role as a regional distributor and point of contact for the *Giornalisti* in Venice.

<sup>487</sup> Zeno, Venice to Egizio, Naples, 7.7.1710, BNN MS XIII c91 70.

The content of Zeno's 1710 letter to Egizio concerned the most pressing erudite controversies of the day, with an emphasis upon those involving Neapolitan scholars. These show, on the one hand, Egizio's collaboration with the *Giornale's* editorial policy, and on the other the kinds of scholarly controversies in which the two scholars took an interest. Prominent was the ongoing controversy between the *Giornale* and Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile and the contested manuscript of 'Riccobaldi', the subject of the following chapter. The *Giornale's* confrontation with Vico in relation to his *Antiquissima* was referred to, with Zeno asking Egizio to send the journalists the title of Vico's forthcoming dissertation. The publication of the Lecce scholar Domenico De Angelis' new compendium of *Letterati Salernitani* was praised, and its wide circulation remarked upon. Fontanini's letters to Egizio later in 1710 show Zeno asking Egizio to corroborate the claims made by De Angelis about the Roman poet Ennius, who De Angelis controversially claimed as hailing from Lecce.<sup>488</sup> Zeno, through Fontanini, asked Egizio's opinion about the arguments made by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Neapolitan scholar Girolamo Colonna, whose *Ennii poetae vetustissimi Fragmenta*, originally published in 1585, was reprinted in 1707. Egizio's response is not clear, but the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Giornale* used Colonna's argument – that there were two cities called Rudia in Southern Italy, and neither of them directly correlated to Lecce – to dispute De Angelis' patriotic scholarship.<sup>489</sup> As this case indicates, Egizio may reasonably be interpreted as the *Giornale's* point of reference in Naples for information.

De Angelis' scholarly patriotism clouded his interpretation of antiquity, and this was one grounds for his criticism by the *Giornale*. Another reason why De Angelis opened himself up to criticism in the years around the founding of the *Giornale* was that he became embroiled in one of the significant jurisdictional struggles between the Church and the State in Southern Italy, which had been triggered by the arrival of the Austrian viceroy. In 1709 De Angelis published, anonymously, several *Lettere Apologetiche Istorico-legali* disputing the attempts by the local government in Lecce to challenge the authority of the Bishop of Lecce, Fabrizio Pignatelli.<sup>490</sup> De Angelis had a negative

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<sup>488</sup> Fontanini to Egizio, 22.11.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 223; De Angelis, *Della Patria d'Ennio dissertazione*, 1701, reprinted in 1712.

<sup>489</sup> GLL, vol. 12, p. 418.

<sup>490</sup> Only a few copies of De Angelis' *Lettere Apologetiche istorico-legali nelle quali rispondendosi ad alcune scritture, pubblicate in nome del governatore di Lecce*, 1709-10 are accounted for – I consulted the copy in the Biblioteca Societa Napoletana di Storia Patria, II STANZA 01.E (12; The case, which escalated, demanding the intervention from the viceroy, who hired a young Pietro Giannone to present the case for

reputation among some of the scholars of Southern Italy, which may have been in part due to his political orientation and tendency to polemicise; D'Avitabile wrote to Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni of De Angelis in January 1701, describing him as

religioso andando tutto il giorno di già e di la, senza risolvere niente. Io non ho conosciuto uomo più stravagante di costui, non ritrovandosagli un atomo di fermezza.<sup>491</sup>

De Angelis' explicit pro-curialist sympathies might have offended Egizio and Zeno, who, on the one hand, express a keen interest in the jurisdictional struggle between civil and ecclesiastical authority, and indeed in critical ecclesiastical history in general, and on the other wanted scholars to remain detached from political polemics. Zeno remarked that "la nuova notizia alla maniera benefiziaria non sono stato carissime", and that he was awaiting the delivery from Egizio of Gaetano Argento's *De Re Beneficaria*, published in 1709, a forthright anticurial text in which Argento disputed ecclesiastical immunity in the Kingdom of Naples. 1710 constituted the most intensive phase of the scholarly conflict between Giusto Fontanini and Ludovico Antonio Muratori, two supporters of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, regarding the territorial dispute around the border town of Comacchio. Zeno applauds Fontanini's second reply as "dotta e ingegnosa; i sono certi punti ai quali difficolta gli avversari avranno vi di rispondete" though shows no political appetite to support one side or the other.<sup>492</sup>

The logic behind the dispute between Muratori and Fontanini was that the surest way to resolve political and jurisdictional conflict, including conflict between civil and ecclesiastical institutions, was to return to the historical record; both scholars could agree on this in principle, though their historical research suggested contrary resolutions. This logic of the instrumental and intrinsic value of critical historical research was supported by the *Giornale*, even as it could have controversial implications. Zeno's letter to Egizio also discussed the case of Benedetto Bacchini's 1708 edition of Andreas Agnelli's *Liber Pontificalis*, which had been the first book reviewed in the first edition of the *Giornale*.<sup>493</sup> Bacchini's edition of Agnelli's *Liber* had caused

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civil jurisdiction, see G. Vallone, 'Conflitti giurisdizionali nel Salento', Cazzato, Costantini, and Vallone, *San Pietro in Lama*, pp. 291-331.

<sup>491</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 21.1.1701, BAR, *Fondo Arcadia*, MS 24, f. 182.

<sup>492</sup> Zeno, Venice to Egizio, Naples, 7.7.1710, BNN MS XIII C91 70

<sup>493</sup> GLL, vol 1, pp. 69-113

controversy in Rome because Agnelli's work discussed the schismatic episcopal hierarchy of the Church of Ravenna during the 9<sup>th</sup> century, seemingly granting the system legitimacy. Bacchini's *Agnelli* offered an accurate edition of an important, and as of then unpublished, Medieval text, but there had been some moves in the curia to censor his work. In this context, the *Giornale's* move to give symbolic priority to a long, appreciative and honest review of Bacchini's *Agnelli* clarified its commitment to historical research against polemic.<sup>494</sup>

Zeno and Egizio were both themselves engaged in researching and discussing ecclesiastical history in the years around 1710. Zeno wrote in praise of Egizio's "bellisomo... osservazione circa le Chiesa dichiarate metropolitane degli Imperadori" adding "alle quali vi sarebbe stato che aggiungere, ma vi ben vedete siamo in Italia dove non si puo dire, ne stampar, tutto." This is clear evidence of Egizio pursuing, and being convinced by, historical research beyond the limits of the regime of ecclesiastical censorship in which Italian scholars worked. The paragraph immediately following this contains Zeno's response to what seems to have been Egizio's enquiry about the "sepulchre degli antichi cristiani dentro le chiese".<sup>495</sup> Zeno mapped out a series of litmus-test questions Egizio should pose: firstly, the time and place of the specific church's establishment should be ascertained; secondly, the political circumstances of the church's founding, and whether it was before or after the edict of Constantine. Zeno concludes that in the early years of the Church, it was common practice for Christians to be buried outside of ecclesiastical grounds, and outside of urban areas, following the Roman custom. On the contrary, princes were often buried inside churches, Zeno citing the example of several emperors buried in the Church of St. Peter's, in Rome. At this point Zeno cites a work by the German protestant scholar Hieronymus Gundling, his *De Origine Sepulcrorum in Templis*, published in his 1707 *Observationes Selectae ad rem literariam spectantes*.<sup>496</sup> In this text Gundling claimed, Zeno recounts, "che l'uso de sepulchre nelle Chiese e nelle usate de' Martiri nascesse dall'avarizia de' preti e de' monaci", as a means to aggrandize their churches. This opinion, Zeno concludes, "non credo che a Roma fare per piacer molto una sì fatta opinione." This was a rather

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<sup>494</sup> This is the reading of Arnaldo Momigliano, "Benedetto Bacchini," in *Terzo Contributo Alla Storia Degli Studi Classici e Del Mondo Antico* (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1966), 121-34, espec. pp. 125-8; On Bacchini see ch. 6.

<sup>495</sup> Zeno, Venice to Egizio, Naples, 7.7.1710, BNN MS XIII c91 70

<sup>496</sup> Hieronymus Gundling, *Observationes Selectae ad rem literariam spectantes*, vol. 1, 1707, pp. 137-161

scandalous notion, one which Zeno recognises the force of, and is happy to share privately with Egizio.

### Egizio as editor-at-large for the *Giornale*

As these examples indicate, Egizio's relationship with Zeno was, on the one hand, as a regional editor for his *Giornale* – Zeno thanks Egizio for his annotations on a draft for the forthcoming edition – but also a scholarly colleague, exchanging books, references, method, ideas and arguments at the sharp end of Catholic ecclesiastical historical scholarship. Zeno wrote of Egizio to his close friend Anton Francesco Marmi in June 1710, describing the Neapolitan scholar as “veramente dottissimo e gentilissimo letterato”, and on praising Egizio's transcription of a manuscript poem “del poeta Gennaro Napoletano” he remarks “dopo l'originale, a dirle il vero, non ho veduta cosa più bella.”<sup>497</sup> The length, content and context of Zeno's 1710 letter to Egizio suggest that it was one extract from a longer correspondence over several years, though no other letters are held in Egizio's archive in the Naples. This is confirmed by two letters from Egizio in Zeno's archive in the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, one dated earlier, the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 1709, and another later, the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1716. The 1709 letter is mainly concerned with a discussion about, and lengthy transcription of, the lyrical poem entitled the ‘Sei età dell'uomo’ by Pietro Jacopo Ferraro. Not mentioning the *Giornale*, or sacred erudition, Zeno's 1710 letter indicates that Egizio must have written to Zeno at least once between the two letters.<sup>498</sup> The 1716 letter is a brief note, a comment on the poetic work of the Neapolitan aristocrat Aurora Sanseverino, and a note about the life of Homer reviewed in the 23<sup>rd</sup> volume of the *Giornale* published earlier that year.<sup>499</sup>

In 1718 Zeno was appointed ‘Poeto Caesareo’ in Vienna. This coincided with the eclipse of the most dynamic phase of the Venetian *Giornale's* activity, indicating the extent to which Zeno was the project's life force. Upon departure to Vienna, Zeno handed editorial authority over to his brother, Pier Caterino Zeno. From this date Pier Caterino Zeno appears to have been Egizio's main contact in Venice, and Egizio remained an

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<sup>497</sup> Zeno, Venice to Marmi, Florence, 6.1710, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 1, p. 227-8

<sup>498</sup> BMV, It, X, 82 = 6711, ff. 141r/155v; although not dated on the manuscript, the catalogue lists the letter as begin dated 17.12.1709.

<sup>499</sup> BMV, It, X, 54 = 6417, ff. 179r-180v.

important collaborator in the editing and curating of Neapolitan themes in the *Giornale*, which continued to be published and distributed through the late 1710s, 1720s and into the 1730s. Although no letters from Pier Caterino Zeno are preserved in Egizio's Naples archive, eleven letters from Egizio are contained with Zeno's correspondence held in Venice, dated between 1719 and 1730.<sup>500</sup> They give insight into the quantity of books moving between Venice and Naples under Egizio's direction; Egizio's book-supplier in Venice is the libreria of "I Sig. Volpi".<sup>501</sup> The first letter, from 16<sup>th</sup> May 1719, explicitly presents Egizio's correspondent with Pier Caterino as replacing that with Apostolo, now in Vienna, from whom Egizio has not received a letter from for some time. Egizio is continuing his distribution of the *Giornale*, having received "un involtino di copie del Giornale XXX. Ne ho dato uno a signori Valletta". A crate of books going in the opposite direction contained eleven copies of Egizio's *Serie degli Imperadori*, which as we have seen was being distributed during these years, having been published several years earlier. Egizio's letter contained direction for the distribution in Venice, including one copy in Apostolo Zeno's library, and one in the library of Bernardino Trevisan. Being indebted to Zeno, Egizio presented the books as a gift. Other books sent from Naples to Venice include the *Vita Civile* of Paolo Mattia Doria, and 'il libro di Paoli', probably Sebastiano Paoli's *De Ritu Ecclesiae Neritiae*, 1719.

In the 1719 letters to Pier Caterino Zeno, Egizio was still playing an active role in the editing of the *Giornale* and its articles relating to Southern Italian scholarship. In a letter in May Egizio explicitly describes his preparation of the 'novelle letterari' section on Neapolitan scholarship, giving news about new publications and literary news from different regions in Italy, included at the end of each edition of the *Giornale*. The context, and Egizio's assertion that he will arrange the section "come ho fatto per lo passato", indicates that this is a regular editorial role Egizio played.<sup>502</sup> After 1719, as the *Giornale's* publication began to be less regular, Egizio played a less prominent role, handing over most of the regional-editorial responsibility to the Salerno-based Dominican monk Tomasso Maria Alfani. In 1728, remembering perhaps the *Giornale's* heyday in the early 1710s, Egizio laments to P.C. Zeno that "i Giornale sono stranamente

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<sup>500</sup> BMV, It, X, 62 = 6708, ff. 27r-28r; 29v-30r; 31v-32v; 66rv; 79rv; 96rv; 120rv; 140v; 156rv; 175rv; 186v-187r; these letters obviously also represent a small remaining part of a larger lost correspondence.

<sup>501</sup> Egizio to P.C. Zeno, It, X, 62 = 6708, f. 29v-30r.

<sup>502</sup> Egizio to P.C. Zeno, 16.5.1719, It, X, 62 = 6708, ff. 27r-28r.

raffreddato, e pur le stampe d'Italia non sono mica più insignificante di quell che prima erano".<sup>503</sup>

After relocating to Vienna, Apostolo Zeno appears to have maintained a relationship with Egizio, both directly, though there are no preserved letters between the two, and indirectly, through common contacts and associates. Having attained the patronage of the Emperor and access to the imperial court from 1718, Zeno quickly became an important figure in the Italian community in Vienna during the late 1710s and 1720s. In the 1720s several minor political-administrative figures for whom Egizio acted as a Neapolitan patron travelled to Vienna to take up positions in the Imperial bureaucracy. In every recorded case, they cite Zeno as a point of reference in the Imperial capital, on the basis of their shared friendship with Egizio. Antonio Tardioli, writing on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1722, described Zeno's position in the Imperial court, singling him out alongside Johann Benedikt Gentilotti as among the more prominent Italians in Vienna, distinguished also by being Egizio's friend.<sup>504</sup> Also in 1722 Michele Sanfelice transferred to Vienna, from where he kept Egizio informed of political discussion in the Imperial Court and the Council of the Spanish Territories. Having also served diplomatically in Prague, Sanfelice was seeking a position on the Italian peninsula. To this end he discussed his chances of becoming secretary to the Viceroy of Sicily, Conte Almenara, with Zeno acting as his Viennese patron, and Egizio his contact in Naples – Sanfelice suggested that Zeno would write to Egizio on the matter.<sup>505</sup> Five years later, another political contact of Egizio's, Francesco Antonio Spada, who had worked with Sanfelice in Prague, discussed meeting Zeno in Vienna, and "ho fatto lunga commemorazione di V.S. Ill.ma con questo S. Apostolo Zeno", and promises to forward Zeno's letter to Egizio.<sup>506</sup>

Establishing Egizio's friendship and collaboration with Zeno and the *Giornale* is important as it presents the former as an active participant in the most persistent, and successful, attempt to reform scholarship in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy. In order fully grasp the significance of this association, the *Giornale* needs to be understood not only as a passive mechanism for scholarly communication and exchange, but rather as an attempt

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<sup>503</sup> Egizio, Naples to P.C. Zeno, Venice, 10.12.1728, It, X, 62 = 6708, 175rv.

<sup>504</sup> Tardioli, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, 3.6.1722, BNN MS XIII C93 118.

<sup>505</sup> Sanfelice, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, 18.5.1722, BNN MS XIII C93 93.

<sup>506</sup> Spada, Vienna to Egizio, Naples, 2.8.1727, BNN MS XIII C93 110; on Spada as an anti-curial figure, see Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone* (Milano: R. Ricciardi, 1970), pp. 246-63 – Spada's correspondence with Egizio shows the latter as supporting Spada's scholarship.

by a specific community of scholarly and literary figures to moderate, contest and re-order the intellectual culture and environment. Beyond the practicalities of information circulation and distribution, the *Giornale* was also the front for a project to *institutionalize* a set of scholarly practices, intellectual norms and epistemic, aesthetic and ethical virtues. This project was enacted principally through the *Giornale's* editorial policy, as it decided which texts to review, how to review them, and which arguments, books and scholars to support or condemn. Considering the general and particular conditions surrounding the establishment of the Venetian *Giornale* clarifies the importance of this approach

### The Establishment of the *Giornale*, after Muratori

In his 1710 *Introduzione* to the first edition of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, Scipione Maffei<sup>507</sup> presented the rationale for initiating the journal, the factors which made it necessary and worthwhile, as well as the context in which the *giornalisti* envisaged their project. Initially he reviewed the recent history of literary journals, those initiated in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, but most essentially using the establishment of the Parisian *Journal des Sçavans* in 1665 as a point of reference for the style of literary journal to which Maffei, Zeno and Valisnieri aspired. This was followed in 1682 by the Leipzig based *Acta Eruditorum*, edited principally by Otto Menckenius, and in 1684 by the *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, edited by "il famoso Baile"<sup>508</sup>. Various other literary enterprises are surveyed, notably the English *Philosophical Transactions*, Baltic, Swiss and German 'Nuove Lettere' formed around 1700, as well as the Paris-based Jesuit *Mémoires de Trévoux*. The latter is praised, though Maffei notes that its general tone "mal corrispondono alla purgatezza del rimanente i lor giudizi del gusto Italiano nell'Eloquenza e nella Poesia". Maffei further elaborates upon the poor treatment of Italians by French journals and French scholarly culture, stressing the distinctiveness of the Italian language and erudition fostered by it.<sup>509</sup> Italy's intellectual reputation had been damaged in recent years, Maffei writes, and has no well-established literary

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<sup>507</sup> On the specific authorship of the *Introduzione* see the introduction to the republished 2009 edition, Francesco Scipione Maffei, *Letterati d'Italia: introduzione al "Giornale" (1710)*, ed. Francesca Brunetti and Cesare De Michelis (Venezia: Marsilio, 2009).

<sup>508</sup> GLI vol 1, 1710, p. 21.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26-28.

journal with which to represent its scholarship on a pan-European stage. Maffei narrates the attempts to establish such a journal on the Italian peninsula since the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century, which had failed due to their inconsistency, and failure to secure the patronage of rulers and elites.<sup>510</sup>

In this environment, the merits of the new *Giornale*, as presented by Maffei, are largely practical: to give scholars the opportunity to learn about recent discoveries and ongoing scholarship, to publish and promote their own work, to enhance literary “commercio” between different parts of the Italian peninsula, and to cultivate the “universalità di cognizione” central to the idea of a “uomo di lettere”.<sup>511</sup> As this final point suggests, the *Giornale* should also promote a specific set of values and scholarly practices and virtues:

il ottimo gusto italiano... come soffriracci più'l cuore di lasciar correr grido che in Italia sieno mancati gli studi, perito il buon gusto, infievoliti gl'ingegni?<sup>512</sup>

The *Giornale's* ambition is to defend, promote and cultivate “il ottimo gusto italiano”, both against the slander and dismissal of foreign scholars, and against its actual decline. The *Giornale* not only planned to select and publicize the most important Italian scholarship across the peninsula to a broader audience, but also to judge, and more generally curate, the Italian scholarly environment:

non si farà qui registro di tutte le cose che in Italia si danno in luce... il far relazione di libri sciocchi (quando privilegio di materia, o razione particolare non l'esigesse) non solo è inutile, ma dannoso, poiche fa gettare il tempo, e vanamente ingombrar l'intelletto. Non si giudicasse pero che ommessi fossero per poca stima tutti quegli che non si trovassero riferiti.<sup>513</sup>

The journalists, Maffei states, would take care to not needlessly offend scholars, but through their judgement - “il carico più importante de' Giornalisti” – they would seek to promote only those opinions conducive to “la perfezione delle belle lettere e delle scienze”.<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-8.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid, pp. 51-2.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

The *Giornale* as an institution, and Maffei's manifesto in his *Introduzione*, have often been framed by Italian scholarship in patriotic or proto-nationalistic terms.<sup>515</sup> Its 'Italianità' is an important dimension of the *Giornale's* intellectual agenda, but to further understand the *Giornale's* call for a rehabilitation of the Italian Republic of Letters along the lines of 'gusto' it is useful to dwell upon and contextualise the sole referenced in Maffei's *Introduzione*, cited as the inspiration for their project: the *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto* by Lamindo Pritanio.<sup>516</sup>

Lamindo Pritanio was the increasingly-widely-recognised pseudonym of the Modena-based librarian and scholar Ludovico Antonio Muratori – in Zeno's 1710 letter to Egizio he identifies Pritanio as Muratori.<sup>517</sup> Muratori first used the pseudonym in his short 1703 tract titled *i primi disegni della repubblica letteraria*, and then again in 1708 for the first edition of his *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto*.<sup>518</sup> Both these projects were similarly, on one level, aimed at a reinvigoration of the Italian republic of letters relative to that of other European countries, at prompting more scholarship, and ensuring its patronage by princes. At the same time, and like Maffei's *Introduzione*, they also contained a normative dimension, promoting a specific kind of scholarship, defined through its content, form and social framing, whilst criticizing scholarship to which they objected. Besides the explicit reference to his work in Maffei's *Introduzione*, there are other reasons to draw a direct line between Muratori's scholarship and the *Giornale's* agenda. Muratori was a close correspondent of Zeno, Maffei and Vallisnieri, through the years of the formation and activity of the *Giornale*, acting as a regional distributor and editor of the journal for central Italy, much as Egizio did for Naples and the Italian South. Secondly, arguably as important and influential as Muratori's 1708 *Riflessioni* was the

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<sup>515</sup> Francoise Waquet, "Per Gloria e Onore Dell'Italia". Sur Le Contexte Ideologique de 'Giornale,'" in *Il "Giornale de" Letterati d'Italia" Trecento Anni Dopo: Scienza, Storia, Arte, Identità (1710-2010) : Atti Del Convegno, Padova, Venezia, Verona, 17-19 Novembre 2010*, ed. Enza Del Tedesco, 2012, 13–20.; on the national dimension of Italian and French erudition circa 1700 see Francoise Waquet, *Le modèle français et l'Italie savante. Conscience de soi et perception de l'autre dans la République des lettres (1660-1750)* (École française de Rome, 1989), and Paola Gambarota, *Irresistible Signs: The Genius of Language and Italian National Identity* (University of Toronto Press, 2011).pp. 59-144.

<sup>516</sup> Footnote (a) cited on GLI, vol. 1, 1710, p. 47.

<sup>517</sup> Zeno, Venice to Egizio, Naples, 7.7.1710, BNN MS XIII C91 70

<sup>518</sup> Muratori used the pseudonym for several later publications, notably his 1727 *De Ingeniorum moderation in religionis negotio*, his 1740 *De Superstitione vitanda*, his 1748 *Raccolta di scritture concernenti la diminuzione delle feste di precetto*, and his *Della regolata divozione de cristiani* published in the same year.

preface to the work, the *Introduzione all'opera cioè la Teoria del Buon Gusto* by Bernardo Trevisan, a close friend of Zeno and collaborator with the *Giornale's* editorial work.<sup>519</sup>

Muratori's *i primi disegni della Repubblica Letteraria* was composed and circulated as a manuscript in 1703, and not published until 1715, when it appeared in the second edition of his *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto*.<sup>520</sup> The *Primi disegni* mapped out concisely many of the themes expanded upon in the *Riflessioni*, which were then drawn upon and featured prominently in the editorial manifesto and editorial strategy and tone of the *Giornale*. The short text is divided into several sections: an introduction; a series of "proposizioni intorno alle Leggi e al Governo della Repubblica Letteraria Italiana";<sup>521</sup> "del soggetto, e fine della Repubblica Letteraria";<sup>522</sup> "de' protettori";<sup>523</sup> and finally "altri disegni".<sup>524</sup> More bluntly than Maffei's *Introduzione*, the *primi disegni* laments the waning vitality of Italian intellectual culture, structured in petty and small-minded regional academies, without the ambition, scope or resources to engage with broader intellectual trends. Muratori's ambition is that:

tutte queste Accademie collegate insieme potrebbeono costituire una sola Accademia, e Repubblica Letteraria, l'oggetto di cui fosse *perfezionar le Arti, e Scienze col mostrarne, correggerne gli abusi, e coll'insegnarne l'uso vero...* la riformaione, e l'accrescimento d'esse Arti, e Scienze per beneficio della Cattolica Religione, per gloria dell'Italia, per profitto pubblico, e privato.<sup>525</sup>

Muratori envisaged this imagined community as an aristocratic republic, in which sovereignty and legislative authority lies with the most skilled and highly regarded letterati of Italy, 'Arconti' whose responsibility would be the "stabilimento, l'accrescimento, la mutazion delle Leggi, l'elezione de' Protettori e Ministri, il dare i voti in tutto gli affari, e l'accettar nuovi Collegati".<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Zeno wrote to Fontanini in praise of Trevisani's *Meditazioni*, a letter published in 1704 as *Lettera Discorsiva di Apostolo Zeno al Signor Abate Giusto Fontanini intorno alla grand'opera delle Meditazioni Filosofiche del Signor Bernardo Trevisano*.

<sup>520</sup> On the 1715 edition, see the final part of this chapter.

<sup>521</sup> Lamindo Pritanio, *I Primi Disegni*, p. 6 – here cited in Muratori, *Opere*, vol. 8, 1768, pp. 1-35.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5 – Italics in the original.

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7.

The responsibility of the Republic's 'arconti' would be primarily to delineate the kinds of scholarship deemed positive and to condemn those deemed negative to the well-being of erudition at large:

raccogliere e registrar modestamente tutti i difetti, abusi, e pregiudizi, che a lui pareranno mischiati con quella Scienza, o Arte, o con la maniera d'insegnar quella Scienza, o Arte.<sup>527</sup>

Through their publications and their criticism, their "componimenti" and "Critica", the 'arconti' should then "abbattere gl'Idoli" underpinning "il Gusto Cattivo".<sup>528</sup> As well as better organization, communication and the expanded teaching of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Muratori's *Primi Disegni* also aimed to encourage an intellectual attitude, or sensibility, of moderation, to avoid the excesses of the "ostinato sofistecheria de' Vecchi Peripatetici" and the "smoderata, e sospetta audacità" of the Moderns.<sup>529</sup> In all aspects of learning and life, a critical approach to the dogmas of antiquity should nonetheless not lead contemporary scholars to "canonizzare I Moderni", which is equally as reckless. In each case a rationalist reliance upon logic and metaphysics rather than a cautious empiricism is the recurrent force obstructing "la Mente nostra allo scoprimento della Verità".<sup>530</sup>

This rule of intellectual moderation found its most significant manifestation in the theological norms Muratori would seek to institutionalize in his literary republic. He divided theology into four categories: scholastic theology, moral theology, polemical theology and dogmatic theology. The first two, in Muratori's view, ought to be "purgate nella Chiesa Cattolica", on account of their tendency to "intralciata la gravità di questa divina Scienza colla profana Filosofia de' Gentili, e l'averne composta una spinose continua Metafisica."<sup>531</sup> Speculative reasoning as well as moral philosophy ought to be rendered distinct from theology. The cultivation of theological truth is rather the realm of dogmatic theology through a return to scripture, to ancient sources, to the systematic historical study of the Church Fathers and early Ecclesiastical Councils.<sup>532</sup> Erudition and

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<sup>527</sup> Ibid., pp. 13-14.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>530</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>532</sup> Polemic theology is cited as necessary to defend orthodoxy against heresy.

historical scholarship, directed to things sacred and things profane, lie at the core of Muratori's programme for scholarly reform in part because they underpin a model of religious reform; the unity of these, in the model of scholarly piety, is fundamental in understanding the proposals at play, both in the *Primi disegni* and in the *Giornale*.<sup>533</sup>

Muratori's *primi disegni* represented an acute sociology of knowledge, and a sensitivity to how scholarship might reorder and rehabilitate itself through the agenda and collaboration of its prominent practitioners. Creating structures managed by scholars themselves to systematically monitor and review scholarly output was itself a powerful mechanism with which to ward against the prevalence of dogmatist and rationalist excess; in short, it made scholarship accountable. Muratori's project for a revitalized landscape of Italian erudition was not universally popular among the Italian scholarly elite. Upon reading the *primi disegni* in manuscript, and probably unaware of its true author, Francesco Bianchini wrote a lengthy letter to Muratori in February 1705 explaining his objection to the project. Bianchini challenged the suggestion that scholars should "entrare in lega letterario di nazione contro nazione", and espoused a more utopian view of the universal scholarly community, encompassing "oltramontani... con oltramarini, o con gli stessi Indiani e Cinesi" as well as "le antecedenti o con le future".<sup>534</sup> Bianchini's concerns related to the reduction of scholarship to an enhancer of national and cultural reputation, and the limits of the regionalization of scholarship. Muratori, on the other hand, was working against the limitations of Bianchini's utopian approach, setting forth a practical reform which would also better bind scholarship to the political world, both through patronage and through engagement with the problems of their day. Bianchini objected to the historical and engaged, rather than trans-historical and cosmopolitan, interpretation of the Republic of Letters in the *primi disegni*, which Muratori recognised as central for its vitality in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

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<sup>533</sup> Françoise Waquet, "De La 'Repubblica Letteraria' Au 'Pio Letterato'. Organisation Du Savoir et Modeles Intellectuels Dans L'Italie de Muratori," in *Naples, Rome, Florence: Une Histoire Comparée Des Milieux Intellectuels Italiens, XVIIe-XVIIIe Siècles*, ed. Antonella Romano, Jean Boutier, and Brigitte Marin (Rome, 2005), 637–50. Françoise Waquet, "De La 'Repubblica Letteraria' Au 'Pio Letterato'. Organisation Du Savoir et Modeles Intellectuels Dans L'Italie de Muratori," in *Naples, Rome, Florence: Une Histoire Comparée Des Milieux Intellectuels Italiens, XVIIe-XVIIIe Siècles*, ed. Antonella Romano, Jean Boutier, and Brigitte Marin (Rome, 2005), 637–50; Bernward Schmidt, *Virtuelle Büchersäle: Lektüre und Zensur gelehrter Zeitschriften an der römischen Kurie 1665-1765* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2009), pp. 201-7; A very broad overview, see Schmidt, "In Erudition There Is No Heresy'. The Humanities in Baroque Rome'."

<sup>534</sup> Bianchini, Rome to Muratori, Modena, 07.02.1705, in *Edizione Nazionale del Carteggio Muratoriano, Carteggi con Bertagni... Bianchini*, ed. E. Ferraglio and F. Marri, (Modena: 2014).

## Contesting and Codifying 'Buon Gusto' in Muratori's Italy

The recurrent term used to underpin the scholarly ideals described by Maffei in the introduction to the *Giornale* and by Muratori in the *Primi Disegni* is 'gusto', described variously as "ottimo", "buon" or "cattivo". This found its clearest codification in Muratori's 1708 *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto*, a work which was re-printed numerous times through the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The discourse about 'gusto' in early modern Italy, and 'goût' in early modern France, has often been placed in the context of poetry, aesthetics and literature.<sup>535</sup> This was a pertinent context, but 'taste' also signified a more amorphous intellectual sensibility and mentality, a way of behaving which has been described as a *habitus*.<sup>536</sup> Most significantly, these were by no means distinct enquiries: attitudes to language, literature and aesthetics both conditioned and reflected intellectual, theological and scholarly dynamics. Before turning to the 1708 text itself, and its later editions, in order to better stress the relationship between Muratori's *Riflessioni* and the project of scholarly reform enacted by the *Giornale*, it is instructive to look in greater depth at the nominally aesthetic and literary debates of the preceding decade.

The crucial context for the emergence of Muratori's "buon gusto" as a scholarly ideal was the so-called Orsi-Bouhours debate. In 1687 the French Jesuit Dominique Bouhours published *La Manière de Bien Penser*, a work which grew out of Bouhours' participation in late 17<sup>th</sup> century French literary reform, along with Nicolas Boileau and René Rapin, along broadly 'neo-classicist' lines, advocating the curation of a simpler prose, and a naturalistic purity, in both cases critical of what was seen as the excess of the baroque.<sup>537</sup> Bouhours' anti-baroque polemic became notorious among Italians principally because of its virulent criticism of the Italian poetic tradition and language at

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<sup>535</sup> Ann T Delehanty, *Literary Knowing in Neoclassical France: From Poetics to Aesthetics* (Lanham: Bucknell University Press, 2013).; Vernon Hyde Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>536</sup> see J. L. Quantin on Mabillon and Tillemont, in Quantin, "Reason and Reasonableness in French Ecclesiastical Scholarship." pp. 426-8.

<sup>537</sup> On Bouhours in general see B. Beugnot, "Le Père Bouhours Ou de La Délicatesse'," *Littératures Classiques* 86, no. 1 (2015): 231-40; in context, see Delehanty, *Literary Knowing in Neoclassical France*. on Bouhours, pp. 53-78. Delehanty is here building upon the work of Nicholas Cronk, *The Classical Sublime: French Neoclassicism and the Language of Literature* (Charlottesville: Rockwood Press, 2003) on Bouhours, pp. 51-73, focussing more on his earlier *Entretiens* (1671).

large. In an Italian context the Neapolitan poet Giambattista Marino became the archetype of ornamental and obscure baroque poetics, a 'marinismo' more interested in excessive embellishment than truth. In his polemic *Bouhours* transposed this argument into a critique of the Italian language in general, comparing it negatively with French.<sup>538</sup>

A flurry of Italian works emerged between 1699 and 1708 by senior and aspiring figures from the Italian erudite strata, notably Giusto Fontanini, Ludovico Antonio Muratori, Anton Maria Salvini, Girolamo Baruffaldi and Apostolo Zeno. Most significant was the vast compilation overseen by the Bolognese scholar Giangiuseppe Orsi that defended the Italian tradition, and attacked aspects of Bouhours' *La Maniere*, and the works of his French contemporaries. There was here, evidently, a strong sub-text of Franco-Italian posturing between two scholarly communities;<sup>539</sup> similarly the collision has sometimes been presented as neo-classical French scholars clashing with Italian defenders of the Baroque. The Italian scholars collected around Orsi as a figurehead were generally also, however, critical of the excesses of Baroque poetry; many were participants in the projects of the Accademia della Crusca, aiming to perfect language to its core principles, and were members of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, presenting a similarly 'Neo-classical', naturalistic and pastoral poetic form. Bouhours' Italian opponents espoused, however, a fundamentally different conception of the relationship between language, history and truth to that proposed by Bouhours.

Bouhours' anti-baroque polemics emerged from his combination of Cartesian rationalism with a form of Jesuitical theology. Bouhours was influenced by the linguistic theories of the Port-Royal scholars such as Antoine Arnauld, Pierre Nicole and Claude Lancelot, as well as Bernard Lamy, whose works from the mid-to-late 17<sup>th</sup> Century proposed to purge language and prose of unnecessary ornamentation, so as to reduce it to its clear and distinct meaning. Bouhours rejected, however, the 'Jansenistic' theological contentions of these scholars which, orientating around the Fall, sought to stress the ontological limitations of human thought and language. Contra this, Bouhours drew direct parallels between the encapsulation of truth in language, the human contemplation of the ineffable sublime, and divine revelation. For Bouhours, the agenda

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<sup>538</sup> Gambarota, *Irresistible Signs*. pp. 59-72.

<sup>539</sup> The Orsi-Bouhours debate as a site for proto-nationalist posturing has been looked at recently by Gambarota, *Irresistible Signs*, chapter 2, pp. 59-98, as well as by Waquet, *Le modèle français et l'Italie savante. Conscience de soi et perception de l'autre dans la République des lettres (1660-1750)*.

of simplifying language was underpinned by the inherent affinity between things, ideas and words, itself structured around a continuum between human and divine orders.<sup>540</sup> The supremacy of French in Bouhours' taxonomy of language was a reflection of its privileged capacity to perform this task more effectively than any other language. 'Bon Goût' for Bouhours, then, was tied to an expression he coined, the 'je-ne-sais-quoi', a kind of ineffable and intuitive sense: it was an inner capacity, founded upon "une harmonie, un accord de l'esprit & de la raison... "un sentiment naturel qui tient à l'âme, & qui est indépendant de toutes les sciences qu'on peut acquérir... un certain rapport qui se trouve entre l'esprit & les objets qu'on lui présente... une espèce d'instinct de la droite raison".<sup>541</sup>

Besides defending the Italian tradition from slander, the Italian critics of Bouhours, principally Orsi (*Considerazione sopra un Famoso libro franzese*, 1703) Muratori (*Vita di Carlo Maria Maggi*, 1700) and Fontanini (*L'Aminta di Torquato Tasso difeso*, 1700; *Della Eloquenza Italiana*, 1706), could not accept Bouhours' aesthetic formula, because it appeared to discard the entire classical tradition, and because it confused the world of human experience with the world of truth. While Orsi acknowledged the Baroque aesthetic, with its excess of metaphor and hyperbole, had got out of hand, humans still essentially dealt with the world of 'verisimilitude', or certainty, artifice, a middle-state between truth and falsity.<sup>542</sup> In other words, humanity experienced the world, and engaged with ideas of the True and the Good, as if "through a glass darkly".<sup>543</sup> While *fantasia* and *concettissimo* shouldn't be indulged, rhetorical structures and literary *ingegno*, especially those inherited from classical learning, were not mere frivolities; rather they were inherent to conveying understanding. Acknowledging the artificiality of language, and the problems of attaining and conveying meaning of things through words, were also important dimensions of the inheritance of Cartesianism in the Port-

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<sup>540</sup> Bouhours, *La Manière de bien penser*, 1687, p. 9; I draw most consistently here on Corrado Viola, *Tradizioni letterarie a confronto: Italia e Francia nella polemica Orsi-Bouhours* (Verona: Fiorini, 2001), pp. 57-76; On Bouhours and theology see also Richard Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe Encounters with a Certain Something* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 63-69; Delehanty, *Literary Knowing in Neoclassical France: From Poetics to Aesthetics*, p. 68.

<sup>541</sup> Bouhours, *La Manière de Bien Penser*, 1687, pp. 381-2 – this definition of taste is one of the few things on which the dialogue's protagonists, Philanthe and Eudoxe, agree; the second half of this citation is Bouhours citing from the 1665 *Maximes et Reflexions Morales* by Francois de la Rochefoucauld.

<sup>542</sup> For instance, see Orsi's letter to the French scholar, herself distanced from Bouhours, Madam Dacier, *Considerazioni sopra la Maniera...*, 1709, see pp. 208-9.

<sup>543</sup> The metaphor is deployed by Vernon Hyde Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste*, p. 49.

Royale *Logique* and *Grammaire*, though in a distinct theological context to that developed by Bouhours.<sup>544</sup> Importantly, for the Italian critics of Bouhours, the question of taste is approached quite differently: it becomes less a kind of innate sense – as it was described, for instance, by the Italian scholar Francesco Montani, in criticism of Orsi: “i regolamenti del quale possiamo a chius’occhi lasciar guidare col regno di nostra mente, la nostra penna, sicuri di così piacere ad ogni bel genio de i nostri tempi”<sup>545</sup> – and more as a practice, following a method and rules, to make reasonable judgements about the world.

The understanding of language and thought upon which this notion of ‘buon gusto’ rests was developed at length by Muratori in his 1706 *Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana*, which, parallel to his *Primi Disegni*, reconceptualised the organisation and practice of Italian erudition.<sup>546</sup> On the one hand, here, the codification of good taste was still presented in a specifically aesthetic key (“consiste dunque il buon Gusto nel conoscere, distinguere, e assaporare il Bello Poetico, cio nel saper giudicare in teorica, e in pratica, cio ch’è bello, ciò che’è deforme in Poesia”<sup>547</sup>) even as it is contextualised in a theory of thought and language. Muratori’s distinction of ‘il buon gusto intellettuale... come Universale o come particolare’ also suggests, however, the increasing centrality of ideas of taste for his attempts to more broadly reform the way scholars thought and behaved, to ward against rationalism, pyrrhonism and dogmatism, trends he perceived as dangerous.<sup>548</sup> For Muratori, as for Orsi, truth and verisimilitude, or what he calls the difference between “Vero secondo l’intelletto” and “Vero second la Fantasia”, are cohabitive, are, in a sense, part of one another, and the faculty of discernment, of buon gusto, is the key to navigating the complex relationship between these two categories.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>544</sup> The point of departure the recent work by Avi Lifschitz, *Language and Enlightenment the Berlin Debates of the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) is to recognise that seemingly ideologically divergent Enlightenments share a reformulation of language, based on the “widespread belief in the historicity and linguistic rootedness of all human forms of life, together with complete naturalism and the view of language as a tool of cognition”, p. 6.

<sup>545</sup> Francesco Montani, *Lettera Toccante le Considerazioni sopra la maniera di ben pensare*, 1705, p. 40; on Montani see Benedetto Croce, *Saggi Filosofici I, Problemi Di Estetica* (Naples, 1910).pp. 360-1.

<sup>546</sup> On the *Perfetta Poesia* see P. Gambarota, *Irresistible Signs*, pp. 78-89; Muratori formulates a definition of Buon Gusto in the first book of the *Perfetta Poesia* to which he repeatedly returns, pp. 57-62; the fourth book of the *Perfetta Poesia* is an explicit celebration of the Italian poetic tradition.

<sup>547</sup> *Perfetta Poesia*, p. 63.

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204-214.

'Buon gusto' and the capacity for discernment, as manifest in a range of contexts, becomes the central theme in Muratori's 1708 *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto*, the text footnoted in Maffei's introduction to the *Giornale*. The text has typically been interpreted as a treatise on aesthetics, but, as the previous pages have demonstrated ideas about aesthetics were bound up with philosophical and theological contentions: collectively they also implied scholarly norms. In the *Riflessioni* Muratori restated the assertions about the separation of speculative and moral theology from polemical and dogmatic theology from his *Primi disegni*, and rested these upon a more sophisticated distinction between reason and authority: reason should direct the scholar in all things – replacing 'magia' with art, replacing alchemy with chemistry, and astrology with astronomy – *apart from* in theological matters, where the authority of tradition and scripture demands priority. Of central importance for Muratori was an attitude of moderation, and he advocates a *via media* between ancients and moderns, where the benefits of each, and the drawbacks of too great a commitment to either, are clarified. In light of the complex psychology proposed by Muratori in the *Riflessioni*, as a dynamic dialogue between will, reason, imagination and fantasy, it is coherent that the central feature of good taste is a prudence, a kind of epistemic modesty, a recognition of the limits of the human mind.<sup>550</sup> This is underpinned by a sensitivity to the 'passions' as central to human experience, by an Augustinian cosmology orientated around the Fall, and both feed into his advocacy of criticism, as well as, importantly, his advocacy of history as authority.<sup>551</sup> In essence the understanding of language proposed by Muratori is as an anthropological and historical entity; in this way the suggestions made by Bouhours, firstly that language has the capacity to deliver divine truths, and secondly, that languages are aligned structurally with national characteristics, are both rendered intellectually bankrupt.<sup>552</sup>

The scholarly sensibility underpinned by Muratori's codification of 'buon gusto' is presented in condensed form in the 1708 *Riflessioni's* preface by Bernardino Trevisan,

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<sup>550</sup> In this sense some of the philosophical currents present in Muratori's later work are prefigured in his *Riflessioni*, especially its 1715 edition: see C. Continisio, "Governing the Passions: Sketches on Lodovico Antonio Muratori's Moral Philosophy," *History of European Ideas* 32 (2006): 367–84, though this focusses more on Muratori's later work.

<sup>551</sup> In his landmark biographical study Sergio Bertelli stressed the importance of the *Riflessioni*, building upon the *Perfetta Poesia* for Muratori's historical method, Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia in Ludovico Antonio Muratori*, pp. 82-90.

<sup>552</sup> The point made by Gambarota, *Irresistible Signs*. on p. 88.

titled 'Introduzione all'Opera Cioè la Teorica del Buon Gusto'. More explicitly than Muratori, Trevisan located the attitude of good taste in a theological key. In his original state, man had divine access to the absolute notions of the true and the good, and accordingly the relationship between objects, words, language, and thought was coherent, in a kind of Adamic alignment. After the Fall, this was no longer the case, and man was only able to either "contemprar nelle cose il riverbero degli attributi Divini, e dove col mezzo di congetture fallaci, e di comparazioni dubbiose investigar" or "dar nome di vero alla conformità attuale degli oggetti coll'immagine, che de' medesimi concepiva, non al concetto ineffabile, ed assoluto del Creatore".<sup>553</sup> In essence, in his fallen state, man must judge the meaning of things from their outer appearances. For Trevisan, as for Muratori, there is no route back to prelapsarian relationship with truth. The *inclination* towards the true and the good remains, through the immortality of the human soul; to best realise these virtues, the prudent path is to avoid both the excesses of authority and the excesses of rationalism, which in essence equate to one another. This path of cautious discernment is that of 'buon gusto'.

#### The 1715 Neapolitan edition of the *Riflessioni*

This substantial detour from Matteo Egizio's Naples into the vicissitudes of literary polemics between French and Italian scholars at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and the early works of Muratori, is necessary to better contextualise what was at stake in the founding of the *Giornale* and the activity of the scholarly community affiliated with it. It both embeds an aesthetic ideal of 'good taste' into a nexus of theological, philosophical and scholarly intellectual dynamics and stresses the centrality of this nexus to attempts to rehabilitate and reshape Italian scholarship in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Muratori's refashioning of 'buon gusto' as a scholarly practice and attitude, rather than a semi-divine tapping into the sublime, is here crucial, because it allows the epistemic virtue of taste to be learnt and taught, and as such systematized and institutionalized. It was the sense in which 'buon gusto' was a virtue that could be practiced and cultivated which underpinned the sociology of scholarship presented in his *Primi disegni*. Realizing Muratori's vision is precisely what the *Giornale* sought to do, by promoting scholarship

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<sup>553</sup> Trevisan, introduction to *Riflessioni*, 1708, p. 4-5.

in accordance with the “leggi del buon gusto”<sup>554</sup> *a la* Muratori, and condemning scholarly practices which transgressed these ideals. Of course, in the process, the Zeno brothers, Vallisnieri, Maffei and to a lesser extent the regional editors of the *Giornale* had to themselves represent the epitome of the tasteful scholar, and so had to develop sensitive and discerning ways to resolve conflict. The tensions of the *Giornale’s* attempts to institutionalize a regime of ‘buon gusto’ in Italian scholarship will play a prominent role in the following three chapters. Before turning to this task, it is instructive to consider more directly the reception and significance of Muratori’s *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto* in the Italian South in the 1710s. This is possible by a close look at the reprinting of the *Riflessioni* in Naples in 1715, at the changed content of the text and the circumstances surrounding its publication.

The decision to print a second, much expanded, edition of Muratori’s *Riflessioni*, in Naples appears to have been partly the result of a proposal by a group of Neapolitans appreciative of Muratori’s project, and partly a result of Muratori’s decision to publish the *Riflessioni* anonymously, without the correct ecclesiastical licenses, and without paying for the printing himself, but rather rely upon an investment from the publisher himself. Muratori’s key contact in Naples to oversee the publication was Constantino Grimaldi, a prominent figure on Naples’ anti-curialist and anti-jesuitical political-intellectual scene. Grimaldi led the committee deliberating on the award of the state censor, and upon receiving Muratori’s manuscript in August 1713, he directed the text to Giacomo Raillard, one of Naples’ most active printers.<sup>555</sup> Grimaldi warned that that finding a publisher might prove problematic, given that “l’opera si stamparebbe senza licenza de superior ecclesiastici”, but Raillard seems to have sensed a commercial opportunity, and Grimaldi was initially appreciative of the quality of Raillard’s.<sup>556</sup> Problems soon arose, however: firstly the slow pace of printing, and secondly, causing this, Raillard’s bankruptcy. This meant that within several weeks of the finalization of the printing process, Raillard was put in a debtor’s prison. This was probably a matter of personal embarrassment for Grimaldi, who had chosen Raillard the printer – he

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<sup>554</sup> Muratori (Pritanio), *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto* (1708), p. 69.

<sup>555</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 22.08.1713; On Raillard see Stone, *Vico’s Cultural History*, pp. 13-19.

<sup>556</sup> Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 12.9.1713, BEUMo AM 67.49, letter 9.

doesn't discuss the details of the situation of the case with Muratori, who seems to have heard about the reason for the delay from Sebastiano Paoli.

Earlier in 1713 Paoli had criticized the choice of Raillard as a printer, which he had learned from Grimaldi, whilst in discussion at the Consigliere's house. Raillard had been the printer of Paoli's *Poesia dei S.S. Padri*, which had been delayed by several months, and the quality of the final edition had, in Paoli's eyes, been poor.<sup>557</sup> Through 1714, Paoli gave Muratori regular updates on the process of publication, including Grimaldi's efforts to pressurize Raillard to work faster.<sup>558</sup> Paoli informed Muratori of Raillard's imprisonment in December 1714, and that the situation had still not changed in mid-January 1715.<sup>559</sup> In the proceeding legal case, Raillard's friends and associates, primarily Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile, supported by Matteo Egizio, collaborated in his legal defence. In his absence, his apprentices appear to have continued their work. Ultimately the publication was finished in late February 1715.<sup>560</sup>

D'Avitabile was elected by Muratori to compose the preface to the *Riflessioni*: Muratori's first choice, Grimaldi's son Gregorio, was unavailable as he was based permanently in Rome during these years. This was a rather controversial choice, given D'Avitabile's disputes with the *Giornale* between 1709 and 1713;<sup>561</sup> Muratori's proposal could be seen as an attempt to re-integrate D'Avitabile into the 'fold' of erudite respectability. Nonetheless, Paoli, reporting on the progress of the publication, clearly disapproved, describing D'Avitabile as "un uomo che in queste materie si stima è strabocchevole geloso", and then later "un uomo che troppo rimesta quando scrive."<sup>562</sup> Paoli, along with the Neapolitan playwright and scholar Nicolo Amenta, were in these years engaged in a defence of Muratori's *Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana*, which had been subjected to criticism by two Vincenza-based poets Andrea Marano and Antonio Bergamini. Marano and Bergamini had jointly published in 1701 a work of collected poetry composed in

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<sup>557</sup> Paoli, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 27.9.1713, BEUMo AM, 74-127.

<sup>558</sup> Paoli, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 7.8.1714, BEUMo AM, 74-127.

<sup>559</sup> Paoli, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 11.12.1714; 8.1.1715, BEUMo AM, 74-127.

<sup>560</sup> "L'opera uscirà fra tre settimane ed io l'ho letta a pezzi et a bocconi, quando ho avuto l'opportunità del tempo, e l'assicuro che e un opera lumnosa, giudiziosa et propria" – Grimaldi, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 5.2.1715, BEUMo AM 67.49, letter 13.

<sup>561</sup> Michela Fantato, "Il Giornale e Le Polemiche Letterarie: Il Caso Di Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile (e Giangrisostomo Scarfo)," in *Il "Giornale de" Letterati d'Italia" Trecento Anni Dopo: Scienza, Storia, Arte, Identità (1710-2010) : Atti Del Convegno, Padova, Venezia, Verona, 17-19 Novembre 2010,* ed. Enza Del Tedesco (Pisa, 2012), 291–301.; but above all see ch. 5.

<sup>562</sup> Paoli, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 8.1.1715, BEUMo 74-127; Paoli to Muratori 19.3.1715.

Italian, Latin and Greek. This work had been criticized by Muratori in his *Perfetta Poesia*, describing the authors as “seguono con pungenti, e gagliarde invettive a condannare o di confiezze, o di bassezza, o di fanciullaggine, e freddura lo Stile de’ moderni Poeti”, objecting in particular to their blurring of Greek, Italian and Latin literary customs.<sup>563</sup> Marano and Bergamini had struck back with a personal attack on Muratori in their *Eufrazio Dialogo* (1708); one aspect of the resentment felt towards Muratori was his attempt to personally reform literary style and taste: “me ne fece copia d’un’altro pubblicato dal medesimo Riformatore; cosi chiamerollo, giàche s’ha presa la cura di scrivere la Riforma de la nostra Poesia”.<sup>564</sup> Not until 1715 did the *Eufrazio Dialogo* receive riposte from Muratori’s supporters, in the form of polemics by Amenta, titled *Lettera dirizzata al P. Sebastiano Paoli* and Paoli in his *Difesa delle censure del Sig. Muratori*.<sup>565</sup> As indicated in both scholars’ private letters to Muratori, their defences were conceived of in the context of the reprinting of the *Riflessioni* in Naples.

The Neapolitan scholars supporting the convoluted publication of the second edition of Muratori’s *Riflessioni* and his defence against the ‘Poeti Vincenti’ were the core of the Neapolitan ‘colony’ of the Arcadian movement. The Neapolitan branch of the Arcadian Academy had been founded by D’Avitabile in 1704, and, under D’Avitabile’s secretariat, was gradually expanded through the first decade of the 1700s to include most of Naples’ prominent scholars. D’Avitabile’s letters to Crescimbeni over these years indicate that it was D’Avitabile and Amenta who were the most active members, as well as how, in a Neapolitan context, the intellectual agenda of Arcadia maintained, alongside an insistence upon literary reform along Petrarchist lines, a direct dialogue with the currents of modern philosophy, and an opposition to the scholastic tradition. This is latent in Amenta’s *i Rapporti di Parnasso* which imagined a community of intellectuals discussing philosophical subject matters, and is riddled with anti-scholastic passages.<sup>566</sup> It is also significant that two of the most significant proponents of ‘modern’ philosophy

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<sup>563</sup> Muratori, *Della perfetta*, 1706, p. 47; Muratori had discussed the work with Apostolo Zeno, who shared his thoughts: see Bergamini’s biography in *Gli Scrittori d’Italia cioè notizie storiche e critiche...*, Giammaria Mazzuchelli, vol. II, parte II, pp. 930-32, especially the long footnote on p. 931.

<sup>564</sup> *Eufrazio Dialogo*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>565</sup> Both letters were cited in the 24<sup>th</sup> volume of the GLI, 1716, pp. 399-400, where they are presented as defending “nostro Muratori”, p. 399.

<sup>566</sup> On Amenta, see Alberto Asor Rosa, “Amenta, Nicola,” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2 (1960); Amenta was also preparing a highly critical re-edition of Osservazioni Daniello Bartoli’s *Il Torto e’l Diritto del non si puo, data in giudicio sopra molte Regole della lingua italian*, which appeared in 1717; Amenta argued that Italian should be modelled more closely on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>-century writers.

of the Investiganti in Naples in the latter decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Lionardo di Capoa and Francesco D'Andrea, were the subject of biographies by D'Avitabile and Amenta. Another figure involved in the Neapolitan Sebezia Colonia was Matteo Egizio, who, as we saw above, was indirectly involved in the publication of the Neapolitan *Riflessioni*. In 1714 Egizio published a new edition of selected works and letters by Sertorio Quattromani with a substantial biography of the 16<sup>th</sup> century scholar from Cosenza, signed "Da Matteo Egizio, tra gli Arcadi detto Timaste Pisandeo". As well as writing extensively upon Petrarch, Bembo, Tasso and the Italian poetic tradition, Quattromani was also noted for his biography of Bernardino Telesio, whose criticism of Aristotelian Scholasticism prefigured, in a sense, the Investiganti tradition in the 'pensiero meridionale'. Telesio and Quattromani were praised by Di Capoa in his 1689 *Parere* which was reprinted in 1714, nominally in Cologne, but quite probably in Naples.<sup>567</sup>

The intellectual agenda of the Arcadian Academy has been well-discussed, especially in light of the 1711 schism between Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni and Gian Vincenzo Gravina. Gravina, a Neapolitan based in Rome, wanted, in part, the academy to remain engaged with philosophical and theological issues, rather than become a platform for pastoral poetry.<sup>568</sup> It has recently been argued that Biagio Garofalo, another Neapolitan in Rome and close friend of Gravina, was also convinced by this model of Arcadianism.<sup>569</sup> The intellectual substance of the Neapolitan Colonia Sebezia awaits serious study, but its most significant presentation to date by Amedeo Quondam has sustained the argument that Neapolitan arcadianism opposed the baroque in association with a condemnation of scholasticism, regarded as "marinismo religioso".<sup>570</sup>

In Naples, therefore, it was this complex prism of aesthetic-literary reform and theological-philosophical currents which received and promoted the 'buon gusto' of

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<sup>567</sup> Di Capoa cites Telesio's struggle against "I maggiori tiranni della filosofia" in the introduction to the 8th 'Ragionamento' of his *Parere*, where he also lists Quattromani as among Telesio's followers, *Del Parere del Signor Lionardo di Capoa*, 1680, p. 376; A long appreciative review of Egizio's edition of Quattromani's works, with extracts, was included in the 22<sup>nd</sup> volume of the GLI, pp. 283-332.

<sup>568</sup> Dixon demonstrates that the schism was also about personal conflict and rules of conduct, Susan M Dixon, *Between the Real and the Ideal: The Accademia Degli Arcadi and Its Garden in Eighteenth-Century Rome* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), pp. 24-27; on Gravina, see Quondam, *Cultura e ideologia di Gianvincenzo Gravina*.

<sup>569</sup> Alveria Bussotti, "Biagio Garofalo, Il Circolo Del Tamburo e La Colona Sebezia: La Riforma Poetic Dalla Prospettiva Filoimperiale," *Atti e Memorie Dell'Arcadia* 5 (2016): 145-67; Bussotti also reads a political dimension into Garofalo's arcadianism.

<sup>570</sup> Quondam, *Dal Barocco all'Arcadia*; De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)*, p. 130.

Muratori's *Riflessioni*. In the expanded 1715 edition the first published edition of Muratori's *Primi disegni* was included an additional preface, making explicit the relationship between scholarly reform and 'buon gusto'. In this edition there was also a much greater stress upon the *manifestation* of 'good taste' in scholarly life, rather than upon its definition and description. A simple rule based on the "amor della verità e la fuga del Falso" was only adequate when simple binaries are at play: Muratori gives the example of Cartesian vs peripatetic philosophy, dogmatic vs scholastic theology, the school of Petrarch vs that of Marino.<sup>571</sup> In general, however, a method was required to ensure the limits of the human capacity for reason, which vary between different disciplines, were recognised and worked within. As we saw in the 1708 edition, this was the logic underpinning a preference for dogmatic theology, against the speculation of the schools. Implications for theology were restated at length in the 1715 edition, but it is also was the basis for Muratori's condemnation of fanaticism, pietism and cabbalism, whose "cattivo gusto" meant their exponents were "professando una scienza troppo transcendente la proporzione della nostra capacità".<sup>572</sup> As good taste was based in "discernimento" and "disciplina" it is both manifest in, and cultivated through, erudition and "istoria, sacra e profana." Long passages in the second volume of the 1715 *Riflessioni* described at length the practice and method of the historian, and their sensitivity to historical facts and sources. The historian, like the poet, dealt most acutely with the world of verisimilitude:

le cose da lui trovate solamente verisimili, e Probabili, non diventano Certe e Sicure nei suoi scritti, ma ritengono la sola aria della Verisimiglianza.<sup>573</sup>

Learning how to navigate this field with skill, with elegance, with piety and with nuance is the central faculty of 'buon gusto'. Driven by the "grande ansietà di trovar pure il Vero" the historian avoids bias, mistrusts converging accounts, and descends into archives, to "pescar" among the "più polverose librerie e nei più riposti Archivi".<sup>574</sup> This

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<sup>571</sup> *Riflessioni*, 1715, p. 42.

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135, also 135-8 – Muratori "considererei in chi buon cuore, ma non mai buon Gusto"; even when good intention is present, without taste, the 'Bene' and the 'Vero' cannot be properly promoted.

<sup>573</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44; the historians method is described at length pp. 40-41, where the examples of the Bollandists in Anvers and the Maurist Benedictines are cited as exemplars.; see also pp. 154-166, where the merits and flaws of Baronius are discussed.

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

almost heroic persona of the critical scholar in search of the 'more true' encapsulate, for Muratori, the 'habitus' of Good Taste.

## Conclusion

By looking at the circumstances surrounding the reprinting of the *Riflessioni* in Naples in 1715 it becomes clear how texts, the key ideas they contained and their authors could function symbolically to bind together a community of like-minded scholars across space. The same is true of the institutions which structured the intellectual environment, such as the *Giornale* in its promotion of the rhetoric and intellectual substance of 'buon gusto' in Italian erudition. Orientating around contested concepts like good taste, tracing their genealogy and dissemination, is a fraught exercise which can incite generalization; it is also, however, a valuable one, as, if performed cautiously and empirically, it forces together elements of intellectual life which might otherwise be treated in isolation from one another. The scholar as the exemplar of 'buon gusto', which comes to the fore in the 1715 edition of the *Riflessioni*, only makes sense when viewed through the lens of literary-aesthetic debates of the previous decades, in turn contextualised in the theological environment of Catholic culture circa 1700. In the process, it encourages reflection upon the mentality or 'habitus' underpinning modes of scholarship.

Placing this conclusion in dialogue with an institutionalization of the intellectual environment through the *Giornale* and its network of editors, on the basis of Muratori's *Primi disegni*, charges the discourse of good taste with normative force. Taste was an important vehicle for scholarly reform on the Italian peninsula in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century: it contained within it guidelines for, not only how scholars should work, but also how they should relate to one another, how they should think, how scholarship should be organized internally, and how it should relate to political and theological tensions. As becomes explicit in Muratori's *Primi disegni*, to fulfil its function – to qualitatively as well as quantitatively enhance scholarship on the peninsula - the Republic of Letters needed to be properly legislated. Both legislative and executive authority was necessarily decentralized, but hierarchically so, and key individuals and institutions could shape the emergent scholarly field, at the expense of other individuals,

institutions or ideas with which they disagreed. Seeing the dissemination of good taste as a form of *disciplining* – in both an epistemic and social sense – allows the editorial policy of the *Giornale*, and its collaborators, to be viewed in a new light.

The function of this chapter is to act as hinge in the context of this thesis, and to enact a shift towards an interpretation of networked regimes of scholarship. This is methodologically distinguished from either offering a survey of scholarly practices, as offered in the first chapter on antiquarianism, or orientating around a specific individual, as presented in the second chapter on Matteo Egizio. The intention here is to have formulated a conceptual framework within which to meaningfully collate series of scholarly controversies, which can then be interpreted as case-studies representing and contributing to a broader scholarly reform. It is to this task that the following three chapters turn.

## Chapter Five - The Moderation of Scholarly Polemics: the “gran lega de’ Signori Avitabile, Ficoroni e Scarfò” between Erudition and Theology

One outcome of the previous chapter has been a conceptualisation the Republic of Letters as a political economy: as a system of production and consumption maintained by communication networks and regulated by norms, laws and institutions. Describing efforts to reform and rehabilitate this system clarifies the hierarchies and power-structures at play within Italian scholarship. The objective of this chapter is to move from the theorization of scholarly reform to its application, and to shed light upon the mechanics of moderation within Italian erudition. The process of moderation rested upon the enforcement of scholarly norms, and its impetus came from their transgression. This dynamic is best understood by recomposing, ‘following’ and interconnecting scholarly controversies.

The controversies surveyed in this chapter concern the points at which assertions of epistemic virtue and vice interfaced with models of scholarly sociability. The first part will consider contested authority and criticism in antiquarian activity between local and Northern European scholars in Rome. It will assess the interventions of the Venetian *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia* and the Holy Office to moderate and reform scholarly debate, as well as the resistance these interventions received. This will place centre-stage the Calabrese Basilian monk and controversialist Giangrisostomo Scarfò, and the second section will consider the theological backdrop to erudite debate, initially through Scarfò’s condemnation of the Benedictine edition of St. Augustine’s *Opere*, and then through the case of Scarfò’s collaborator Biagio Maioli D’Avitabile. A review of the machinations of D’Avitabile and Scarfò against the Venetian *Giornale*, their reception by different representatives of the Italian ‘Republic of Letters’, and the response of the *Giornale* itself, substantiates the third section of this chapter, which will embed theological controversy back into erudite disagreement and scholarly sociability. The overall effect will be to demonstrate the cross-pollination between contested

theological norms and contested erudite norms, and to show how each could be strategically and earnestly deployed in different contexts

Tightly bound to the critical approach towards scholarship, as developed since the Renaissance humanists, as manifest in ideas of 'buon gusto' and as defended by the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, was an enthusiasm for identifying forgeries and fake documents. In certain circumstances, this could function as grounds for polemic, where the discredited document implied or unraveled historical arguments of political-jurisdictional or theological-ecclesiological weight.<sup>575</sup> The emergence of the history of scholarship as a subdiscipline and a method has directed scholarly attention to the significance of forgery and its identification for conceptions of scholarly practice in early modern Europe.<sup>576</sup> Much of this work has served to historicize the category of forgery vis-à-vis historical truth, and so to conceive the evolution of forgery outside of the lens of its critics. In this way, questions about credibility, trust and method in scholarship have become of central importance.

In short, identification of apocrypha was also a central project for scholars cultivating a more accurate and substantiated understanding of the past, deemed of merit in and of itself. In this respect, critical scholars carefully distinguished themselves from exponents of historical pyrrhonism, for whom doubts about the authenticity of the past fueled more fundamental doubts about the general knowability of history *tout court*, and from dogmatists, whose truth claims had no credibility at all.<sup>577</sup> A past rendered

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<sup>575</sup> Among the most famous cases are Lorenzo Valla's identification of the donation of Constantine as a medieval document, and Isaac Casaubon's discrediting of the *Corpus Hermeticum* – both scholarly endeavours were ideologically charged: Anthony Grafton, "Protestant versus Prophet: Isaac Casaubon on Hermes Trismegistus," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983): 78–93. It was in the field of sacred literature where practices and accusations of forgery were most contested: see Bart D Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>576</sup> In general, and with specific early modern case-studies, see Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). on a specific regional case study, see Katrina Olds, *Forging the Past: Invented Histories in Counter-Reformation Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015, 2015); Using a case-study as platform for some broad theoretical and historiographical reflections see Anthony Grafton, "Inventions of Traditions and Traditions of Invention in Renaissance Europe: The Strange Case of Annius of Viterbo," in *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 2010, 8–38; on the same case, Christopher Ligota, "Annius of Viterbo and Historical Method," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 44–56.

<sup>577</sup> On Historical Pyrrhonism in general, see A. Matytsin, 'Historical Pyrrhonism and its Discontents', in Matytsin, *The Specter of Skepticism in the Age of Enlightenment*, pp. 233-263 and Borghero, *La certezza e la storia*. On the application of pyrrhonism to historical scholarship and its capacity to incite controversy in practice, see the case of Jean Hardouin: Grafton, "Jean Hardouin".

unknowable could underpin both *libertinage* and religious dogmatism alike; ascertaining the credibility of objects and texts was central to the development of a moderate 'via media' between these two positions. Anxiety about the credibility of texts and artefacts tended, therefore, to be of *intrinsic*, rather than, or as well as, only *instrumental*, significance, as scholars weighed up the full range of evidence in conversations with their contemporaries and forebears in a real and imagined Republic of Letters.

This approach to the authenticity of texts is evidenced in a letter sent from Giusto Fontanini in Rome to Egizio in Naples, towards the beginning of their correspondence. Writing on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1701 Fontanini remarked, in response to Egizio's query, that "il libro di Leone Alacci de Libris Apocryphis, benche venga da lui citato nella Censura delle Antichità dell'Inghirami, non è pero mai uscita alla bue".<sup>578</sup> This remark relates to Egizio's continued interest in an important scholarly controversy of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Leone Allacci was then the Vatican librarian, of Greek origin, and the 'Libris Apocryphis' referred to his attempts to claim the authenticity of a range of texts falling between the Old and New Testament, the credibility of which were instrumental in an agenda of uniting Eastern and Western churches around a common tradition.<sup>579</sup> Allacci's work on the apocryphal books remained unpublished, but was referred to in Allacci's 1640 *Animaversiones in antiquitatum etruscarum fragmenta*, his damaging critique of the scholarship of the Tuscan archaeologist Curzio Inghirami. Inghirami claimed in his 1636 *Etruscarum antiquitatum fragmenta* to have discovered an ancient Etruscan prophecy, which evidenced the antiquity of sophisticated Etruscan culture, and made claims to theological predictions. Allacci promptly quashed Inghirami's forgery, concocted both as practical joke and as an aggrandizement of Tuscan heritage. Condemning Inghirami's poor scholarship strengthened Allacci's claims to the genuine, not apocryphal status of passages of Scripture.<sup>580</sup>

Cases of outright forgery such as that of Inghirami were only the most dramatic instances of a general culture concerned with probing and questioning the credibility of

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<sup>578</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 5.11.1701, BNN MS XIII.c.90 200.

<sup>579</sup>D. Musti, "Allacci, Leone," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2 (1960).; Allacci published in 1619 *Libri VII de Concordia Ecclesiae occidentalis atque orientalis in septem sacramentorum administratione*; and then in 1648 his definitive *De Ecclesiae occidentalis atque orientalis perpetua consensione*.

<sup>580</sup> On the case, see Ingrid D Rowland, *The Scarith of Scornello: A Tale of Renaissance Forgery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

claims to historical fact in texts and artefacts. When doubts over the credibility of historical claims fed into accusations of poor or irresponsible scholarship, erudite disagreements could become personal. An instance from several years later in Fontanini's correspondence with Egizio opens up a meshwork of intellectual controversies, which offers insight into the moderation of the scholarly environment.

### Credibility and Authority in Historical Knowledge: Francesco Ficoroni against Bernard de Montfaucon

On 25th of October, 1710, Fontanini wrote to Egizio with erudite news from Rome, to which he attached "il foglio Francese, una saggia che è stato tradotte in Italiano e posso appie dell' Apologia del P. Riccobaldi Benedettino per lo Diario Italiaco del P.

Montfaucon contra il S. Ficoroni, uomo ammogliato, e non Abate".<sup>581</sup> Fontanini adds, "quest'Apologia è stampata qui, e se questi Monaci di S. Mauro me la daranno, come hanno detto, non lascerò di trasmetterla a V.S. Ill.m". Bernard de Montfaucon's *Diarium Italicum, sive, Monumentorum veterum, bibliothecum, musaeorum...* was printed in Paris in 1702, and recounted his journey through Italy in the preceding years. As a scholar and prominent member of the renowned Maurist school of Benedictine monks most of Montfaucon's *Diarium* is an account of the manuscripts and antiquities, monuments and archives of the Italian peninsula.<sup>582</sup>

For his connections, his institutional affiliation and his scholarship, Montfaucon was widely respected in erudite circles across Europe. His *Diarium Italicum*, however, drew criticism from Francesco de' Ficoroni, a Rome-based antiquary, an authority on local history who regularly assisted visitors to the city from Northern Europe interested in its heritage.<sup>583</sup> In his *Osservazioni sopra l'antichità di Roma*<sup>584</sup> Ficoroni railed against

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<sup>581</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 25.10.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 222.

<sup>582</sup> On the *Diarium Italicum* see J. L. Lemaître, "Le Voyage En Italie et Le Diarium Italicum," in *Dom Bernard de Montfaucon: Actes Du Colloque de Carcassonne, Octobre 1996*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel and Raymond Rogé, 1998, 159–86.; on Montfaucon's approach to the past in general, in the same volume, see Chantal Grell, "Bernard de Montfaucon et l'histoire," in *Dom Bernard de Montfaucon: Actes Du Colloque de Carcassonne, Octobre 1996*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel and Raymond Rogé, 1998, 107–26.

<sup>583</sup> The Ficoroni-Maffei-Montfaucon controversy is recounted in its antiquarian context by Tamara Griggs, "The Local Antiquary in Eighteenth-Century Rome," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 69 (2008): 280–314., pp. 280-314, p. 282-292.

<sup>584</sup> Full title: *Osservazione di Francsco de' Ficoroni sopra l'antichità di Roma; descritte nel Dioario Italico pubblicato in Parigi l'anno 1702, Dal M. Rev. Padre d. Bernardo de Montfaucon nel fine delle quali s'aggiungono molte cose antiche singolari scoperte ultimamente tra le rovine dell'antichità*, Rome, 1709,

‘Personaggi Pellegrini’, tourists who would visit Italy before returning to their home countries masquerading as scholarly authorities, publishing popular books about the antiquaries they encountered; clearly Ficoroni had Montfaucon, but also a range of foreign scholars, in mind.<sup>585</sup> The *Osservazioni* proceeds as an erudite journey through a range of Roman antiquarian curiosities and manuscripts. So doing, it offers a systematic, page-by-page critique of Montfaucon’s *Diarium*. Some of these criticisms are aimed at Montfaucon’s claims of novelty, when describing artefacts already well acknowledged in the Italian historiographical record.<sup>586</sup> At other moments, Ficoroni simply indicated Montfaucon’s lack of local expertise: “A carte 71. descrive nel Museo Trevisano un piombo colle teste di M. Aurelio, e di L. Vero, e stimandolo di rarità singolare... soggiungendo di non avervi conosciuto sospetto d’artificio moderno”.<sup>587</sup> One of the more elaborated cases is Ficoroni’s criticism of Montfaucon’s interpretation of the cemetery beneath the Church of San Lorenzo.<sup>588</sup> Ficoroni challenges Montfaucon’s reading by claiming that “le cose dall’Autore descritte sono meramente supposte”, elaborating that he himself has since entered the cemetery, walked along its paths, and observed that many of the things Montfaucon described simply weren’t there. The problem was that Montfaucon “non aver per guida un’Uomo dotto e pratico”, and that “essendo le vie divise in molti rami, e a guisa di laberinto, e dilantandosi con ritorti giri per molte miglia, vi si poteva smarrire qualche Pellegrino.”<sup>589</sup> Ficoroni goes on to list the great number of foreigners – English, French, Swedish, Danish, Dutch and Flemish – that he has shown around ‘Roma sotterranea’, bolstering his own claims to credibility and scholarly respectability.<sup>590</sup>

There are several dynamics at work in Ficoroni’s critique of Montfaucon’s *Diarium*. Initially, there is perhaps a base pedantry, responding to errors he identifies, and with this a crude, or at least poorly disguised, self-promotion. The repeated reference to Montfaucon as a ‘Pellegrino’, and the gestures towards Roman and Italian knowledge of their own antiquity suggests that Ficoroni is also criticizing the supposed expertise of

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<sup>585</sup> Ficoroni, *Osservazioni*, p. 2.

<sup>586</sup> Montfaucon’s claims to have uncovered the concealed manuscript of a 16<sup>th</sup>-century sculptor Flaminio Vacca, (*Diarium Italicum*, p. 104-5). which Ficoroni shows were in use by several local scholars over the past centuries.

<sup>587</sup> Ficoroni, *Osservazioni*, p. 11.

<sup>588</sup> *ibid.*, p. 19-25.

<sup>589</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19-20.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23-24.

'oltralpine' scholars as superior to Italian antiquarians. Finally, and combining these two, the epistemic framework of Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* might be located within the same local-antiquarian tradition surveyed in earlier chapters: Bianchini's criticism of the inscriptions included in the volumes of Gruter and Fleetwood, and Egizio's critical commentaries on the chronologies of Guillaume Marcel and Nicolas Lenglet Du Fresnoy. This is not a simple pedantry or a patriotic defense of patrimony, but also a defense of a certain *kind* of historical-geographical knowledge, one which prioritizes the eye-witness, the local expert and the accumulated nature and situated specificity of his knowledge.

#### Maffei's critique of Ficoroni, and the Intervention of the Holy Office

Ficoroni's attack received a response from Montfaucon himself, published in the *Journal des Sçavans*, in which the Benedictine scholar systematically refuted most of Ficoroni's criticisms, but maintained a professional tone.<sup>591</sup> Beyond this, writing polemically against Montfaucon, a well-established and well-connected scholar, invited critique of Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* from his fellow Italians. This was the context in which Romualdo Riccobaldi's 1710 *Apologia del Diario Italiaco... contra le osservazioni del signor Francesco Ficoroni*<sup>592</sup> appeared in Venice, the work cited by Fontanini to Egizio in October of that year. The author of the *Apologia* was actually Paolo Alessandro Maffei, a well-established Roman scholar. Close friends with both Giusto Fontanini and the French Benedictines in Rome, Maffei had published in the preceding years several studies of Roman antiquities in collaboration with Domenico De Rossi, the *Raccolta di Statue Antiche e Moderne* (1704) and the *Gemme antiche figurate* (1707-9).<sup>593</sup> Riccobaldi (Maffei), after profusely praising Montfaucon's erudition, accused Ficoroni of composing "un astio sì straordinario in un suo libricciuolo intitolato Osservazioni" and presents himself as compelled to:

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<sup>591</sup> *Journal des Sçavans*, vol 46, 1709, pp. 320-347.

<sup>592</sup> Full title: *Apologia del Diario Italiaco del molto reverendo padre Don Bernardo Montfaucon Monaco Benedettino della Congregazione di San Mauro Contro le Osservazioni del signor Francesco Ficoroni*, 1710.

<sup>593</sup> The religious context to Maffei's work on antiquities, similar to that of the Maurists, is evident in his 1705 essay: *L'Immagine del Vescovo rappresentata nelle Virtue di Mongisnor Jacopo Benigno Bossuet vescovo di Meaux, Discorso detto nell'Accademia Ecclesiastica*, Rome, 1705.

prendere la difesa della mia Religione a torto oltraggiata in persona del P. Montfaucon... disingannare i meno informati degli' innumerabili errori commessi dal Critico, siccome anche mala strada, che ha tenuta in opporsi all'Autore del Diario con mille inezie, ed accuse e sopra tutto con procurare a tutta sua possa in porlo in discredito.<sup>594</sup>

The charge of false criticism was then wrapped up with the charge of erudite impropriety, enhanced by an unwarranted attack on a much respected religious order – which Riccobaldi claimed to represent.

Much of Maffei's account proceeds as a systematic critique of the 135 false claims made in Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* and his improper method of argumentation. Worthy of interest, however, is his hypothetic response to those who would think that “applicandomi a combattere una scrittura di si poco rilievo, io sia degno s'esser ripreso di perdimento di tempo”.<sup>595</sup> If Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* were only circulated amongst erudites and scholars, “ogni savia mente ne avrebbe da se stessa facilmente scoperti gli errori, e condannata l'ignoranza dell'Autore”.<sup>596</sup> The marketing strategy of Ficoroni's publisher, however, meant his book has the capacity to negatively influence “i più novizi nella cognizione dell'antichità erudita, e molto più la maggior parte de i forestieri”. In this context it is the obligation to preserve the standards of erudition at large that drives Maffei to compose his *Apologia*. Maffei's appeal to the learned in the Republic of Letters turned Ficoroni's pretensions to stand for local knowledge on its head; local expertise is only legitimated if it has broader credibility. The merits of eye-witness accounts and local familiarity do not translate into the “pratica nel distinguere sopra ogni altro il falso del vero, l'antico dal moderno”. In other words, local expertise needed to be coupled with method, with ‘il buon gusto universale’.

The shortcomings of Ficoroni's reputation and ‘gusto’ are highlighted in the appendix to Maffei's *Apologia* – the ‘foglio francese’ about which Fontanini wrote to Egizio. This is a letter written by a ‘Signor Vaillant’ to a friend in Marseille ‘Mons. Coconier’. The letter, translated into Italian from French, reflects upon Vaillant's experience of Roman antiquities, and criticizes forcefully the “critica sciocca, e temeraria, che le ha fatta un

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<sup>594</sup> Riccobaldi, *Apologia*, preface.

<sup>595</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1-2.

<sup>596</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1.

certo Signor Ficoroni, che fa il dotto Antiquario per mestiere”.<sup>597</sup> Perhaps Maffei sought to demonstrate how, rather than defending Italy’s scholarship, such needless polemics affected negatively how the pan-European ‘Republic of Letters’ viewed the ‘local’ Italian antiquarian, and so Italian erudition at large.

Maffei’s implication of the importance of the ‘Republic of Letters’ as an imagined community maintaining certain standards and practices of scholarship is further enhanced by his dedication of his *Apologia* to the ‘Giornalisti di Venezia’. The ‘Giornalisti’, repaying the compliment, but also seeing a common cause in the defense of scholarly standards, endorsed Maffei’s *Apologia*, stating in the first volume of the journal, published in early 1710, it to be “Opera per più riguardi degna della curiosità e dell’attenzione delle persone erudite”.<sup>598</sup> This note was then expanded in the 6<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Giornale*, published the following year, with an extended review essay which, while describing at length the disagreements between Riccobaldi, Ficoroni and Montfaucon, remarks upon disequilibrium between Montfaucon, “uno de’ più insigni Scrittori del nostro secolo, e uno de’ suoi piu singolari ornamenti”, and Ficoroni, a small-scale antiquarian.<sup>599</sup> Proposing that Ficoroni might have felt personally slighted not to have been consulted or cited by Montfaucon,<sup>600</sup> they criticize the temerity of Ficoroni’s *Osservazioni*, and conclude that the the dispute has led to a lot of controversy about things of ‘minor conseguenza’.<sup>601</sup>

That conclusion – that the affair was of little consequence – was not universally shared, and both the *Osservazioni* and the *Apologia* were referred to the Holy Office, to be reviewed for censorship. Ficoroni’s *Osservazioni* was referred to the Index by a representative of the Congregation of Saint-Maur; the referral was discussed by the Congregation of the Index in their meeting of the 11 August 1710. The letter of referral held among the documents of the Congregation, itself undated and unsigned, clarifies the rationale for censoring Ficoroni’s work. The letter indicates that it was Ficoroni’s fellow Roman antiquarian Francesco Bianchini who conducted the revision of the *Osservazioni* to grant the book its ecclesiastical license, and while Bianchini granted the

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<sup>597</sup> *Apologia*, p. 98.

<sup>598</sup> GLI, vol. 3, 1710, p. 531.

<sup>599</sup> GLI, vol. 6, 1711, pp. 366-411.

<sup>600</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>601</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 411 .

book permission to be published, on the grounds that “nulla contra la fede conteveano”, the work was nonetheless essentially published “non pero coll’approvazione di Mons. Bianchini, a cui ne era stata commessa la revisione; perche egli indegne le giudicio di vedere la luce... non voleva in contro veruno apporvarle in iscritto”.<sup>602</sup>

The anonymous critic here built upon Bianchini’s own doubts about the credibility of Ficoroni’s scholarship by also claiming the *Osservazioni* to be full of dubious theological connotations. The anonymous critic claims that Ficoroni wanted to dedicate his book to a heretic (“si era volute il Libricciuolo dedicare a un Eretico stampandosi la Dedicatori”) and that the author of the book was in regular communication with communities of protestants in Rome, as Ficoroni himself testifies. Whereas Ficoroni stated his guidance of foreigners through sites of Roman antiquity as a means to stress his authority, here it was instead turned against him to damage his credibility. This context is bound directly to his “entrato in disputa tale con un Religioso sì saggio” and as polemicizing “contra la pietà di medesimo padre”.<sup>603</sup> In invoking Ficoroni’s objection to both “Religione e ai buoni costumi”, which are implicitly connected, his *Osservazioni* was transformed into more than just a polemic against Montfaucon *per se*, but rather a series of accusations “calunniose ed ingiuriose a un Religioso, e a tutto in Ordine monastica di tanta riputazione nella Chiesa di Dio, e come contrarei a buoni costumi, e alla pubblica quiete violata con simili sorta di maligni e maliziosi componimenti”.<sup>604</sup>

In the following meeting of the Congregation, on the 15 September 1710, a similar petition was presented to argue for the prohibition of Maffei’s criticism of Ficoroni, his *Apologia*, which had received uncritical praise in the anonymous letter from the previous meeting of the Index.<sup>605</sup> This was penned by Carlo Collicola, a future Cardinal, stationed permanently in the Congregation of the Index from earlier in 1710, and a regular reviewer of books proposed for prohibition. Collicola’s review of the *Apologia* stressed its tone and the circumstances of its publication, more than the particular arguments it sets forth; in this sense it mirrors the arguments deployed by the *Giornale* against Ficoroni. Specifically, Collicola emphasizes how Ficoroni’s *Osservazioni* were legitimately granted an ecclesiastical license, by Bianchini, whose authority Riccobaldi’s

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<sup>602</sup> ACDF, Protocollum Congregationis Indicis BBBB, f. 123v - the letter is unnamed and itself undated

<sup>603</sup> Ibid., ff. 123v-124r – underlining in original.

<sup>604</sup> Ibid., 125v.

<sup>605</sup> *ibid.*, f. 245r-249r.

*Apologia* implicitly undermines. Furthermore, the *Apologia* was composed under a pseudonym, and one claiming falsely to be a member of a religious order, thereby damaging the reputation of that order. Finally, Riccobaldi's book lacked any appropriate licenses and has a false place of publication: Collicola claims to have information that, while the *Apologia* claims to have been printed in Venice, in fact the Venetian publishers refused to print it, "per essere una spezia di libello infamatorio".<sup>606</sup> The work was published clandestinely in Rome in a publishing house associated with the "P. Benedettino Ultramontano". The bulk of the review assessed negatively the tone and style of Riccobaldi's critique, and defended the merits, and friends, of Ficoroni:

questo modo di scrivere è indegno d'un christiano non che d'un monaco Benedettino, che da un brutto esempio ai secolari di scrivere senza charità, senza timor di Dio, e con tanto pregiudizio della fama di un uomo da bene, di un virtuoso molto be inteso nelle cognizione dell'Antica, di un favorita da molti Emi. prelati, principi e virtuosi così in Italia come fuori.<sup>607</sup>

A serious assessment of the historical claims made in the *Diarium Italicum*, the *Apologia* and the *Osservazioni*, was explicitly not undertaken: though the authority of those better able make such judgements is invoked: "non entro a farmi giudice delle ragioni antiquarie di una parte o dell'altra, solo dirò aver sentito più uomini dotti e dispassionati dire che l'Apologia non risponde a buon".<sup>608</sup> Collicola's ultimate conclusion is that the *Apologia* was libelous, and warranted prohibition. The same conclusion was reached by a formal review of Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* conducted by a 'D. Josepho Baviera', testified in the same meeting. In both cases, the rationale for prohibition was as much about scholarly propriety than antiquarian falsity or theological error.

Ultimately both books were put on the Index of prohibited books, published 15th January 1714.<sup>609</sup> This might signify the end of Ficoroni's antiquarian confrontation with Montfaucon, Maffei, possibly assisted by Fontanini, and the Giornalisti in Venice. But the

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<sup>606</sup> Ibid., f. 245v.

<sup>607</sup> Ibid., f. 246r.

<sup>608</sup> Ibid., f. 248v – underlining in original.

<sup>609</sup> A copy of the decree is included in ACDF Protocollum Congregationis Indicis CCCC, f. 180. No more discussion of the cases is present in the following extent records of the Index, so the long delay in their final censorship may indicate 'behind the scenes' machinations, or just bureaucratic inefficiencies.

proposed religious connotations of a superficially antiquarian controversy raised by the critics and reviewers suggested the possibility for Ficoroni's disputation with the monks of St Maur to bleed into a broader-based controversy. This transition was made explicit by the interventions of a complex character: the Calabrese Basilian monk Giangrisostomo Scarfò.

Giangrisostomo Scarfò critiques the *Giornale de' Letterati D'Italia*

As the *Giornale's* thorough review of the Ficoroni-Montfaucon controversy, coupled with the censorship of the *Osservazioni* and the *Apologia*, seemed to put an end to the dispute – Ficoroni himself appears to have not engaged any further against the Maurists or the Giornalisti – an essay was published by which we might locate Ficoroni's antiquarian controversy in a broader context. The *Lettera del molto reverend padre D. Giangrisostomo Scarfò... scritta al signor Francesco de' Ficoroni... che si denomina Antiquario Romano*<sup>610</sup> was published in late 1712 in Cosenza – the letter is dated from Naples, 2nd October 1712. The object of Scarfò's *Lettera* was a retraction of his previous criticism of Paolo Alessandro Maffei's two antiquarian treatises, *Raccolta di Statue Antiche e Moderne* (1704) and the *Gemme antiche figurate* (1707-9). This previous criticism, for which he was now repentant, was based, Scarfò claims, on his naïve trust in the arguments posed by Ficoroni. Reproducing Ficoroni's poor scholarship, Scarfò's own work had been discredited, leading in particular to criticism from the French Jesuit journal, the *Mémoires de Trévoux*:

Compatitemi, signor Francesco, se non vi ringrazio, ne mi vi professo punto obbligato delle notizie, da me sciocamente credute recondite e vere, le quali voi mi mandate per arricchire la giunta al primo giornale de letterati d'italia, da me composta ad effetto di porre per mezzi do essa in discredito que Giornalisti, e i pretesi eruditi, i quali in esso Giornale con troppa parzialità vengono lodati... non solo per simpatia di genio, ma anco per conformità di costumi e di dottrina, io mi muovo ora a passare con esso voi doglianze e risentimento per avermi indotto

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<sup>610</sup> *Lettera del molto reverend padre D. Giangrisostomo Scarfo, Monaco Basiliano Calabrese dimorante in Napoli, detto altramente Grisofano Cardieletti, scritta al signor Francesco de' Ficoroni da Lugnano nel Lazio che si denomina Antiquario Romano, 1712.*

colle vostre false relazioni, e colle vostre insulse, e malconce chiaccere a fondare sulla sporca mensogna, e sulla sfacciata impostura quel capitoletto della pag. 9, che concerne alcune delle opere del signore Cavaliere Paolo Alessandro Maffei<sup>611</sup>

Scarfò presents himself as the arbiter of good taste, criticizing “Sig. Francesco de Ficoroni, che fa da antiquario e scrive più sproposti, che parole”.<sup>612</sup> Scarfo appears, then, to be on the ‘side’ of Maffei, the *Giornale* and the Holy Office. However, there is a more complex back-story to Scarfò’s *Lettera* and his relationship with Ficoroni. The context of Scarfò’s *Lettera* was his retraction of his previous polemics in a series of controversies in which he engaged the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia*.<sup>613</sup> Scarfò’s praise of Ficoroni’s criticism of Montfaucon, and his critique of Maffei, which in his *Lettera* he recognised as misguided, constitute a minor part of a much more substantial work, his *Giunta al Primo Tomo del Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia*, published under the pseudonym Grisofano Cardieletti, in 1712.<sup>614</sup> Exploring Scarfò, his *Giunta* and its polemical context will help situate Ficoroni’s antiquarian controversy within a more expansive intellectual world, where theological anxieties regularly ruptured the surface of scholarly propriety and erudite sociability.

Scarfò’s *Giunta* is a volume of published letters; the first is from ‘Cardieletti’ addressed to ‘D. Biagio Maioli de Avitabile, Avvocato Napoletano’, and is dated Napoli, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1712.<sup>615</sup> In addition to this long letter, the *Giunta* includes three shorter letters: one from an anonymous writer to Cardieletti, “intorno all’Articolo 5. Del Primo tomo del Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia”<sup>616</sup>, dated from Napoli, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1712, and two letters from ‘Signor Carmine Buonaventura’ addressed to Sig. Cardieletti, the first “nella quale si ragiona del Libro del Reverendo Sig. Sarconio, intitolato *Lettere di Ragguaglio, ecc.* uscito in Napoli contra il Libro del Sign. Avvocato Maioli de Avitabile intitolato *Lettere Apologetiche ecc.*” is dated 7 May, 1712 (pp. 79-91) and the second “intorno alla Giunta del Giornale, all’opera Sarconiana, e ad altre faccende Letterarie”,<sup>617</sup> is dated, from

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<sup>611</sup> Scarfò, *Lettera*, p. 3.

<sup>612</sup> *Lettera*, p. 13.

<sup>613</sup> Scarfo’s criticism of Ficoroni, and his retraction of his previous sins, is praised in the GLI, vol. 12, 1712, pp. 415-419.

<sup>614</sup> ... di Grisofano Cardieletti Stesa dal medesimo In una Pistola Sofaletoloica, in cui si fanno ancora alcune considerazioni sopra le Lettere di Ragguaglio intorno a’punti principali della regolta Probabilità di Gian Sarconio, 1712.

<sup>615</sup> *Giunta*, p. 61, pp. 1-61.

<sup>616</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>617</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Naples, 28th May 1712 (pp. 92-103). Assembled collectively, the letters offer a virulent critique of the first edition of the Venetian *Giornale*.

Scarfò's defence of Ficoroni against Maffei and the *Giornalisti* comes in the first letter of the *Giunta*, amidst his systematic objection to a series of the articles of the first edition of the *Giornale*.<sup>618</sup> Scarfò was especially critical of the *Giornale's* treatment of Neapolitans, accusing the *Giornalisti* of either omitting important Neapolitan texts, or giving them superficial and disproportionately negative judgement.<sup>619</sup> Ficoroni was not explicitly mentioned, but Scarfò challenged the *Giornale's* judgement of Maffei as "per soggetto dotato di erudizione, e talento", by drawing attention to a series of errors of erudition in Maffei's antiquarian publications, and his repeated attempts to "figne... moltissime cose nuove per accreditarsi nel Mondo Letterario".<sup>620</sup> That this attack implied a defence of Ficoroni's *Osservazioni* is obvious from the context, and confirmed by Scarfò's later retraction.

If this seems a modest and more-or-less superficial interjection, more light is shed upon Scarfò's initial, later retracted, defence of Ficoroni, his broad condemnation of the *Giornalisti*, and his systematic criticism of the oeuvre of Paolo Alessandro Maffei by considering Scarfò's unpublished manuscript essays, held today in the Biblioteca Angelica, Rome. Here Scarfò composed a full-length, though undated, critique of the *Apologia del Diario Italico*, titled *Avviso Letterario in cui dal P.D. Gio. Grisostomo Scarfò... si risponde all'Apologia del Diario Italico del M.R.P.D. Bernardo Montfaucon... contra le Osservazioni del Signor Francesco dei Ficoroni*.<sup>621</sup> Elsewhere in the Scarfò manuscripts is a more substantiated criticism of Maffei's antiquarian work, titled *Avvisi letterari del P.D. Giangrisostomo Scarfò... per coloro che si diletta de Monumenti della Venerabile*, divided into two parts, one based on Maffei's *Raccolta di Statue antiche e moderne...*, the second on his *Gemme*.<sup>622</sup> Here Scarfò explicitly identifies Maffei as Riccobaldi, but also

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<sup>618</sup> Ibid., p. 9-12.

<sup>619</sup> Scarfò defends the *Raccolta di Rime dei Poeti Napoletani* (1701), edited by Giovanni Acampora (p. 6-9); the "Dissertazione de nostri temporis studiorum ratione del Signor Vico, by Vico, (p. 8) reviewed in GLI, tomo 1, pp. 231-333; and the *Vite de' Letterati Salentini* by Domenico De Angelis (p. 60-61).

<sup>620</sup> Scarfò, *Giunta*, p. 12.

<sup>621</sup> BAR, MS 2151 - ff. 188r-227v. The copy of the manuscript must have been written after 1714, as Scarfò refers to the support of Ficoroni from a foreign academy in that year. In introducing the circumstances of its composition, Scarfò suggests that he wrote it after relocating to Rome in 1712. Quite possibly the Biblioteca Angelica copy had been revised over time.

<sup>622</sup> BAR, MS 2152, ff. 2r-59v.

implicates Fontanini in the publication of the *Apologia*, citing the oral testimony of Tomasso Maria Minorelli, the Rome-based Domenican, close to Fontanini:

la suddetta insussistente Apologia fignesi composta dal P.D. Romualdo Riccobaldi Cassinese. Nella Congregazione Cassinese unqe mai vi simiglievol soggetto. Si fu ella per verità formato dal Cav. Paolo Alessandor Maffei ~~aiuta dal Fontanini~~ e da Monsig. Giusto Fontanini, secondo la pubblica confessione fatta dal Maffei, col R.P. Minorelli Domenicano, prima di morire.<sup>623</sup>

If the second two *Avvisi* raise and elaborate similar points to those listed in Scarfò's *Giunta*, the first *Avviso Letterario*, directed at Riccobaldi's *Apologia*, contains an explicit and positive recognition of the place of Ficoroni in Roman antiquarian circles, a series of criticisms of Maffei and Montfaucon alike, and several innovative antiquarian interjections based upon Scarfò's own research. Among Ficoroni's patrons, or those who cited him appreciatively in their work, Scarfò lists Francesco Bianchini, who as we have seen was instrumental in granting a license for Ficoroni's *Osservazioni*, but also other Italian scholars and antiquarians such as Antonio Pio, Giovanni Vignoli and Francesco Dini. Scarfò also lists foreign scholars such as Marcantonio Jacques and Ezekiel Spanheim as well as a series of institutions and academies, in Leipzig, England, Holland, Paris, and the 'Galleria Chircherana', institutes which, Scarfò claimed, supported Ficoroni in his dispute with Maffei and the Maurists.<sup>624</sup> If Ficoroni was a respectable scholar, Riccobaldi was seen as relying dogmatically on Montfaucon's assertions, who himself was presented as part-dogmatist and part-fool, for claiming novelty in antiquarian environments with which he was not familiar, and for relying too insistently on one authority, the afore-mentioned Flaminio Vacca.<sup>625</sup>

With the credibility of the protagonists established, Scarfò quite literally guides the reader, case by case, through a series of antiquarian disjunctures between the accounts of Ficoroni and Maffei or Montfaucon. Some of these have real substance; for instance Scarfò elaborates at length the basis for the distinctive readings of ancient statues and

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<sup>623</sup> *ibid.*, f. 59v; strike through included in original manuscript.

<sup>624</sup> BAR, MS 2151, ff. 201r-202r; the genuine support of any of these figures or institutions for Ficoroni is not clear.

<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 202r. The letter in appendix to the *Apologia* from the French scholar 'Coconier' is dismissed as a fake; even if he were real, Scarfò elaborates, "Coconier non era venuta ancora in Italia e quando costui vienne ando prima in Venezia essi in Roma, quando appunto l'Apologista ne stave per publicar a Apologia", ff. 227rv.

Gods in antiquity, offering a more nuanced interpretation of Roman paganism than the pantheism assumed by Maffei.<sup>626</sup> These longer manuscripts suggest that Scarfò invested significant time and energy into formulating a substantial criticism of Maffei and thus defence of Ficoroni, even though only a brief remark is made in his *Giunta*. To understand both why Scarfò was compelled to polemicize against the *Giornale* in Venice, and how he situated his antiquarian polemics against Maffei and the Maurist congregation in a theological-philological context, another, much shorter, manuscript essay offers a point of entry: his *Memoriale Theologico Dogmaticum D. Joh. Chrysostomi Scarfò... pro nova editione Operum Sancti Augustini*.<sup>627</sup>

Scarfò takes on the Maurists: 'Jansenism' as a Pejorative

The *Memoriale Theologico Dogmaticum* held among Scarfò's manuscripts is a half-composed proposal for a new edition of the works of Saint Augustine; it is draft of a planned commentary on the Maurist 1680 edition of the *Opere* of St. Augustine. The Maurist edition of the works of St. Augustine had attracted great controversy upon its publication in 1680. On the one hand, it constituted the most authoritative and extensive edition of the works of an important Church Father; on the other hand, the Maurist edition was scrutinized for its supposed inclusion of the Jansenist propositions regarding grace and free-will in Augustine's thought. Here philological analysis was key, with critics of the Jansenist heresy alert to supposed attempts to conceal heretical theological positions behind choices of terminology and translation, and the Maurist *Opere's* defenders establishing the credibility, or 'transparency' of the monks' edition. This former position is the line of argument sketched out in Scarfò's *Memoriale Theologico Dogmaticum*, where he makes eight accusations of covert heresy smuggled into the Maurist *Opere* concerning issues of sin and grace, free will and predestination.

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<sup>626</sup> The issue, discussed in BAR, MS 2151, ff. 203r-206r, concerns pantheism in ancient Rome, and, using the Pantheon, "del tempio ragioni di Agrippa" as the point of reference, whether all the Roman, Greek and Egyptian Gods were conceived of as "simulacro Panteo cioè di tutto gli Dei", or as Gods in their own right. Scarfo accuses of Maffei of holding the former position, which he himself disputes.

<sup>627</sup> MS 2151, ff. 177r-183v.

Scarfò published this list of philological criticisms as an appendix to his 1711 polemic *Lettera Apologetica*, again using the pseudonym Grisofano Cardiecletti.<sup>628</sup> The gravity of the matter, in the years leading up to the Papal Bull *Unigenitus* of 1713, meant, however, that they quickly attracted criticism from several quarters, leading to a lively case in the Holy Office.<sup>629</sup> Some of this criticism came from Scarfò's own order, the Southern Italian community of Basilian monks. The order's Padre Generale, Pietro Menniti, had assessed Scarfò's errors and deemed them problematic, and possibly himself referred Scarfò's *Memoriale* to the Index. This prompted Scarfò himself to write to the Holy Office, preempting his referral, protesting his innocence and arguing his case.<sup>630</sup> In Scarfò's view, the philological discrepancies he noted in the new edition of Augustine's *Opere* were intentionally placed there to encourage heresy: "che verrebbe in pregiudicio della Fede Cattolica essendole falsazioni scoperte dall'oratore chiarissime fundamenta del Giansenismo, come si obbliga di far costare in presenza della chiesa tutta".<sup>631</sup> Scarfò requested that the Cardinals of the Congregation of the Index, via the Neapolitan cardinal Pignatelli, stress the need to enforce the various papal bulls against Jansenism, and to order the General of the Basilians Pietro Menniti, and "i superiori del Monastero di S. Agrippina di Napoli" to adhere to theological orthodoxy, while "protegga l'Oratore in ogni cose che da detti superior se gli facesse qualche violenza".<sup>632</sup>

Scarfò's *Memoriale* was composed and received in the context of his break with and then expulsion from his religious order. He wrote to the Index again later in November, once more professing his innocence, and striking out again at Menniti, who he accused

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<sup>628</sup> Full title: *Lettera Apologetica di Grisofano Cardiecletti intorno all'estratto delle Lettere Apologetiche Teologico-Morali del Sig. D Biagio Majoli d'Avitabile Avvocato Napolitano, FATTO dagli Autori del Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia al tom. I art. 8 pag. 261 nella qual lettera si da anche notizia di alcune Opere mm.ss. del P.D. Giovan Gisostomo Scarfo Lettore Baisiliano e delle falsita scoperte dal medesimo P. Letore nelle Opere del Gran Padre S. Agostino, fatto ristampare dagli'Insigni Teologi di S. Mauro di Parigi. INDIRIZZATA DETTA LETTERA allo stesso signor d. BIAGIO MAJOLE DE AVITABILE, nel CDCCX.* In the ACDF edition, below the final name D'Avitabile is scrawled "Che n'è l'autore", and below the dated, listed as 1710, is scrawled "Napoli, 1711". This text will be contextualised in the following section.

<sup>629</sup> The whole case is recorded in ACDF, Iansenismus, St. St. F4c – FIANDRA MESCELANIA 1711-1735, ff. 49r-88v. It is filed in a collection of theological controversies from 1711, 1712 and 1713 concerning the jansenist question in the low countries – the most substantial case is that of the Irish Augustinian priest Francis Martin, ff. 219r-456v; also of note is the decision to prohibit the work of the Belgian Gallican scholar Zeger Bernhard van Espen (ff. 213r-219v) – this gives some idea of Scarfo's company in the Holy Office's administration.

<sup>630</sup> Scarfo's letter to the Congregazion is produced twice, identically, bookending other documents: Ibid., ff. 50rv and 67r; 51rv and 66r. A longer letter anonymous but probably from Scarfo, is f. 52r and 65r. Both of these were assessed in the feria on the 4<sup>th</sup> November.

<sup>631</sup> Ibid., f. 51r – underlining in original.

<sup>632</sup> Ibid., f. 66r.

of treating him “come se scomunicata fossi”.<sup>633</sup> Scarfò’s opponents, among them those within his own order, are scathingly presented: “non conoscono altro Tribunale che l’interesse temporale, pretendendo di preferirlo agli interessi di Gesù Cristo”.<sup>634</sup> Scarfo accused Menniti of writing in defence of the Maurists purely because he was himself praised by Montfaucon in his *Diarium Italicum*: “a cagion che il P. Monfocu [Montfaucon] dell istessa cong.ne di S. Mauro abbia encomiato l’accennato p. Genle nel libro intitolato Iter Italicus, e a cagione ancora che lo stia in atto lodando nell’altre di lui opere”.<sup>635</sup> Scarfò’s thesis of direct collaboration between the Basilian Menniti and the Maurists is difficult to ascertain, but unsurprisingly representatives of the Benedictine Order did compose their own criticism of Scarfo’s criticism of the Maurist edition of Augustine’s *Opere*.

This attack appears to have been co-ordinated by Père Philippe Raffier, newly appointed in 1710 as ‘Procureur Général de la Congrégation (de St. Maur) en Cour de Rome’, and committed to defending the interests of the Maurists and Benedictines at large on the Italian peninsula.<sup>636</sup> Raffier wrote to the Holy Office in 1711 disputing Scarfò’s philological claims as false, before placing the critique of the Maurists as crypto-jansenists in a broader context. Here he drew attention to the cases in 1679, and then later in 1699, where anonymous polemics accused the Maurists of Jansenism, with it being judged that “tale accusa essendo stata convinta per calunniosa, e falso in questo ecclesio Tribunale del S. Offizio, gli accennati due opuscoli furono condannati e proibiti dall’E.E.V.V. con decreto di 11 Giugno”.<sup>637</sup> By the same measure, Scarfò’s criticism had no credibility.

To effectively counter Scarfò’s “atrocissime contumelie... inveisce contra quei Monaci, come se avessero falsificare le opere del Santo in otto luoghi per favorire il Giansenismo

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<sup>633</sup> Ibid., f. 68rv, f. 68v.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid., f. 68v.

<sup>635</sup> Ibid., f. 50r.

<sup>636</sup> On Raffier, see his biography in *Histoire littéraire de la Congrégation de Saint-Maur*, by Rene-Prosper Tassin, 1770, xxiv, pp. 790-793. There is also some superficial discussion about Raffier’s polemics against Scarfò, reference to three polemics he composed against Scarfo (*Responsio ad Animadversiones D. Joannis Chrysostomi Scarfo; Responsio ad ultimas annotations Patris Scarfo contra novam editionem Parisiensem operum Sancti Augustini; Lettres de M. Antiqualino a M. Biagio Maioli de Avitabile Avocat de Naples, dit Grisophano Gardieletti*), as well as a journal he wrote of his time in Italy (*Memoire de mon voyage d’Italie en 1711 & le Journal de tems que j’ai été à Rome*) and his keen interest in hebraics. All his published works seem to have been lost.

<sup>637</sup> ACDF, Iansenismus, St. St. F4c., f. 69r - Although undated, the letter can be identified as being sent in 1711, from contents – “... in quest’anno 1711...”.

e il Calvinismo” Raffier attached to his letter a copy of “l’opuscolo del P. Scarfò insieme con un esatto Confronto dell’Edizione piu famose d’Italia, Germania, Fiandria e Francia dell’opere di S. Agostino nei luoghi accusati da essa P.re, essendo pronti i Monaci di S. Mauro a giustificarsi anche piu diffusam.te”.<sup>638</sup> Attached to Raffier’s letter is a systematic assessment of Scarfò’s philological claims, via a cross-referencing of the Maurist St. Augustine with a series of other editions printed in England, France, Germany and the Netherlands, over the previous centuries. Some of Scarfò’s points are dismissed as Scarfò’s own citations from the different editions are proved to be incorrect, while where Raffier’s analysis does recognizes some linguistic discrepancies, these represent minor differentiations within translations, and certainly not a ‘nuovo cavallo Troiana’, an attempt to slip heresy into orthodoxy by distorting translations of canonical works.<sup>639</sup>

This analogy - of covert heresy as trojan horse - is that of the author of the *Avviso alla S. Chiesa Cattolico intorno ai due libretti della Lettera Apologetica, e della Giunta, di Grisofano Cardiecletti*,<sup>640</sup> a text also included in the documents relating to the Scarfò case. The work has been attributed to the Florentine Servite monk Gerardo Capassi, who was close to both the editors of the *Giornale* in Venice and the Maurists in Rome.<sup>641</sup> In his *Avviso* Capassi defended the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia* against the attacks it received from Scarfo in his *Giunta*, and the Maurists from the false accusation of Jansenism they received in Scarfò’s *Lettera Apologica*. He reproduced the point-by-point repudiation of heresy sent by Raffier to the Holy Office, suggesting that perhaps there was some collaboration between the two.<sup>642</sup>

Capassi’s *Avviso* goes beyond Raffier’s systematic philological critique by turning the tables on Scarfò, arguing that his posturing as anti-Jansenist was in fact a ploy to *himself* promote jansenist positions: Scarfò “in queste sue opera insinuati gli accennati due

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<sup>638</sup> Ibid., 69v; a manuscript of Scarfo’s *Memoriale* is ff. 54r-63v; a full copy of Scarfo’s *Lettera Apologetica* is enclosed among the documents on f. 85, within which Scarfo’s eight points are on ff. 19v-20v.

<sup>639</sup> Raffier’s systematic listing of the errors in Scarfo’s philological criticism of the *Opere* is contained on page 70v and 81r; the 8 points are also listed on f. 71rv and 80r; Between these pages is a review of Raffier’s analysis, presumably commissioned directly by the Index, ff. 72r-79v.

<sup>640</sup> cioè del P. D. Grian Grisostmo Scarfo, Monaco Basiliano Calabresi, Convinto come sospetto de vehementi di Giansenismo da un RELIGIOSO ZELANTE, in Cosenza, 1712.

<sup>641</sup> On Capassi, see Andrea Maria del Pino, “Il Padre Gerardo Capassi e La Sua Corrispondenza Con Schelstrate, i Bollandisti e i Maurini,” *Studi Storici Dell’ordine Dei Servi Di Maria* 7 (56 1955): 75–126.; also, Franco Andrea Dal Pino, “Capassi, Gerardo,” *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 18 (1975).; see ch. 6.

<sup>642</sup> ACDF, Iansenismus, St. St. F4c, f. 86, with the key argument summarized ff. 15-16.

errori dei moderni Giansenisti, cioè, che le cinque proposizione sieno DATE a *Giansenio*, e che il *Giansenismo* sia una mera impostura”.<sup>643</sup> One of the most controversial aspects of the Jansenist controversy was Antoine Arnauld’s insistence upon a distinction between *de iure* and *de facto* submission to the new papal Bulls against Jansenist heresy. Arnauld argued that he, and others accused of Jansenism, could acknowledge that the claims made of Jansen’s *Augustinus*, “date a Giansenio” constituted heresy, *de iure* conformance, without actually acknowledging that those claims were made by Jansen himself, *de facto*. In an ironic move, Capassi mirrors Scarfò’s structure, listing eight of his own points, clarifying his rationale for seeing Scarfò as a crypto-Jansenist, “sospetto *de vehementi* di Giansenismo”.<sup>644</sup> Capassi ended his critical commentary by stating his ambition to extend his critique of Scarfò, by recourse to the Basilian monk’s other works, notably his 1709 *Sacra Stromata Theologico Dogmatico*, as well as lamenting that the printers in Naples, “citta Cattolica, e tanta religiosa, sieno impegnare ad infettare l’Italia con scritture così velenose, e pestiere.”<sup>645</sup>

With damaging claims and counter-claims of Jansenism being exchanged, reconstructing in full Scarfò’s polemical activity in the years around 1710 is of value principally as it shatters the illusion of a ‘pure’ ideological-theological plane of discourse and scholarship. Scarfò’s condemnation of the Maurist St. Augustine as crypto-Jansenist appears to have been, at least in part, stimulated by his broad-based criticism of the Maurist scholarly order and the scholarly ideals they represented. His proposed project of an alternative edition of Augustine’s *Opere* seems to have been designed to prompt controversy rather than being a serious project. Conversely, Ficoroni’s criticism of Montfaucon’s antiquarian scholarship was redeployed by his critics as a front for theological disagreements. Scarfò’s defence of Ficoroni and his criticism of the Venetian *Giornale de Letterati d’Italia*, appear, on the one hand, as stimulated by personal affiliation and resentment, and, on the other hand, as signalling the criticism of critical scholarship in the Maurist mould. The Holy Office here played a complex role: as arbiter of a theological orthodoxy both in a state of flux and, rhetorically at least, bound up with ideals of scholarly propriety and decorum. In the case of Scarfò, Jansenism as a

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<sup>643</sup> *Avviso*, p. 13.

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-47; Of political significance, his 7th point is that Jansenists tend to favour state jurisdiction over ecclesiastical authority of temporal matters, and that, on p. 9 of his *Giunta*, Scarfò commends Prince Eugene, Duke of Savoy, in his conflicts with the ‘Dataria Apostolica’, p. 46.

<sup>645</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

pejorative term acted more as a front for shifting fault-lines within a scholarly culture than as indicative of serious theological disagreement.

### The spectre of 'Probabilism' in D'Avitabile's Naples

To further flesh out the conceptual space between erudite sociability and theological scholarship, and use this enquiry to offer some more substantial claims about the re-ordering of scholarly norms in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Italy, the following section of this chapter will re-orientate around Scarfò's collaborator, the Neapolitan scholar Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile. It was primarily in defence of D'Avitabile against his criticism by the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, that Scarfò published his *Lettera Apologetica* in 1711, the appendix of which led to collision with the Maurists, the Index and his own order.<sup>646</sup> A defence of D'Avitabile was also the main subject of Scarfò's 1712 *Giunta*, assessed above for its comments on Ficoroni and Maffei. Unlike the Calabrese Scarfò, who appears as something of an outsider in Italy's scholarly culture, D'Avitabile was well-integrated into Neapolitan and Italian intellectual life, and well connected with senior, respectable scholars across the peninsula. Substantiating D'Avitabile's confrontation with the *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia* – understood as related to, and in a sense appropriated by the polemics of Scarfò – offers a particularly fertile case with which to piece together the fragmented and contingent distribution of scholarly authority in the Italian Republic of Letters.

Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile, originally from the Campanian town of Agerola, was a lawyer, a literary scholar and professor of theology and philosophy at the university in Naples.<sup>647</sup> He was an enthusiastic representative of Naples' erudite culture, playing a prominent role at the Accademia Palatina, which replaced the academy maintained by the Viceroy Medinaceli, and initiating and administering the Neapolitan 'colony' of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, among whom he used the pseudonym Agero Nonacride.<sup>648</sup>

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<sup>646</sup> And the text was attributed to D'Avitabile – see above, note 628

<sup>647</sup> On D'Avitabile in general, see the blog entry by Aldo Cinque, "Biagio Avitabile: L'Agerolese Che Porto l'Arcadia a Napoli," <https://agerola.wordpress.com/2014/03/27/Biagio-Avitabile-Lagerolese-Che-Porto-Larcadia-a-Napoli/>, 2014.

<sup>648</sup> Great insight into Avitabile's role in Neapolitan intellectual life, his administration of the Accademia Palatina and the Arcadia 'colony' in Naples is given in his letters to Giovanni Maria Crescimbeni, held in the Fondo Arcadia, BAR: MS 18, ff. 205-222 (1710-12), ff. 367-374 (1703-4, 1710); MS 21, ff. 1-71 (1706); MS 24, ff. 10-14, 123-137, 176-223 (1707); MS 26, ff. 225-226, 441, 444-502, 505-509, 653-672 (1710,

Having published several literary works and contributed to collected editions of Neapolitan poetry in the Arcadian tradition, promoting Petrarchism and literary reform, D'Avitabile published, in 1709, his *Lettere Apologetiche-Teologico-Morali, scritte da un Dottor Napoletano a un Letterato Veneziano*.<sup>649</sup> D'Avitabile's *Lettere* proved controversial to various different interest groups in Italian scholarship: for the theological positions it contained, for its scholarly method, tone and presentation, and perhaps most significantly for the relationship between theological scholarship and erudition it maintained.<sup>650</sup>

D'Avitabile's two *Lettere* both offered strong criticism of moral-theological laxity associated with the doctrine of probabilism, and a defence of the authority of the Church Fathers as a basis for religious reform. This had been a pan-European tension within Catholicism since the mid-17th Century.<sup>651</sup> D'Avitabile's *Lettere*, however, had specific targets: two inter-related regional theological controversies concerning Neapolitan scholars from the previous ten years. The subject of D'Avitabile's first letter to Astori was a defence of Biagio Visconti's *Synthesis apologetic theologial moralis* in 1708,<sup>652</sup> against the criticism it had received by the Roman Jesuit Padre Baldassare Francolino. Visconti's book was a refutation of the probabilism of the "Moderni Teologi Scolastici", advocating instead the authority of the Church Fathers, and Scripture, in moral-theological matters. With a series of polemics from the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century,

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1715); MS 27, ff. 3-63 (1715); MS 28, ff. 79-101 (1716). As well as regularly informing Crescimbeni of the initiation of new members of the Academy, D'Avitabile describes at length the process of establishing the academy, attaining the necessary licenses from Gennaro D'Andrea, the Regio Consigliere – MS 18, ff. 269rv, 20.10.1703, and 371r-372r, 14.11.1703. On the Neapolitan Arcadians see Quondam, *Dal Barocco all'Arcadia*.

<sup>649</sup> Of note see his play *Il Torgone*, 1701.

<sup>650</sup> The *Lettere* consisted of two letters from Avitabile to Sig Astori, the titular 'letterato Veneziano', the first in defence of Biagio Visconti, dated 2 April 1709, from Naples (1-267), and the second 'in difesa del P. Ciaffoni Calunnato dal Sacerdote Giovanni Sarconio', dated 26<sup>th</sup> May 1709, also from Naples, (269-388). Two forewords introduce the letters, one by the priter Pierre Offray, dated 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1709, from Avignon, and the second by Nicodemo De Galenis. The *Lettere* were supposedly printed in Avignon by the printer Pierre Offray, and were dedicated to Emanuel Maurizio Di Lorenza, Principe D' Elbeuf, 'comandamente della Cavalleria nel Regno di Napoli'. On the *Lettere* and ensuing controversies see Stone, *Vico's Cultural History*, pp. 16-162; and Fantato, "Il Giornale e Le Polemiche Letterarie: Il Caso Di Biagio Maioli D'Avitabile (e Giangrisostomo Scarfo)." See also De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)*, pp. 83-7.

<sup>651</sup> On the role of the probabilist doctrine in ecclesiastical politics within the Society of Jesus see Jean-Pascal Gay, *Jesuit Civil Wars: Theology, Politics and Government under Tirso González (1687-1705)* (Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate, 2012); for a pan-European survey see Tutino, *Uncertainty in Post-Reformation Catholicism*.

<sup>652</sup> Full title: *Synthesis Apogetica-Theological-Moralis, secundum Ethicae Christianae doctirname, Generales Morum regulas continens. Authore D. Blasio Visconti S.T., U.J. Doctore, & in Regio Neapolitano Archigymnasio Professore Theologo*.

targeted primarily at Louvain clerics, Francolino had become a figurehead for the Jesuit promotion of probabilism and casuistry as theological doctrines, critical of the theological tenets of a rigorism perceived as 'philo-Jansenistic'. Critics of rigorism disputed the claim that the present Church was corrupt, and needed reform according to the primitive Church.<sup>653</sup> In his first *Lettere D'Avitabile* follows Visconti's argument carefully, and discredits Francolino, primarily by ridiculing the implications of probabilism in moral theology and dissolving the category of 'rigorist', used pejoratively by the Jesuits, as a false construct.<sup>654</sup>

D'Avitabile might have had a personal reason to intervene and defend Visconti, whom he identified in a 1707 letter to Crescimbeni as being his mentor in both law and theology.<sup>655</sup> Ideological and social fault-lines peculiar to Naples were also at play. Visconti vs Francolino was one phase in an ongoing theological debate between the Society of Jesus and its Neapolitan critics: the most substantial case was the long series of polemics between Costantino Grimaldi and Benedetto 'Aletino' De Benedictis, referenced directly by D'Avitabile.<sup>656</sup> A corollary to Grimaldi's polemics with De Benedictis' was the subject of D'Avitabile's second letter to Astori.

In 1696, at the height of the crisis of the Jesuit order between probabilists and probabiorists, a damning critique of the theological lexicity of probabilist moral doctrines, and a call to return critically to the Church Fathers as authority, was published: *Apologia in favore de' S.S. Padri, contra quei che nelle materie morali fanno de' medesimi poca stima*. The posthumous author was Bernardino Ciaffoni, a little-known

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<sup>653</sup> Francolino's publications from the early 18th Century include: *Veteris Ecclesiae Rigor in Administrando Sacramento Poenitentiae: A rigidorum quorundam scriptorum calumniis vindicatus*, Rome 1704; *Praesentis Ecclesiae Benignitas in Administrando Sacramento Poenitentiae a Rigidorum Quorumdam Doctorum calumniis vindicata*, Rome 1705; *Clericus Romanus contra nimium rigorem munitus...*, Rome 1705; *De Dolore ad Sacramentum Poenitentiae*, Rome 1706. Visconti's critique of Francolino did not stand alone: Antonio Bardon, a Dominican monk, published in 1706 anonymously his *Francolinus Clerici Romani Paedagogus, laxoris, in administrando Poenitentiae Sacramento, disciplinae Magister... Observationibus Historico-critico-moralibus exigatus*.; Another attack aimed at Francolino was Johannes Opstraet's 1706 defence of the Louvain scholars, *Belga Clericum Romanum muniens adversus notam nimii rigoris, & calumnias, quibus Theologos Belgas aspergit Francolinus, Jesuita Romanus in libro, quem inscribit, Clericus Romanus contra nimium rigorem munitus*.

<sup>654</sup> See D'Avitabile's satirical criticism of probabilists, *Lettere Apologetiche*, pp. 214-6.

<sup>655</sup> Upon introducing Niccolo Visconte into the Colonia Sebezia, D'Avitabile introduces him as "fratello del Sig. Biagio Visconte, già mio maestro nella legge, e maestro ancora presentam.e nella teologia", D'Avitabile to Crescimbeni, Naples to Rome, 25.3.1707, BAR, Fondo Arcadia, MS 24, f. 194r.

<sup>656</sup> D'Avitabile, *Lettere*, p. 24-25 – where he refers approvingly to Grimaldi's deployment of Malebranche against Aletino's "moderna scholastica teologica"; on Grimaldi's polemics with De Benedictis, see ch. 1, part 2.

Franciscan monk.<sup>657</sup> Ciaffoni's book quickly went through several editions, and became directly implicated into the Neapolitan debate, being the subject of a critique from De Benedictis, published under the pseudonym Francesco de Bonis, *La Scimia di Montalto*.<sup>658</sup> Several responses were written under pseudonyms defending Ciaffoni, notably by Antonio Dazii, titled *La Maschera Conosciuta o sia riposte d' un libricciuolo*<sup>659</sup>, purportedly published in Liege, which was itself criticized by Gabriele Gualdo, under the pseudonym Guido Bellagra, in *Risposta all' autor dell' Apologia de Santi Padri*.<sup>660</sup> It was following Gualdo, in defense of the probabilistic method and against theological rigorists, that Giovanni Sarconio published his *Difesa della morale teologia dale false accuse del modern finto apologist de' santi padre*, published in 1708 in the ecclesiastical press at Benevento, the Beneventan Archbishop Orsini being inclined to promote the Jesuit cause.<sup>661</sup> Sarconio's *Difesa* was the work against which D'Avitabile's second *Lettere* railed.<sup>662</sup>

This, then, was the polemical context, pan-Catholic but also specifically Neapolitan, in which D'Avitabile's *Lettere* was conceived and then received. It was a context charged by the spectre of heresy, and an anxiety about theological heterodoxy. In criticizing the probabilist doctrines associated with the Society of Jesus, Visconti, Grimaldi, Ciaffoni and by extension D'Avitabile were concerned that unbridled 'modern' rationalism in theological matters would encourage sophistry and arbitrariness in the governance of

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<sup>657</sup> On Ciaffoni see Luigi Cajani, "Ciaffoni, Bernardino," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 25 (1981).

<sup>658</sup> cioè un libricciuolo intitolato *Apologia in favore dei Santi Padri contra quelli che in materia morale fanno de' medesimi poca stima convinto di falsità*, published in 1698: De Benedictis is here responding to the similarities between Ciaffoni's argument and that of Pascal, whose *Lettres Provinciales* he had recently attacked by translating Gabriel Daniel's critique of Pascal into Italian, titled *Ragionamenti di Cleandro, e di Eudosso sopra le lettere al Provinciale Recati nell' Italiana favela dall' Original Francese*, published in Pozzuoli, in 1695. See P. Sposato, *Le Lettere provinciali di Biagio Pascal e la loro diffusione a Napoli durante la rivoluzione intellettuale della seconda metà del secolo 17*.

<sup>659</sup> Full title: *La Maschera Conosciuta o sia riposte d' un libricciuolo, che ha per titolo la Scimia del Montalto, In cui oltre la difesa a di cio, che viene addotto dal P. Maestro Bernardino Ciaffoni da San Lupido Min. Conv. Nella sua Apologia in favore de Santi Padri, si fa conoscere la poca Cristiana intenzione di Francsco de Bonis, Sacerdote che passa per autore della Scimia del Montalto*, Liege, 1700.

<sup>660</sup> *in cui si fa vedere dannarsi senza fondamento alcune opinioni et i moderni non esser contrarii di S.S.P.P. come falsamente gli impone il detto autore*, Salzburg, 1701.

<sup>661</sup> Sarconio's *Difesa* is quite rare, and only a few copies exist. One copy, in the BNN, indicates it was published in 1701. On Orsini and the Jesuits see Enrico Narciso, *Illuminismo meridionale e comunità locali* (Guida Editori, 1988), pp. 26-61.

<sup>662</sup> Another relevant influence upon D'Avitabile's *Lettere* could have been his fellow Neapolitan Gianvincenzo Gravina: D'Avitabile informs Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni that he has bought a copy of Gravina's *Poetica Ragione* in a letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 1710, Fondo Arcadia, MS 26, f. 441 – presumably as he was preparing his *Lettere*, printed in the spring of that year. From the early 1690s, Gravina had represented one of the most advanced and most virulent Neapolitan critics of probabilist moral theology – see his *Hydra Mistica*, 1692.

the Church and right religion, as well as in personal ethics and conduct.<sup>663</sup> For defendants of probabilism, such as Francolino, De Benedectis and Sarconio, the ‘rigorist’ or ‘dogmatic’ theological position was perceived to be a front for Jansenists, deists and atheists to infiltrate orthodoxy. The appeal to positive theology and the primitive church appeared to them as little more than a ploy to undermine the structures of ecclesiastical authority felt to be under assault. The Jesuits were correct in perceiving a potential alliance between, on the one hand, positive theology and opposition to scholasticism and probabilism, and on the other anti-curial reformist politics. In Naples, Costantino Grimaldi represents this dynamic best, but D’Avitabile was also engaged in jurisdictional scheming: In 1712 he edited and wrote the introduction for two volumes of collected essays, objecting to ecclesiastical attempts to intervene in Savoy and Liege.<sup>664</sup> The texts were almost certainly printed in Naples: the false provenance, ‘colonia agrippinae’ is a play on their anti-papal tone. The first *Responsa* concerned the disputed concession of jurisdictional authority made to the Savoyard Monarchs by the 15<sup>th</sup> century Pope Nicholas V, and includes anti-curial essays by the Neapolitan Giacinto Falletti, the Savoyard Geronimi-Marcello, Comte de Gubernatis and the Lucchese Jacomo Sardini. The second *Responsa* concerned the contested position of Prince-Cardinal of Liege, in the Habsburg territories in the Netherlands: the title was disputed between Joseph-Clement of Bavaria, Elector of Cologne, and Emmanuel Theodose de la Tour d’Auvergne, Cardinal Bouillon. This work included a series of lectures by the well-known Neapolitan anti-curial polemicist Pietro de Fusco and the French lawyer Antoine Le Vaillant, interjected with pro-curial texts: of note, in the editor’s introduction, D’Avitabile lists as his collaborators Constantino Grimaldi and Scarfò. This suggests a

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<sup>663</sup> See D’Avitabile’s satirical criticism, *Lettere Apologetiche*, pp. 214-6.

<sup>664</sup> *Praeclarissimorum prudentum responsa de privilegio a Nicolae V. Pont. Max. Ludovico Sabaudiae Duci concesso ad omnes sabaudiae dignitates concistoriales, quas docunt, nominandi, utrum etiam pedemontanam quoque ditionem complectatur in quibus qualplura scitu illustra de re Beneficiaria, de Regio nominandi jure, de Conciliorum, ac sere tota Ecclesiastica historia, uti & praecloriora juris Civilis, & Canonici principia continentur, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1712; Praeclarissimorum prudentum reponsa de Epicopatu Ac Principatu Leodiensium, quem Josepho-Clementi Bavaro coloniensi electori Leodiense capitulum suffragatus est; Emmanuel-Theodosius Autem Cardinalis Bullionius Eiusdem Praepositus: aliique oppugnarunt, in quibus De Episcoporum, aliorumque electione, de Canonum, Legum, que Jure, de Ecclesiastica Historia, de Re Civili, maxime de Summorum Principum Pacis, Bellique tempore juribus exercendi, scitu dignissima, continentur, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1712.*

degree of intellectual cross-pollination between D'Avitabile's political action, his theological position and his scholarly activity.<sup>665</sup>

D'Avitabile would probably have expected a riposte from Sarconio, or another representative of the Jesuit order, which would represent a continuity within the environment of theological polemics D'Avitabile had knowingly entered.<sup>666</sup> At this point, however, D'Avitabile seems to have been taken by surprise by the criticism he received from the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, and by aligned elements of the Italian literary establishment, generally anti-jesuit in orientation.<sup>667</sup> Exploring the nature of the *Giornale's* critique offers an opportunity to move once more from theological polemic to erudite controversy, and to interrogate from a different vantage point the relationship between the two.

#### D'Avitabile's 'Cattivo Gusto'

Outside of explicitly theological discourse, D'Avitabile's *Lettere* appear to have caused controversy primarily as a result of its tone, its impropriety and essentially its 'cattivo gusto', rather than the core of its theological argument. In the first edition of the *Giornale* the review of D'Avitabile's *Lettere* (that subject to critique by Scarfò in his *Giunta*) began by chastising those who would praise or critique a text "secondo che hanno la buona o la cattiva fortuna di loro piacere o dispiacere, o secondo i loro propri interesse" rather than according to the standards of "la Critica" as directed towards "comun disinganno e della pubblica utilità."<sup>668</sup> The sensitivity of theological discourse made this tone of argument even more problematic. This, at core, is, for the *Giornale*, the nature of D'Avitabile's mistake in his *Lettere*. The review lists systematically the errors of D'Avitabile's text. Firstly, he feigned publication in Avignon, when the work was in fact published in Naples, already establishing a tone of deception.<sup>669</sup> Secondly, his

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<sup>665</sup> This is, in general, the reading in Quondam, *Dal Barocco all'Arcadia*.; more recently, on this nexus, see Bussotti, "Biagio Garofalo, Il Circolo Del Tamburo e La Colona Sebezia: La Riforma Poetic Dalla Prospettiva Filoimperiale".

<sup>666</sup> This duly arrived, with Sarconio's 1712 *Lettere di Ragguaglio intorno ai punti più principali della regolata probabilità*.

<sup>667</sup> D'Avitabile had even praised directly Scipione Maffei, one of the *Giornale's* editors, as well as the Italian, French, Spanish and German Benedictines as being anti-probabilisti: *Lettere*, pp. 223-4.

<sup>668</sup> GLI tomo 1, 1710, p. 261.

<sup>669</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

criticism of ‘moderni probabilisti’ transmuted too easily into “attacando non solo la Dottrina, ma le Persone ancora”.<sup>670</sup> Thirdly, in the argumentation of D’Avitabile’s *Lettere* “trionfare da per tutto più la passione che l’amore della verità”<sup>671</sup>, particularly criminal, given that D’Avitabile was a lawyer, and so well practiced in writing critically, rather than passionately. Fourthly, D’Avitabile’s *Lettere* were both addressed to Giannantonio Astori; but Astori, the *Giornalisti* claim, “professa di non averne mai ricercato, e di non averle avute che dopo seguitane ultimamente la stampa.”<sup>672</sup> Implicating Astori, D’Avitabile did not offer a faithful critique, but “vi aggiunge molto di suo”, attacking Francolino “con malignità”.<sup>673</sup> D’Avitabile presented himself, the *Giornale* notes, as defender of the theological via media, “il partito di coloro i quali non s’interessano ne per le massime troppo severe de’ Rigoristi, ne per le pericolose facilità de’ Casuisti rilasciati”, and opposing Sarconio’s “critica tanto contraria alla civiltà e alla buona regola Cristiana”.<sup>674</sup> Theoretically this was an agenda the *Giornale* could support – but it was jeopardized by D’Avitabile’s reckless scholarship.

Through the wide circulation and enthusiastic reception of the first copy of the *Giornale*, the negative review of D’Avitabile’s *Lettere* and its implications for his reputation rippled through the Republic of Letters. The case divided scholars. In the summer or 1710, Giusto Fontanini offers his thoughts on the D’Avitabile affair to Matteo Egizio, remarking:

Suppongo che ella avrà letto il Giornale di Venezia, contra il quale intende che il S. Avitabile sia molto sdegnato, e che faccia gran minacce. Pero io posso dire che in ello Giornale hanno mano personaggi grandi, e che il S. Avitabile non ci guadagnerà molte, onde dovrebbe acchetarli, perche cio che è stato scritto del suo libro è stato per estrema necessità, siccome mi vien riferito da persone degne di fede: il che tutto io desposito a V.S. Ill.ma con la alta confidenta”.<sup>675</sup>

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<sup>670</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>671</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>672</sup> Ibid., p. 265. Furthermore Astori “protesta di non avere ne pure per sogno giammai pensato a promuovere la difesa di un libro di questa fatta (Ciaffoni’s *S.S. Padri*)”, p. 266.

<sup>673</sup> Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>674</sup> Ibid., p. 266. Interestingly, the *Giornale* cites its defence by the Jesuit father D’Epineuil in his criticism of Jean Le Clerc in the *Mémoires de Trévoux*. Implying a parallel between D’Avitabile and “il signor Clerico professore Arminiano... d’Amsterdam” (p. 266) could be seen as another form of discrediting the Neapolitan scholar.

<sup>675</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 26.06.1710, BNN MS XIII C 90 220.

The situation for Fontanini is clear: He feels some sympathy with D'Avitabile, but the vast social distinction between him and the 'personaggi grandi' affiliated with the *Giornale* gives the Neapolitan little choice but to accept their judgement. Furthermore, he recognizes the prudence of the *Giornale's* disciplining of scholarly form in theological debate. A similar sympathetic note is voiced by Giacinto Gimma in his letter to Valisnieri on 26 July 1710:

non posso lodare quello che ha operato il Giornale contro l'Avitabile, perche è stato soverchio. Bastava negare tutto quello che si dice dentro la lettera a lettori del libro dell'Avitabile fatta da un amico del signor Zeno senza tanto infamarlo lo stesso Avitabile.<sup>676</sup>

In this sense Gimma was privately redirecting the *Giornale's* condemnation of D'Avitabile's *Lettere* back against the journal editors – their critique was too personal in tone. If this is Gimma's confidential opinion, his initial response reflected his public stance: "Nella causa dell'Avitabile io non ho alcuno interesse".<sup>677</sup> Most important for Gimma was to not himself become embroiled in theological controversy. By praising Gimma in his *Lettere*, D'Avitabile drew the Barese into a controversy which threatened to boil over: "avendomi egli lodato nel suo libro nominandomi tra Rigoristi, io scrisse subito, che non mi nominasse non volendomi pubblicare ne per Rigorista, ne per Probabilista. Fu in tempi di cassar il mio nome, altrimenti gli bisognava ristampare il foglio".<sup>678</sup> Gimma contextualised the D'Avitabile controversy more generally in the polemicization of theological and aesthetic scholarship, which he saw as distasteful and futile, and to the detriment of Italian scholarly and scientific culture, once "detta la madre della scienza", now dominated only by "poesie, prediche e materiale spirituale".<sup>679</sup>

D'Avitabile, personally slighted and clearly incensed, did not agree with Fontanini that it was not prudent to respond forcefully to the *Giornale*, regardless of the 'grandi personaggi' involved, or with Gimma that theological polemic should be subordinated to

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<sup>676</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 26.7.1710, BACR, 337-6; f. 15.

<sup>677</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 26.7.1710, BACR, 337-6; f. 15.

<sup>678</sup> Ibid.

<sup>679</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 1.12.1708, BACR, 337-6, f. 4, 5.

other forms of scholarship, and that polemics were unseemly. Writing to Crescimbeni in May, he stated dramatically:

io dovrò prenderlami colli Sig. Giornalisti di Venezia, che nel primo tomo del loro giornale m'hanno sporcato le mie lettere Apologetiche. Sarò solo, e sono ignorante; ma la giustizia della cause non mi fa temere il numero di Giornalisti, e la loro dottrina.<sup>680</sup>

To inform his critique, D'Avitabile asked Crescimbeni to "trasmettere una copia del decreto della condanna dell'Apologia de S.S. Padri del P. Ciaffoni, col farne la diligenza nella Cong.ne del Indice, pche avendolo detto li Giornalisti in istampa, dovra esser dannata, ma io non ne ho mai avuto notizia."<sup>681</sup> He offered to reimburse Crescimbeni for his troubles. Letters in the following weeks repeat the request, with increasing anxiety: "vi siete scordato del decreto del Ciaffoni, Dio sa quanto m'importa averlo presto. Io questa sett.ma l'aspettava senz'altro".<sup>682</sup> In a letter dated 5th July 1710, D'Avitabile stated his intentions:

fra due altre settimane pubblicherassi un manifesto contro I Giornalisti di Venezia, onde si potreste darmi piu corto notizia del decreto del Ciaffoni, l'attendo con ogni brevità p. scriverme<sup>683</sup>

It is unclear whether D'Avitabile received the official decree he requested with which to prepare his defence, or indeed how Crescimbeni responded to his requests. As news of D'Avitabile's outrage filtered north to the *Giornale* in Venice, the editor-in-chief, Apostolo Zeno, prepared his response, though indicating little concern: "So che l'Avitabile ne fa il maneggio, in vendetta di quanto è stato detto sinceramente di lui da chi ha steso quell'Articolo. Da pessima causa non si possano argomentare che poessimi effetti."<sup>684</sup> There was also a degree of regional motivation, as a group of Neapolitans,

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<sup>680</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 17.5.1710, BAR Fondo Arcadia, MS 26, f. 462.

<sup>681</sup> Ibid.

<sup>682</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 21.6.1710, BAR Fondo Arcadia, MS 26, f. 468.

<sup>683</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 5.7.1710, BAR Fondo Arcadia, MS 26, f. 471.

<sup>684</sup> Apostolo Zeno to Anton Francesco Marmi, 20.9.1710, included in *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 2, Venezia 1785, letter 230, pp. 80-82. Zeno is overseeing indirectly the controversy, adding "io non aveva ne pur vedute, non che lette, quelle sue Lettere Apologetiche".

headed by D'Avitabile, organized to launch a rival 'Giornale'.<sup>685</sup> Zeno responded coolly to such rumours, writing disparagingly of D'Avitabile's status and contacts:

sentesi che in Napoli possa uscire un'Apologia dell'Avitabile, e forse anche un nuovo Giornale. Se sarà migliore del nostro, gli cederemo il campo: se inferiore, son di opinione che mai son si nomini, e che non se ne faccia alcun conto. I corrispondenti dell'Avitabile non mi fanno gran paura, benché sieno di gran pretensione. Se ella ne penetra alcun cosa, me ne favorisca di pronto avviso.<sup>686</sup>

In both cases – D'Avitabile's personal response to his criticism, and the institutional challenge to their monopoly of erudition – Zeno and the editors of the *Giornale* seemed content to allow the 'chips to fall', resolutely maintaining their position, and appealing to public opinion among the scholarly community to favour their side: "Il pubblico farà giustizia a chi la merita. Tenga in se, quanto confidentemente le scrivo".<sup>687</sup>

This was then the charged context in which the *Lettera Apologetica* by Grisofano Cardiecletti appeared in the first months of 1711, which could be seen as the first formulation of the 'manifesto contro i Giornalisti di Venezia' promised by D'Avitabile; this perhaps validates the Holy Office's suspicion that D'Avitabile and Scarfò were co-authors of the work. Here, as we saw above, an incensed attack on the editorial practice and policy of the *Giornale* was placed in dialogue with Scarfò's critique of the Benedictine Maurist order and their *Opere*. The author of the *Lettera* was therefore polemicizing at once against the probabilist critics of D'Avitabile and the 'Jansenist' Maurists. If this was supposed to be a means to defend a moderate *via media* theological stance, it was perceived as encouraging the further debasement of the 'queen of the sciences'.

Following the *Giornale's* attack, D'Avitabile's original *Lettere Apologetiche* had been referred to the Holy Office to be reviewed. This work was put on the Index in January

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<sup>685</sup> The new *Giornale* is cited in a letter from Gimma to Vallisnieri, 26.7.1710, BACR, 337-6 f. 16; Gimma's letters to Vallisnieri evidence that Elbeuf, to whom Avitabile's *Lettere* was dedicated, was the chief patron of the new giornale: f. 17, 9.8.1710; Gimma himself distanced himself from the Neapolitan journal upon being asked by the Neapolitans to help, both not wanting to upset the "equilibrio", and also reckoning that "le discordie daranno gusto agli oltramontani": see letter f., 27.12.1710. This journal is referred to in Dooley, *Science, Politics, and Society in Eighteenth-Century Italy*, p. 75; Dooley does not identify the journal: it could certainly be the two *Praeclarissimum prudentum response...* published in 1712, edited by D'Avitabile, with a Gallican, if not particularly Jansenist, tone. This suspicion is perhaps strengthened by D'Avitabile's reference to the affair with the *Giornale* in the foreword to the *Praeclarissimum prudentum response... ac Principatu Leodiensium, quem Josepho-Clementi Bavaro* – see note 664.

<sup>686</sup> A Zeno, Venice to Filippo del Torre Vescovo d'Adria, Rovigo, 17.9.1710, in *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 2, letter 229, p. 79-80.

<sup>687</sup> Zeno, Venice to Marmi, Florence, 20.9.1710, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 2, letter 230, pp. 80-82.

1712, as indicated by the *Giornale*, with a curt announcement: “Ai dodici del passato Gennajo furono a pieni voti dannate dall Sacra Congregazione dell’Indice le Lettere Apologetiche del Sig. Dottor Biagio Majoli de Avitabile, censurate nel Tomo I del Giornale”.<sup>688</sup>

### Agitation and Moderation in the ‘Republic of Letters’

At this point, we can return to the point at which we first encountered Giangrisostomo Scarfò. It was primarily the D’Avitabile case, and Scarfò’s conflicts with the Maurists, which led to the publication and circulation of Scarfò’s *Giunta*. *The Giunta* explicitly represented a transposition of argument from one based on specific cases or even specific books, to one directed towards the *Giornale* as an institution, and its editors as individuals. This was the key context in which it made sense for Scarfò to defend Ficoroni in his antiquarian dispute: while Ficoroni the antiquarian doesn’t appear to have been interested in theological matters, he and Scarfò had common ‘enemies’: the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia*. Scarfò’s *Giunta*, and rumours about the text, spread through the Italian republic of letters. A copy was promptly sent to Gimma in Bari, a friend of D’Avitabile, and seemingly despised by Zeno, who described him to Vallisnieri as “un pazzo solennissimo”.<sup>689</sup> Gimma wrote to Vallisnieri in early June 1712: “mi è stato mandato un opuscolo, col titolo di Giunta al primo tomo del Giornale ec. L’autore pretende criticar tutti i libri lodati nel Giornale, e vuol continuare a far le Giunte a ciaschedun tomo. È un autore bizzarro, dotto e risoluto, e non si è fatto bene a stuzzicarlo”.<sup>690</sup>

Gimma must have sent a copy of the *Giunta* to Vallisnieri, who describes the text in a letter to Umberto Landi in July,<sup>691</sup> while Zeno received the *Giunta* by September 1712, stating his response to Vallisnieri:

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<sup>688</sup> GLI, vol. 9, 1712, p. 468.

<sup>689</sup> Zeno, Venice to Vallisnieri, Padova, 17.4.1712, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 2, letter 286, pp. 172-3.

<sup>690</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 30.6.1712, in BACR, 337-6, lett.2 – here cited from Vallisnieri, *Epistolario, vol II, 1711-13*, Dario Generali (ed.), 1991, transcribed in footnote p. 198-202.

<sup>691</sup> Vallisnieri, Padova to Landi, 16.7.1712, *Epistolario*, p. 186-97.

ho letto quella sciocca Giunta al Giornale fatta dal P. Scarfò, ch'è un pazzo solenne, piena di inezie, e d'imposture: lascio stare le maldicenze, che sono il carattere proprio di quel fanatico.<sup>692</sup>

Viewing Scarfò as a 'fanatico' captures how the *Giornale's* objections to Scarfò encompassed both his irresponsible polemicizing of theology, and his transgression of the norms of acceptable scholarly behavior in general.

The defense of Neapolitan erudition in the *Giunta*, its treatment by the *Giornale*, and the private letters of the 'Giornalisti' present Scarfò, D'Avitabile and to a lesser extent Ficoroni as collaborating, as working with and in a sense representing a Neapolitan scholarly bloc. This view is reinforced by considering the mediating role of Ludovico Antonio Muratori in the moderation of erudite controversy. D'Avitabile first wrote to Muratori in late 1712, expressing indignation at being attacked by the *Giornale* without reason, and a reluctance to revoke his polemics. The stimulus for D'Avitabile's contact with Muratori was his communication with Gimma and Nicolo Amenta in Bari and Naples respectively, who both hoped the influential Modenese librarian could help calm the republic of learning. As we have seen Gimma presented himself as sympathising with D'Avitabile's predicament, but was unwilling to himself become embroiled in theological discourse. Amenta was a close friend of D'Avitabile, with whom he collaborated at length in the Neapolitan 'colonia sebezia' Arcadian academy, under the pseudonym Pisandro Antoniani. Amenta's letter to Muratori, dated 23.8.1712, indicates he, like Gimma, also felt Avitabile to be unjustly attacked by the *Giornale*:

in quanto al mio giudizio, che gliel do confidentissamente: mi par troppo, per aver solamente detto I giornalisti, che il Signor Avitabile aveva scritto con astio; che il di lui libro e quasi una traduzione di quello del Visconti; e che il sig Astori non avesse cooperate niente nella stampa di quell libro l'ove per l'opposito l'hanno a bastanza lodato di virtuoso, di letterato, del'avvocato. Poteva il sig. Avitabile rispondere la libro scrittogli contra del Sarconio: e con modestia, se non giustamente, rimbrottare i signori giornalisti come passavato del P. Francolini, del Sarconio e del probabilismo.<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>692</sup> Zeno, Venice to Vallisnieri, Padova, 1.9.1712, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, letter 300, p. 196-7.

<sup>693</sup> Amenta, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 23.8.1712, in *Edizione Nazionale del Carteggio Muratoriano: Carteggi con Amenta... Azzi*, ed. C. Forlani and M.G. Di Campli, (Modena: 1995).

Amenta restates his sympathy for D'Avitabile in his letter of the 27th September 1712, railing against the "tanto rigogliose ed animoso" notice of the censorship of the *Lettere Apologetiche* in volume IX of the *Giornale*.<sup>694</sup>

By 1712, D'Avitabile, Gimma and Amenta were in tight communication, but while the latter two advised D'Avitabile to resist the urge to retaliate, D'Avitabile asserts to Muratori that the slight was too great, and relates at length his anti-*Giornale* scheming with Scarfò, and the Neapolitan lawyer Carmine Buonaventura.<sup>695</sup> D'Avitabile claims that in his *Lettere Ragguaglio*, a response published by Sarconio to the *Lettere Apologetiche*, "il Sarconio vomita contra la mia persone, contra i miei costumi e contro il mio libro ingiurio tali, che peggiori non s'avrebbero potuto dire contra l'uomo più infame che viva, e contra i libro più orlazo, che mai si fosse stampato nel mondo".<sup>696</sup> Muratori's response to these polemics is difficult to gauge, though one might assume he disapproved. With the publication of D'Avitabile's ironic *Confessione*,<sup>697</sup> Scarfo's *Lettera dicheoloica* and *Lettera Aletoloica* signed by a 'Signor Monorfelino'<sup>698</sup> and Carmine Buonaventura's *Lettera... nella quale si ragiona del Libro del sig. Sarconio*,<sup>699</sup> Gimma could remark in a letter to Valisnieri that "questa briga pare che ora incomincia".<sup>700</sup> In reality, by early 1713 the editorial energy of D'Avitabile and Scarfò was wearing thin, and the opposition of the *Giornale*, representing and enforcing scholarly order, was too great.

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<sup>694</sup> Amenta to Muratori, 27.9.1712, *ibid*.

<sup>695</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 23.8.1712, BEUMo AM, 69.40, letter 2.

<sup>696</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 4.10.1712, BEUMo AM, 69.40, letter 3.

<sup>697</sup> *Confessione di Biagio Maioli de Avitabile Fatta per la lettera Apologetica Teologico-Morale prima da lui scritta contra Giovanni Sarconio Sacerdote, e Confessore di Monache*, no place of publication, 1712: D'Avitabile initially apologises for his behaviour, before vindicating his opinions with added vitriol – its insincerity is forced home by the image on the front cover of a ship with the words written across its mast "immota manet".

<sup>698</sup> *Lettera dicheoloica di Monorfelino Scritta all'illustrissimo sig. Tommaso Palma dottore delle Leggi*, 1713. The *Lettera aletoloica di Monorfelino indirizzata all'illustrissimo sig. Antonio Vallisnieri, Veneziano*, 1713, is an extended defence of Ficoroni's *Osservazioni*.; In a letter to Egizio dated 21.4.1713 (BNN MS XIII C91, 197) Garofalo attributes the works by Monorfelino to 'i seguaci di Scarfo Calabrese'. Garofalo was strongly critical of, and rather perplexed by, Scarfo's polemics, sent to him by Egizio (14.1.1712, MS XIII C91 172; 30.12.1712, MS XIII C91 191; MS XIII C91 172; 22.1.1713, MS XIII C91 194,) "se mai potesse penetrare il libretto dello Scarfare e anche in suo poter, ne lo invi indirizzata al Sig. Cavalier Maffei" (11.3.1713, MS XIII C91 195).

<sup>699</sup> *Lettera del sig., Carmine Buonaventura a Grisofano Cardiceletti, nella qualesi ragiona del Libro del sig. Sarconio intitolato Lettere di ragguaglio ec. Uscito in Napoli contro il libro dell'Avvocato Majoli de Avitabile intitolato Lettere Apologetiche ec.*, Napoli, 1712.

<sup>700</sup> Gimma, Bari to Vallisnieri, Padova, 21.1.1713, p. 246, Vallisnieri, *Epistolario*.

The polemics co-ordinated by the “gran lega de Signori Avitabile, Ficoroni e Scarfò” in late 1712 and early 1713 had a delayed and limited impact as they were printed in small batches and diffused slowly.<sup>701</sup> Furthermore, Scarfò’s projected third and fourth ‘giunta’ were never published, the second was suppressed, and it was at this point that Scarfò was expelled from his monastic order.<sup>702</sup> This appears to have been a tipping point, after which Scarfò began aiming to extract himself from the controversy he had both caused and fuelled. Following the appearance of his *Lettera del molto reverend padre D. Giangrisostomo Scarfò... scritta al signor Francesco de’ Ficoroni*, published under his real name, excusing and withdrawing the polemical claims made in his *Giunta*, Scarfò sent a full retraction to the *Giornale*, by way of Apostolo Zeno’s brother Pier Caterino, in June 1713.<sup>703</sup> This was then announced in volume XIV of the *Giornale*, along with a note expressing Scarfò’s intention to dedicate his time to working on the *Martirologio Basiliano*, a history of his order.<sup>704</sup>

If Scarfò had, while damaging his reputation, successfully extricated himself from his predicament, from early 1713 D’Avitabile had begun to try to do the same, by appealing to his better-connected and more reputable correspondents, notably Muratori in Modena and Gimma in Bari, for assistance. According to D’Avitabile’s letters to Muratori, Gimma had, for several months, been trying to neutralize the dispute with the *Giornale* in Venice. Gimma’s letters to Vallisnieri demonstrate this: writing in January 1713, he presents D’Avitabile “n’è affatto alienato, e lascia tutta la briga al dett Padre Scarfò”, whilst citing D’Avitabile’s assertion that he was merely responding to “le forme critiche ed incivili” directed towards him from the *Giornale*.<sup>705</sup> After hearing news of Scarfò’s retraction, and its publication in the *Giornale*, Gimma wrote a long letter to Vallisnieri, proposing that they also excuse D’Avitabile, suggesting that D’Avitabile could send a ‘dichiarazione’, excusing his conduct.<sup>706</sup> In October, apparently having received no clear response from the *Giornale* via Gimma, D’Avitabile appeals to Muratori for assistance, incensed that the journal had accepted Scarfò revocation - “l’ha chiamata generoso, o degna d’un vero religioso” – but made no mention of D’Avitabile, even as “La ritrazione

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<sup>701</sup> GLL, vol. 13, 1713, p. 493.

<sup>702</sup> Zeno, Venice to Valisnieri, Padova, 25.3.1713, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, no. 312, pp. 217-8.

<sup>703</sup> 18.7.1713, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, no. 427, pp. 337-8.

<sup>704</sup> GLL, vol. 14, 1713, pp. 415-416.

<sup>705</sup> Gimma, Bari to Valisnieri, Padova, 21.1.1713, cited in Valisnieri, *Epistolario*, pp. 246-7.

<sup>706</sup> Again the gist is to direct the blame to Scarfò, as a means to excuse D’Avitabile: Gimma to Vallisnieri, 9.9.1713, cited in Valisnieri, *Epistolario*, footnote, p. 218.

dello Scarfò anche pruova la mia innocenza”.<sup>707</sup> Presumably Muratori acted upon D’Avitabile’s request, as he received a letter in December 1713 from Zeno, indicating that the latter, having received a similar letter, requesting D’Avitabile be pardoned, from Vallisnieri (who himself probably received it via Gimma), was “prontissimo a fare”, stating that he has already instructed Vallisnieri to write to D’Avitabile confirmation the acceptance of his ‘dichiarazione’.<sup>708</sup> In January 1714, Avitabile wrote to Muratori that he had received confirmation from Vallisnieri, via Gimma, that his ‘dichiarazione’ would appear in the 15<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Giornale*, which indeed it did.<sup>709</sup>

## Conclusion

With the publication of D’Avitabile’s declaration, the controversy centred around him, Scarfò and Ficoroni was resolved, and scholarly order was restored. Reputations were damaged – both of individuals and of entire scholarly regions<sup>710</sup> – but the political constitution of the ‘Republic of Letters’ meant D’Avitabile and Scarfò were, in time, readmitted on the merit of their scholarship, and the influence of their supporters. While polemics had assumed a personal tone, both parties, in the case of D’Avitabile and Zeno at least, recognized that the key issue at stake was scholarly decorum. D’Avitabile stated this explicitly to Muratori, that “se ammenderanno i loro errore” and acknowledge “la mia riputazione tanto lacerato nel *Giornale*... io ho prossimo occasione di pubblicamente onorarli”,<sup>711</sup> while Zeno professed in a personal letter to Valisnieri his respect for D’Avitabile, whose condemnation was not a personal matter, but rather a necessary maintenance of ‘buon gusto’.<sup>712</sup> Later editions of the *Giornale* praised both D’Avitabile and Scarfò, while, as we saw in the previous chapter, D’Avitabile even collaborated in 1715 on a new Neapolitan edition of the *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto*

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<sup>707</sup> D’Avitabile, Naples, to Muatori, Modena, 29.10.1713, BEUMo AM 69.40, letter 5

<sup>708</sup> Zeno, Venice to Muratori, Modena, 2.12.1713, *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, letter 325, p. 237-9.

<sup>709</sup> By this point D’Avitabile had evidently had enough of controversy, writing to Muratori “spero che finalmente si quieterà”, D’Avitabile to Muratori, 30.1.1714, BEUMo AM 69.40 letter 7; D’Avitabile’s dichiarazione appeared in GLI tomo 15, p. 453. D’Avitabile’s confession praises all of the scholars he had previously attacked.

<sup>710</sup> As the controversy gained heat, Valisnieri writes to Landi of the Italian South: “E ben vero che quello e un paese caldo, ma non li credo poi tutti di cosi caldo temperamento, che non vene sieno molti di savi”, Vallisnieri to Landi, 20.8.1712, *Epistolario*, p. 215; Capassi’s lament in his *Avviso* is also of note: “Stampe di Napoli... sieno impegnare ad infettare l’Italia con scritte cosi velenose, e pestiere”, p. 50.

<sup>711</sup> D’Avitabile, Naples to Muratori, Modena, 4.10.1712, BEUMo AM, 69.40, letter 3.

<sup>712</sup> Zeno, Venice to Muratori, Modena, 2.12.1713, in *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, letter 325, pp. 237-9.

by Muratori, which D'Avitabile asked Vallisnieri to ensure was reviewed in the *Giornale*.<sup>713</sup> Through such collaboration, reputations could be restored; but even as controversies were ongoing, scholars could strategically moderate their image to safeguard their reputation for posterity. We saw earlier how Gimma was careful to not become embroiled in theological polemic by being cited in D'Avitabile's published work, as had happened to Astori. As D'Avitabile was preparing his attacks on the *Giornale* in summer 1710, he was asked by Crescimbeni to supply a biographical note for his forthcoming *Vita* of Francesco D'Andrea, which would appear in the new edition of the *Vite D'Arcadi*. Here D'Avitabile was clear that he wanted to avoid explicit reference to his *Lettere* and the controversy in which he presently found himself: "darò in qualche scoglio con Revisore p le Lettere Apologetiche, di passarla col parole generali, che ho stampato alcune cose morali, senza dire il titolo del libro. Vi priego ancora onorarmi il titolo del poeta latino, e toscano".<sup>714</sup>

One of the prevailing themes of this chapter has been the complex relationship between the rhetoric and the intellectual substance of scholarly impartiality and neutrality in the Italian Republic of Letters. This played out in the tense dynamic between erudition and theology. The critical ideal of authoritative and credible scholarship aligned with an approach to theology which was sober rather than controversialist, avoiding the heretical extremes of probabilism and rigorism. Scholarly and theological impartiality could both, however, be rhetorically deployed, manipulated and used as counter-points for one another. An ideal of a theological *via media* was difficult to sustain in a polemicized theological environment, where pejoratives of Jansenist and probabilist were readily deployed. As theological currents simmered beneath the surface of scholarly decorum, superficially antiquarian disagreements could be transposed and appropriated into disputes of theological gravity. Similarly, the flow of causality could work in the opposite direction, with erudite controversy acting as a 'front' or a 'proxy' for underlying theological misgivings. Furthermore, while some degree of continuity between methods and approaches to scholarship and theology might be interpreted, based on the ideal of 'buon gusto', in the same vein both might be contextualised within the persona of a controversialist and polemicist such as Scarfò.

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<sup>713</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Vallisnieri, Padova, 16.4.1715, BACR, 341.34, letter 2.

<sup>714</sup> D'Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 16.8.1710, Fondo Arcadia, MS 26, f. 476 – underlining in original.

Carefully reconstructing constellations of scholarly controversies uncovers a highly variegated picture, where the intentions and objectives behind texts depend on specific contexts and circumstances, and were often distorted by the “unintended consequences” of a text’s reception and reappropriation. It also demonstrates a highly hierarchical and institutionalized erudite landscape. The ‘Republic of Letters’ as a virtual community has sometimes been presented as lacking institutions, as being essentially ‘flat’. As these case studies demonstrate, however, it was structured and shaped through the interventions and policy of a range of formal organizations, such as the *Giornale*, the Holy Office, and Rome-based community of Benedictine monks, understood as extended entities, as well as less formal institutions, such as the “gran lega” of Scarfò, D’Avitabile and, to a lesser extent, Ficoroni, who sought to contest the legislation of erudition. Intermediary figures such as Muratori, Gimma and Vallisnieri, played a vital role in the distribution of credibility and the dis- or re-habilitation of reputation, by virtue of their connections and influence. This interpretation disturbs the illusion of horizontal inclusivity which celebrants of the Republic of Letters, both early modern participants and present-day scholars, have sometimes sought to promote. The rules of scholarly decorum which governed erudite propriety were produced by and enforced through mechanisms and actors internal to scholarship itself: the ‘Republic of Letters’ as a whole might, therefore, be read as a self-organizing and self-moderating system.

## Chapter Six - The Defence of Criticism: Authority and Devotion in Sacred Erudition

The previous chapter has dealt with the theological tensions in the early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italian Republic of Letters as primarily contexts for erudite criticism and its contested moderation. Similarly, it has engaged with explicitly religious institutions, such as the Holy Office and the community of Maurist scholars in Rome, as primarily participants in an extended scholarly system. This approach is of value in its capacity to contextualise theological and religious dynamics within scholarship at large. It also risks, however, reducing religious tensions to mere extensions of scholarly reform. This chapter aims to avert this conclusion by inverting the equation, and approaching the disciplining of scholarship as a context for disputes in ecclesiastical history, sacred erudition and hagiography. In the process it also aims to better grasp the value, and the limits, of using religious orders as devices with which to structure the Italian Republic of Letters.

Once again assembling and connecting controversies at a pan-Italian level, this chapter will begin and end in Naples, but much of its content will concern the community of scholars affiliated with the Roman Curia in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The first section will assess the Italian defense of the French Maurist scholar Jean Mabillon, before using this enquiry to present the scholarly environment within Rome, the 'Circolo Tamburo' and its French affiliations. The second part of this chapter will use this context to understand the series of controversies related to Giacomo Laderchi's *Acta Passionis S.S. Cresci*, published in 1707, as they manifested tensions surrounding the style and function of hagiography and ecclesiastical history. The third section will approach these themes from a different perspective by focusing on the writing and disputation of sacred erudition within religious orders, working specifically with networks of Italian Benedictine and Camaldolese scholars.

Before re-entering this meshwork of erudite controversies, it's important to clarify just what was at stake in the discussion of the history of the Church. The ruptures in Christendom marked by the Reformation as a complex, ongoing and polycentric

phenomenon had charged ecclesiastical history with a new significance.<sup>715</sup> This was primarily because of history's capacity to contest the nature of ecclesiastical and doctrinal authority in the present. In the post-Tridentine Catholic world this contestation could take primarily two forms: a 'triumphalist' history validating the growth of the *ecclesia universa* and the emergence of its political and doctrinal architecture; and a 'nostalgic' history based upon an idealized primitive Church which represented a recoverable model for ecclesiological and doctrinal practice in the present.<sup>716</sup> Both could play an essentially confessional function in confronting the ecclesiastical models of Protestant scholars, but crucially they proceeded by different, and to a degree contradictory, historical methods.<sup>717</sup>

The 'triumphalist' history, associated most emphatically with Cardinal Baronius and the historiographical tradition his *Annales* represented, sought to stress the unity and coherence of the Church over the centuries, and so emphasize the continuities between past and present. Conversely, the 'nostalgic' mode of church history aimed to reform the present church through the recovery of a primitive not-yet corrupted ideal. Both models produced significant and innovative historical scholarship, and both found themselves "zwischen Tradition und Kritik".<sup>718</sup> Enclosed within them, however, they contained different formulae for how theology and history related to one another. In the former case, history acted as a perfect mirror to theological norms: as such it could sustain scholastic and speculative models of theology. In the latter, history increasingly replaced philosophy as the *ancilla theologiae*, a means to actively resolve doctrinal

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<sup>715</sup> In general, see Irena Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation, 1378-1615* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2003).

<sup>716</sup> See Bruno Neveu, 'L'erudition écclesiastique du xvii siècle et la nostalgie de l'Antiquité chrétienne', in Bruno Neveu and Marc Fumaroli, *Erudition et religion aux 17. et 18. siècles* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), pp. 333-364 ; on the emergence of positive theology, see the good description in Stefan Benz, *Zwischen Tradition und Kritik: Katholische Geschichtsschreibung im barocken Heiligen Römischen Reich*, Historische Studien (Matthiesen Verlag) ; Heft 473 (Husum: Matthiesen, 2003), pp. 427-8.

<sup>717</sup> On this dichotomy in method, see Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Cesare Baronio, La Storia Ecclesiastica, La Storia 'Civile' e Gli Scrittori Giurisdizionalisti Della Prima Metà Del XVIII Secolo," in *Baronio Storico e La Controriforma. Atti Del Convegno Internazionale Di Studi Sora 6-10 Ottobre 1979*, ed. Aldo Mazzacane, Romeo De Maio, and Luigi Gulia (Sora, 1982), pp. 780-81.

<sup>718</sup> Benz, *Zwischen Tradition und Kritik*; For some general remarks, see Anthony Grafton, "Church History in Early Modern Europe: Tradition and Innovation," in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance*, ed. Katherine Elliot Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (Oxford University Press, 2012), 3-27.

controversies.<sup>719</sup> In other terms, ecclesiastical history, when critically composed, was conceived as ‘positive theology’.

The ecclesiastical-historical equation underpinned by positive theology made it politically sensitive: its depiction of a primitive ideal in the Christian past to an extent implied, and could certainly be appropriated for, criticism of the Church in the present. A critical interpretation of scripture and ecclesiastical history could, therefore, inform and direct both political-theological re-interpretations of ecclesiastical architecture and doctrinal-theological moves to reassess the substance of orthodoxy. It was this dynamic which bound practices of critical ecclesiastical history to both ‘Gallicanism’ and ‘Jansenism’ as reforming moves within Catholicism.<sup>720</sup> As seen in the previous chapter, however, it is important to ‘unpack’ these terms, and recognize that rather than representing clearly defined organizations they signified instead rather amorphous yet widespread attitudes and sensibilities, both within Catholicism specifically, but also in Christianity at large.

This cautious approach to taxonomies within Catholic erudition also clarifies the ways in which theological and ecclesiological disputes were in a complex relationship with methodological disputes in sacred erudition more broadly defined. In broad accordance with the ‘triumphalist’ model of church history was a devotional and emotive approach to the reading of sacred erudition and hagiography, where reading about the events and individuals of the history of the Church was designed to function as a form of prayer. Contra this, critical scholars condemned the lack of rigour with which devotional hagiographers, for instance, pieced together the lives of saints; history as devotion obscured history as truth. For these critics, it was the production, rather than consumption, of sacred erudition which assumed devotional force: distilling the empirical certainty about the Church’s history, and purging it of falsity, brought the scholar closer to a truth of religious gravity.<sup>721</sup> These different scholarly methods and

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<sup>719</sup> Levitin, “From Sacred History to the History of Religion.”, p. 1160.

<sup>720</sup> The essays collected in Neveu and Fumaroli, *Erudition et religion aux 17. et 18. siècles.* offer sensitive treatments of these complex themes.

<sup>721</sup> One of the greatest representative of this approach in 17th Century was the French historian Jean de Launoy, see Jacques Gres-Gayer, “L’Aristarque de Son Siècle: Le Docteur Jean de Launoy, 1601-1678,” in *Papes, Princes et Savants Dans l’Europe Moderne: Mélanges à La Mémoire de Bruno Neveu*, ed. Bruno Neveu, Jean-Louis Quantin, and Françoise Waquet (Paris, 2007), 269–85.

aesthetics hung, therefore, upon divergent moral, anthropological and gnoseological orders, framed within the fault-lines established in 17<sup>th</sup> century Catholic theology.<sup>722</sup>

### The Italian Defense of Mabillon and the 'Circolo Tamburo'

A key arena for these methodological tensions within sacred erudition in late 17<sup>th</sup> century Catholicism was France and the Low Countries, and its key protagonist was Jean Mabillon.<sup>723</sup> Dom Mabillon was the most prominent member of the Benedictine Order of monks from the Congregation of St. Maur, famed for their critical scholarship and assertion that historical learning was at the centre of spiritual life. Mabillon had famously defended the latter point against the Trappist Abbe Rancière, who advocated for a more practical, and less scholarly, approach to the religious life. Mabillon developed new methods in philology and diplomatics in his *De Re Diplomatica*, and applied these methods to the interrogation of aspects of sacred and profane history. This work was primarily composed in response to Mabillon's disputes with Daniel Van Papenbroek, leader of the Flemish 'Bollandists', Jesuit scholars who represented the other key force for critical innovation in historical writing in Catholic Europe. Papenbroek had questioned the validity of Mabillon's interpretation of historical legal documents: Mabillon's *De Re Diplomatica* was an important move in establishing the 'knowability' of history through philological interpretation, which the Benedictine further codified in his *Méthode pour apprendre l'histoire* (1684), and his *Traité des études monastiques* (1691). Mabillon's relationship with the Gallican church and its four articles, establishing the limits of Papal authority, was complex, though theologically he pursued a cautious *via media*;<sup>724</sup> his scholarship found its most heated encounter with religious authorities through his work on hagiography. Mabillon wrote, under the pseudonym Eusebius Romanus in 1698, *De Cultu Sanctorum ignotorum*, criticizing the misguided emotive devotionism directed towards saints whose historical lives were

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<sup>722</sup> A dichotomy well described in Girolamo Imbruglia, "Dalle Storie Dei Santi All'idea Moderna Di Superstizione," *Rivista Storica Italiana*. 101, no. 1 (1989): 36–84; Jean-Louis Quantin, "Document, histoire, critique dans l'érudition ecclésiastique des temps modernes, Abstract," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* Tome 92, no. 4 (2004), 597–635.

<sup>723</sup> On Mabillon in general see Henri Leclercq, "Biographie de Dom Mabillon," in *Dom Mabillon: Oeuvres Choies*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel (Paris, 2007), 1–364.

<sup>724</sup> B. Neveu, 'Mabillon et L'Historiographie Gallicane vers 1700', *Erudition et Religion*, pp. 175-233.

little known, a work which was republished in the vernacular in 1705 with the title *Dissertation sur le culte des saints inconnus*. Here Mabillon was building upon the tradition of French critical hagiography, but his reading was considered too close to the kind of destructive hypercriticism associated with Jean de Launoy, and attracted serious deliberation by the Congregation of the Index.

By 1700 Mabillon had become a figurehead for the cause of critical sacred erudition, and was enthusiastically courted by ambitious Italian scholars: A young Costantino Grimaldi sent numerous letters to Antonio Magliabechi in Florence between 1701 and 1705, trying to establish an audience with Mabillon and obtain a copy of his *De Cultu Sanctorum*.<sup>725</sup> Through his two journeys through Italy, through the activity of his 'confreres' and his Italian disciples Mabillon had established a strong following among Italians, a group of whom had translated part of his *Traité des études* under the Italian title *La Scuola Mabillona* in 1701.<sup>726</sup> When a new attack was directed at Mabillon's works by the French Jesuit Barthelémy Germon, scholars from across the Italian peninsula came to his defense. So doing, they were not only defending the reputation of the French Maurist personally, but of the entire regime of scholarship for which he stood.

Germon was a French Jesuit theologian who taught at the Jesuit College Louis-le-Grand in Paris, and co-directed the Jesuit journal the *Mémoires de Trévoux*. In 1703 Germon published his *De Veteribus Regnum Francorum Diplomatus*, a text which amounted to a systematic criticism of Mabillon's claims in his *De Re Diplomatica*. Germon's work went through two further editions, each substantially enlarged, one published in 1706, and finally a definitive 1707 edition which included Germon's refutation of numerous criticisms directed at his *De Veteribus*. Mabillon himself had promptly published a refutation of Germon in 1704 (*De Re Diplomatica supplementum*), but Germon's

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<sup>725</sup> Grimaldi's letters to Mabillon are published in *Lettere dal Regno ad Antonio Magliabechi*, vol. 2, pp. 683-700.

<sup>726</sup> Classic study is Arnaldo Momigliano, "Mabillon's Italian Disciples," in *Terzo Contributo Alla Storia Degli Studi Classici e Del Mondo Antico*, 1966, 135-52; see F Russo, "Medieval Art Studies in the Republic of Letters: Mabillon and Montfaucon's Italian Connections between Travels and Learned Collaborations," *Journal of Art Historiography* 7 (2012): 1-24.; and the articles by Francesco Trolese OSB, "Influenza e Diffusione Del « modello Maurino » Nella Congregazione Cassinese," in *Érudition et Commerce Épistolaire: Jean Mabillon et La Tradition Monastique*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel (Paris, 2003), 115-32 and Paolo Vismara, "Muratori Alla « scuola Mabillona » : Dalle Riflessioni Sopra Il Buon Gusto Agli Annali d'Italia," in *Érudition et Commerce Épistolaire: Jean Mabillon et La Tradition Monastique*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel (Paris, 2003), 133-52.

extensions of his *De Veteribus* were primarily targeted at the defences published by Thierry Ruinart and Giusto Fontanini.<sup>727</sup>

In his anti-Mabillon polemics Germon not only argued that Mabillon had wrongly interpreted the documents relating to French law which he had scrutinized in his *De Re Diplomatica*, but more substantially cast doubt over the authenticity of medieval sources, and the viability of their interpretation, *tout court*. Germon's approach might be associated, and as we will see was associated by his contemporaries, with the historical pyrrhonism deployed by Germon's fellow Jesuit Jean Hardouin.<sup>728</sup> This represented more than a challenge to specific historical scholars or arguments; rather it threatened a dissolution of the project of meaningful and critical historical scholarship, and subsequently the capacity for arguments to be made 'from history' all together.

Three contributors, with varying degrees of direct participation, to this Italian 'defence' of both Mabillon and critical scholarship were Giusto Fontanini, Biagio Garofalo and Matteo Egizio. Biagio Garofalo was a Neapolitan scholar based in Rome. In the years around 1707 he became embroiled in a polemic concerning biblical poetry, and has been labelled as a closet 'Spinozist' for his approach to philology.<sup>729</sup> Garofalo discussed the controversy at length with Egizio, with whom he maintained a correspondence between 1705 and the 1720s;<sup>730</sup> his letters show his relationships with Gianvincenzo Gravina, Paolo Alessandro Maffei and Domenico Lazzarini in Rome, and his contact with Gaetano Lombardo, Gaetano Argento, Costantino Grimaldi, Niccolo Caravita and Niccolo Valletta in Naples.<sup>731</sup> Garofalo wrote to Egizio in late 1705, asking him to oversee the publication in Naples of "una brieve saggio di Teologia... scritta da me fatta in difesa del

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<sup>727</sup> See C Alberta, "Benedictins et Jesuites Devant La Question Historiographique Dans La Première Moitié Du Xviiie Siècle," in *Érudition et Commerce Épistolaire: Jean Mabillon et La Tradition Monastique*, ed. Daniel-Odon Hurel (Paris, 2003), 89–101, on Germon especially pp. 92–5 – Alberta is careful to clarify that the Jesuits were not necessarily all opposed to Mabillon, and the blanket anti-Jesuitism of Mabillon's defenders was not necessarily warranted.

<sup>728</sup> Hardouin himself sought to disassociate himself from Germon – see Grafton, "Jean Hardouin," p. 202

<sup>729</sup> Francesca Bregoli, "Biblical Poetry, Spinozist Hermeneutics and Critical Scholarship: The Polemical Activities of Raffaele Rabeni in Early Eighteenth Century Italy," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 8, no. 2 (July 2009): 173–98.; also, Manuela Sanna, "Introduzione: Un Intellettuale Della Modernità," in *Considerazioni Intorno Alla Poesia Degli Ebrei e Dei Greci*, (Napoli: 2014) 9–25.

<sup>730</sup> Garofalo, Rome to Egizio, Naples 14.1.1712, MS XIII C91 172; 17.6.1712, MS XIII C91 173; 11.7.1712, MS XIII C91 174 – here Garofalo indicates that Egizio oversaw the publication of his second polemic contribution to the affair, and sent copies of it Rome for distribution.

<sup>731</sup> See especially MS XIII C91 161 (undated 1706?); MS XIII C91 234 (undated 1705?) MS XIII C91 162 (undated, 1706?); MS XIII C91 164 (undated, 1706?); MS XIII C91 197 (21.4.1713); MS XIII C91 208 (31.3.1714).

Pre Mabillon contra il Pre Germonio”.<sup>732</sup> Egizio, Garofalo remarked, had built a reputation for “diligenza” and “accuratezza” in his editorial and publishing work, and was recommended to him by ‘Sig. Rondinelli’. The letter, and those which follow, go into significant detail regarding the editing of the manuscript, which Garofalo plans to send with Rondinelli, and Egizio’s replied with his comments on the text, its errors, and his judgement.<sup>733</sup> Garofalo’s patron in the curia was the anti-Jesuit Cardinal Casoni, to whom he directs Egizio to send the published texts.<sup>734</sup> Garofalo presented his commentary on Germon as emerging from within a nexus of texts published by Lazzarini, by Giusto Fontanini and Tomasso Maria Minorelli, Antonio Gatti, and Claudio Monterchio all in defence of Mabillon, in critique of Germon and riled by the treatment of the case in the Jesuit *Mémoires de Trévoux*.<sup>735</sup>

Along with his manuscript, Garofalo also sent to Egizio a package containing the three tomes of Germon, in response to which Egizio offered some ‘osservazione’ on Germon’s polemics. Upon receiving Egizio’s thoughts, Garofalo judges them to be “assai dotte e ingegnose”.<sup>736</sup> From their letters, it is unclear of the nature of Egizio’s “osservazione” upon the books of Germon, or indeed the fate of the book Garofalo aimed to publish in Naples through Egizio; there is no reference, in manuscript or published text, of Garofalo or Egizio having contributed meaningfully to the Germon-Mabillon debate. Working through their private correspondence, however, both substantially locates the

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<sup>732</sup> Garofalo, Rome to Egizio, Naples, BNN XIII C91 234, also 235. Like much of Garofalo’s correspondence, these letters are undated, but they can be reasonably read as dating to late 1705 through their contents.

<sup>733</sup> BNN MS XIII C91 234, 235, 166, 168, 236, 241.

<sup>734</sup> Garofalo to Egizio, ???.1706, BNN MS XIII C91 166, 188.

<sup>735</sup> Fontanini, *Vindicae Antiquorum Diplomatum adversus Bartholomaei Germonii...*, 1705, printed in collaboration with De Passionei; Lazzarini, *Epistola ad Amicum Parisiensem pro vindiciis antiquorum diplomatum justi fontanini forojulensis*, Rome 1706; Gatti, *Epostla ad V.Cl. Jacobu Bernardum pro Vindiciis antoquorum Diplomatum Justi Fontanini*, 1707; Monterchio’s projected publication was never released (GLI tomo 3, p. 316), but a letter from him was included in in 1708 work by the Sicilian Scipione Maranta, *Messanensis, Expostulatio in Bartholomaeum Germonium pro antiquis diplomatibus & codicibus manscriptis*; Lazzarini followed up his initial text with a 1708 work, *Ex Nobilibus de Murro, defensio in P. Barthol Germonium, editat studio Cajetani Lombardi, Philosophi Medici Neapolitani*. Minorelli’s polemic, like that of Garofalo, doesn’t seem to have appeared or been noted. Beyond Italy a range of other scholarly authorities defended Mabillon, most notably his confrere Thierry Ruinart, *Ecclesia Parisiensis vindicata adversus Bartholomei Germon*, 1706 and their fellow Benedictine Pierre Coustant; on all these polemics, see GLI, vol. 3, 1710, pp. 289-342; That Garofalo was working with Lazzarini is evidenced by the note in the left margin of his letter to Egizio, BNN XIII C91 235: “sig. Lazzarini ci mandarmi di breve i suoi dialoghi”; Garofalo complained about the case’s treatment by the Jesuit journal in his letter Egizio, BNN XIII C91 241.

<sup>736</sup> Garofalo, Rome to Egizio, Naples, BNN XIII C91 193 – this letter is dated, at a later point on the back, to 1712, which is almost certainly incorrect.

two Neapolitans in this scholarly milieu, and gives further insight into the collaborative and multipolar nature of the Italian 'defence' of Mabillon and critical scholarship.

Another of Egizio's Rome-based correspondents Giusto Fontanini played a more direct role in coordinating the defence of Mabillon in Italy. Writing to Domenico Passionei on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1706, Fontanini notified him that "il Germonio ha stampato il secondo libro contra il Mabillone, e sono così sciocchi". In response, Fontanini explicitly presented his stance on critical scholarship: "contra il pirronismo pero, e le sentenze maliziose, e audaci mi dichiarerò sempre nemico, e in questo dissentirei da mio padre pro verità".<sup>737</sup> To maintain this commitment to 'verità' in his confrontation of Germon's arbitrariness, Fontanini requested repeatedly the *Annales Ordinis S. Benedicti* of Mabillon from Passionei, himself in Paris during these years, so that he can make a serious scholarly critique of Germon's commentary: "tengo estremo bisogno degli Annali del Mabillon"<sup>738</sup>; "attendo gli Annali, Annali, Annali"<sup>739</sup>; "Per l'amor di cristo Annali, Annali, Annali ed altri libri simili altramente io do in ciampanelle".<sup>740</sup> Fontanini recognised that the best way to dispute Germon was through a properly researched study, drawing empirically upon Mabillon's original text. A commitment, however, to embed critical rigour in published scholarship rather than mere polemic, didn't mean Fontanini was in private, or, as we will see, behind the cover of a pseudonym, the ideal unimpassioned scholar:

del resto vi assicuro che un certo Cristianuccio, il qual son'io ho preparato due sacchi di sale, e quattro Barili d'aceto per regalare il R.mo P. Germon tostoche sia uscito il terzo suo libro, onde se vuole il regalo affreti, e dica delle bestialita Pirroniche corroborate dalla Dialettica, e dalla Scolastica.<sup>741</sup>

Situating Germon within his order, represented by the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, and associating his work with the scholarly vices of pyrrhonism, 'dialettica' and 'scolastica' Fontanini presented a generalized critique of the Society of Jesus. We have seen how anti-Jesuitism was at play in the formation of the *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, and in the Italian condemnation of Dominique Bouhours. The centrality of an opposition to the

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<sup>737</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 17.7.1706, transcribed in Appendix I, to Alfredo Serrai, *Domenico Passionei e la sua biblioteca* (Milano: Sylvestre Bonnard, 2004), pp. 381-516.

<sup>738</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 23.8.1706, in Appendix I, Serrai, pp. 402-3.

<sup>739</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 7.9.1706, *ibid.*, pp. 403-6.

<sup>740</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 21.9.1706, *ibid.*, pp. 406-9.

<sup>741</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 23.8.1706, *ibid.*, pp. 400-2.

Society of Jesus in forming ideals of scholarly conduct is made clear in a humorous aside in one of Fontanini's letters to Passionei:

Fra Burgos (Alessandro)... diche, che ha tre vizi, il p.mo che non risponde mai a lettere, 2.do che si scorda subito degli amici, e il 3.o che non restituisce mai libri. Ci fu chi aggiunse il 4.o, cioe il dir male de Gesuiti, ma egli rispose, che era virtù, e non vizio.<sup>742</sup>

With Fontanini pulling the strings, the central context for the co-ordination of the Italian defence of Mabillon was the community of scholars based around the Roman Curia known as the 'Circolo Tamburo', in reference to beating of the drum which they deployed as a metaphor for the 'shaking up' of Italian intellectual culture. The Tamburini – Fontanini and Passionei, Garofalo and Celestino Galiani, Domenico Bencini, Giovanni Vignoli and Tomasso Maria Minorelli, Gianvincenzo Gravina and Giovanni Maria Lancisi, and to a lesser extent Francesco Bianchini and Cardinal Noris – supported by several high-profile Cardinals, including the Pope's nephew Cardinal Albani, was the "principale punto di riferimento in Rome per i circoli piu validi delle lettere sia italiane che europee".<sup>743</sup> Studies have stressed the diffusion of Newtonian science and 'Spinozist' biblical criticism in the Circolo, but the main emphasis of its participants was positive theology, ecclesiastical history and sacred erudition; the 'Tamburo' had, in a sense, grown out of the *Accademia dei Concili*, focussed directly on the history of the Church.<sup>744</sup> With this agenda, the Tamburini were influential in stimulating attempts, from the first years of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, to reform and rehabilitate Italian scholarship, attempts which found fruition in the polemics of Muratori, and then most influentially in the Venetian *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*.<sup>745</sup> As indicated in Fontanini's remarks, these

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<sup>742</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 31.8.1706, *ibid.* pp. 402-3.

<sup>743</sup> Alberto Caracciolo, *Domenico Passionei tra Roma e la repubblica delle lettere* (Roma: Ed. di storia e letteratura, 1968), p. 37.

<sup>744</sup> Ferrone has stressed the discussions of philosophy and science at the Circolo, though is less interested in scholarly and historical discourse, Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione.*, p. 367-94; More rounded studies include Caracciolo, *Domenico Passionei tra Roma e la repubblica delle lettere.*, pp. 31-55; Hanns Gross, *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The Post-Tridentine Syndrome and the Ancient Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 263-77; and M. Rosa, 'Curia Romana e repubblica delle Lettere', in Bruno Neveu, Jean-Louis Quantin, and Jean-Claude Waquet, *Papes, princes et savants dans l'Europe moderne: mélanges à la mémoire de Bruno Neveu* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2007), pp. 333-349 pp. 186-91; on the sacred historical scholarship of Galiani, and in a sense representative of the group, see Gustavo Costa, *Celestino Galiani e la Sacra Scrittura: alle radici del pensiero napoletano del Settecento* (Roma: Aracne, 2012).

<sup>745</sup> As elaborated in chapter 4.

tended to assume a distinctly anti-Jesuit hue, and were directed towards positive, rigorist, and to an extent 'philo-Jansenist' theology.<sup>746</sup>

In this context the Circolo was a key receptacle of French theological and scholarly culture on the Italian peninsula, as well as being integrated into the communities of French scholars, theologians and ecclesiastical figures travelling through and resident in Rome and Italy in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. This was the same group of scholars, then focussed around Paolo Alessandro Maffei, which had acted in defence of Bernard de Montfaucon and against Francesco de' Ficoroni. The prominence of Mabillon and Montfaucon in the historiographical record has obscured the sense in which these were merely the most well-known figures within a more complex meshwork of Rome-based French scholars, many of whom were affiliated with the Maurist Benedictine order. We have seen how the regional representative of the Maurists Philippe Raffier played a key role in co-ordinating the Order's interests in the Curia. Passionei's letters from Fontanini, when the former was serving as an aide to Cardinal Gualtiero on diplomatic missions in Northern Europe, give insight into some of the other figures in this group. When Fontanini wrote to Passionei, sending his regards to Montfaucon in Paris, he added:

quando il vedrete salutatelo con tutto gli altri nostri Confratelli, Ruinart [Thierry Ruinart], Martene [Edmond Martène], Marziane [Jean Martianay], Sammartano [Denis de Sainte-Marthe], Mabillon.

When the 1706 edition of the Paris-based *Journal de Sçavans*, usually appreciating the Benedictine's work, lauded Germon's second polemic and failed to mention Fontanini's response, Fontanini describes viscerally the embarrassment felt by his French friends in Rome:

è giunto il Giornale di Parigi di quest'anno e tutti I Francesi, che sono a Roma sono rimasti stomacati dalla sciochezza di esso Giornale, e della stolidezza

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<sup>746</sup> The limits of associating the Circolo with Jansenism are discussed sensitively in Caracciolo, *Domenico Passionei*, p. 40-41 and 50-51; on the uses, and limitations, of anti-Jesuitism as a framework see the discussion introducing, and essays within, the collected volume Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Catherine-Laurence Maire, *Les antijésuites: discours, figures et lieux de l'antijésuitisme à l'époque moderne*, (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010).

maliziosa in lodare un secondo temerario libro del Germon, ma più in non vederne parlato del mio.<sup>747</sup>

From Paris, Passionei transmitted news and books from the Abbé de St Germain and from the bookseller Antoine Dezallier, who in turn published Fontanini's *Vindicae Antiquorum*.<sup>748</sup> Conversely Paris-based Maurists relied upon French and Italian scholars based in Rome to send news and manuscript transcriptions from the Roman archives, to aid their scholarship: key figures included the Abbe Renaudat, Guillaume Laparre and Claude Estiennot de la Serre, as well as Garofalo, working on transcriptions of Origen and Saint Hyppolite in 1706 on behalf of Montfaucon.<sup>749</sup>

Substantiating the Circolo Tamburo's relationships with French Benedictine Maurists, and viewing this relationship in the light of both 'institutions' wider networks on the Italian peninsula, captures the sense in which scholarly cultures, such as that advocating critical sacred erudition, were formulated through relationships built and maintained across space. Satellites surrounding Rome, as well as centres of gravity in their own right, were scholars such as Antonio Magliabechi in Florence, Muratori in Modena, Benedetto Bacchini, between Parma and Modena, Apostolo Zeno and Angelo Maria Quirini between Venice, Florence and Rome. In light of his correspondence with Garofalo, we might tentatively add Egizio as a relatively minor figure in this group. Collaboration in the defence of Mabillon was a key stimulus in binding together this community behind a coherent scholarly agenda in the first decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Behind the most famous authors and polemicists was an entire machinery of erudition: editors and discussants, publishers and go-betweens, suppliers of books, and those happy to record their thoughts in manuscript form alone.

Giacomo Laderchi, *The Acta Passionis SS. Crescii*, and the *Mémoires* of Tillemont

Assembling these scholarly networks and recognising a commitment to critical historical method as a common feature, helps navigate the more 'ideological'

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<sup>747</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 13.12.1706, in Appendix I, Serrai, pp. 418-9.

<sup>748</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 17.7.1706, *ibid.*, pp. 399-400.

<sup>749</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 21.9.1706, and 8.2.1707, *ibid.*, pp 406-9; 422-3; on the Laderchi case, see Antonella Barzani, *Gli affanni dell'erudizione: studi e organizzazione culturale degli ordini religiosi a Venezia tra Sei e Settecento* (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2004), pp. 24-5.

ecclesiastical-political and theological-doctrinal dynamics at play in a nuanced way. In this environment local controversies in sacred erudition could spiral into broad-based conflicts with more ideological weight. In the summer of 1707, as the Germon-Mabillon polemics were dying down, the Florentine Oratorian Giacomo Laderchi published his *Acta Passionis S.S. Cresci, et sociorum Martyrum*. The work had been commissioned by Cosimo III de' Medici, as a component of his attempts to cultivate the Tuscan sacred past. Laderchi's *Acta* was based to large extent upon supposedly new documents discovered during the restoration of rural Tuscan churches under the direction of Cosimo, and then housed in the Laurenziana library – the discovery, analysis and validation of the manuscripts is described in the preface to the *Acta*. An appendix to the project, written by Antonio Francesco Felice was published in the same year in the same publishing house.<sup>750</sup>

San Crescio was a relatively obscure martyr, killed by soldiers on orders from the repressive Emperor Decian, along with a small company of Christians in the Mugello, north of Florence. Laderchi claimed that the new documents pre-dated existing documents about Cresci and his contemporaries, and so allowed a new definitive hagiography to be written. His *Acta* quickly met with opposition. This initially came from the Florentine Servite monk Gerardo Capassi, who, as we have seen in the previous chapter, would later condemn Giangrisostomo Scarfo's polemics against the Maurist edition of Augustine. Capassi's objections to Laderchi's *Acta* were initially sent as a manuscript from Giusto Fontanini to Antonio Magliabechi in Rome.<sup>751</sup> These were in time read by Laderchi himself, who objected, and published Capassi's criticisms with a point by point response, in defence of his *Acta*, posing as an anonymous Florentine scholar.<sup>752</sup> Capassi's commentary focussed on a series of historical and logical errors in Laderchi's *Acta*, designed to undermine the credibility of the Oratorian's scholarship

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<sup>750</sup> Felice's appendix fleshed out the context to Laderchi's *Acta: Appendix ad Acta SS. Crescii, & SS. Martyrum edita a Jacobo Laderchio, Congregationis Oratorii Urbis Presbytero...*, Florence, 1707.

<sup>751</sup> See letter dating 15 October 1707 from Fontanini to Magliabechi, transcribed in Antonio Magliabechi et al., *Clarorum Venetorum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae: ex autographis in Biblioth. Magliabechiana quae nunc publica Florentinorum est adservatis descriptae* (Florentiae: Ex typographia ad insigne Apollinis ..., 1745), p. 275; a manuscript copy of Capassi's 'lettera sulla autenticita degli atti di S. Cresci' is held in the BSL, MS 1700, ff. 254r-276v; another copy is held, with a range of documents pertaining to Laderchi's *Acta* in the Biblioteca Moreniana, *Acq. Div. 186*, ff. 61r-82r.

<sup>752</sup> *Lettera ad un Cavaliere Fiorentino devoto de' Santi Martiri Cresci, e Compagni in risposta di quella scritta dal P. Fr. Gherardo Capassi... a Giusto Fontanini... dati alla luce da Giacomo Laderchi*, 1707; Laderchi reprinted the text in 1711 with a slightly different title, *Lettere... in risposta ad alcune difficolta e dubbiezza motivate contro gl'Atti de medesimi santi*.

and sources, and to imply that the *Acta*, the subject of Laderchi's work, was in fact composed several centuries after the death of Crescio. Laderchi dated the martyrdom of Crescio and the other Tuscan martyrs to 249; but, Capassi objects, this would predate the martyrdom of Saint Fabian in 250, generally considered as the initiation of the persecutions under Emperor Decian.<sup>753</sup> Laderchi's anonymous Florentine scholar refutes this at length, referring to a range of modern and ancient sources to corroborate the chronology in his *Acta*. At other points Capassi objects to the style and format of Laderchi's *Acta*, which, postdate it, as well as specific references to contexts which suggest it was written several centuries after the persecutions.

This general criticism leads into the core of Capassi's argument, which was potentially much more damaging: that the depiction of the Holy Trinity in Laderchi's *Acta* is historically anachronistic, reflects post-Nicaean doctrinal formulae, and thereby discredits the text as a whole.<sup>754</sup> On the one hand the *Acta* suggests that Emperor Decian had an intimate understanding of the Trinity, which, Capassi argues, would have been impossible, given the "Disciplina Arcani, che specialmente in quei tempi da Fedeli religiosamente osservasi".<sup>755</sup> Furthermore Laderchi, Capassi stated, was guilty of "confonendo la sostanza della Fede con le formole espressive della medesima".<sup>756</sup> Capassi's argument is that the formulae for expressing dogma changed over time; the substance of that dogma, however, remained the same: there was a difference between literal and figurative meaning, and this needed to be properly interpreted. Here Capassi draws upon the Anglican scholar George Bull's *Defensio Fidei Nicaenae* (1685) as Laderchi himself had done, which had used this method to align historical scholarship with orthodoxy.<sup>757</sup> By assuming necessary continuity in doctrinal formulae, Laderchi failed to recognise the anachronisms latent in his *Acta*, where characteristically post-Nicaean theological formulae were widespread. Serious critics, Capassi claimed, "stimano per apocrifi tutti quelli Libri, che vanno sotto il nome di qualche Padre

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<sup>753</sup> *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, pp. 10-26.

<sup>754</sup> The issue is most directly raised in *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, pp. 54-70.

<sup>755</sup> *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, p. 54.

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57-8; the incriminating passage in the *Acta*, is pp. 40-45, where Laderchi explicitly discusses these methodological problems.

<sup>757</sup> On Bull's *Defensio*, see Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, pp. 344-49.

Antinicensi, ogni volta, che in essi trovano con continuo, e costante passo usate le formule solo nel Concilio Niceno prescritte”.<sup>758</sup>

A commentary on the *Lettera* was written in early 1708 by Benedetto Bacchini, *Hypercrises ad Crises P.M. Gerhardi Capassi & Anticrises Tyronis Laderchiani*, which remained unpublished but circulated among Laderchi’s critics, and was reviewed and applauded in the *Giornale*: Bacchini offered a balanced reading, but generally took Capassi’s side.<sup>759</sup> Later that year Capassi wrote a response to Laderchi’s *Lettera*, the *Nugae Laderchianae*, in collaboration with Antonio Gatti and, behind the scenes, Giusto Fontanini.<sup>760</sup> Why were Capassi, Bacchini, Gatti and Fontanini so keen to discredit Laderchi’s *Acta*? In part, we should see it as a case-study in the defence of criticism against Laderchi’s questionable scholarship. But there was also a crucial subplot, which only intermittently comes to light in the published exchanges, but is substantiated further in private correspondence within the Circolo Tamburo and its affiliates. In preparing his *Acta* Laderchi drew upon a range of ancient and modern scholars in establishing the chronology of the Decian persecutions. Most recurrent among these were the *Annales* of Cardinal Baronius, which Laderchi was further editing and continuing, ultimately publishing volumes xxii to xxiv between 1728 and 1734.<sup>761</sup> A prominent scholar not cited by Laderchi in his *Acta*, but certainly consulted, was Louis-Sébastien le Nain de Tillemont, whose *Mémoires pour servir pour à l’histoire ecclésiastique des six première siècles* were published intermittently in the last decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and then continuing after Tillemont’s death in 1698.<sup>762</sup>

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<sup>758</sup> *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, pp. 58-9.

<sup>759</sup> Copies in the Biblioteca Estense (see Momigliano, “Benedetto Bacchini.” p. 130); reviewed in the *Giornale*, vol. 3, 1710, pp. 222-52; the publication of Bacchini’s texts was obstructed by Grand Duke Cosimo, as cited in Don Enrico Bini, “Giacomo Laderchi, Oratorio,” [http://www.academia.edu/30526190/GIACOMO\\_LADERCHI\\_ORATORIANO](http://www.academia.edu/30526190/GIACOMO_LADERCHI_ORATORIANO), n.d. p. 5, note 21.

<sup>760</sup> An Italian translation of the *Nugae* is held in manuscript form in the BSL, ‘Frivolezze Laderchiane’, MS 966; on Fontanini’s commentary on the Capassi-Laderchi case, see his correspondence with Magliabechi in late 1707 and 1709, in Magliabechi et al., *Clarorum Venetorum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae.*, pp. 267-293; Garms Cornides claims the author of the *Nugae* was Biagio Garofalo, see Elisabeth Garms Cornides, “Zur Geschichte Der Geistigen Beziehungen Zwischen Osterreich Und Italien Im 18. Jahrhundert: Der Abate Biagio Garofalo,” *Mitteilungen Des Instituts Fur Osterreichische Geschichtsforschung* 85 (1977): 77-97, pp. 84-5, note 28.

<sup>761</sup> That Laderchi was already in 1705 working on the *Annales* is evidenced in a letter from Passionei to Muratori, Passionei to Muratori, 14.2.1705, in Serrai, *Domenico Passionei*, Appendix II, p. 528-9

<sup>762</sup> On Tillemont, see Bruno Neveu, *Un Historien a l’ecole de Port-Royal: Sebastien Le Nain de Tillemont, 1637-1698.* (La Haye: M. Nijhoff, 1966).

In volume three of the *Mémoires*, published in 1701, Tillemont discussed the Decian persecutions at length in a note to a chapter on the martyrdom of the Pope, Saint Fabian.<sup>763</sup> Tillemont doesn't in fact mention San Crescio at all – which perhaps in and of itself riled Laderchi – but is deeply sceptical about historical reconstructions of the lives of his contemporary martyrs. On the lives of Saint Abdon and Sennen, Tillemont remarked “nous avons l'histoire des SS. Abdon & Sennen dans la première partie des actes de S. Laurent, (qui est si insoutenable & si fabuleuse) que Baronius l'abandonne absolument”; on Saint Anatolia, Tillemont concluded that, apart from a single reference, “il est visible que ce n'est qu'un fragment d'une histoire plus entiere de cette Sainte”. He continued to judge the acts of Saint Secondien, Saint Magnus, Saint Fusque, Saint Maure, Saint Galatian, Saint Thyrsus, Saint Maxime, Saint Chrisotphle, Saint Nestor as all lacking credibility, and dismisses several other saints persecuted by Decius, which have been confused by later historians. His points of reference are the works of Baronius and the criticism of his *Annales* by Pagi, Bolland and the *Acta Sanctorum*, as well as recourse to the original texts.

Upon seeing the extent of Tillemont's criticism of the lives of the early Christian martyrs when completing his *Acta*, Laderchi was stimulated to act, and he sent a letter to Giovanni Cristoforo Battelli, an adviser to the Congregation of the Index, advising that they censor the work. Laderchi's letter circulated widely in Rome – Fontanini got hold of a copy, which he reported to Magliabechi in Florence and Passionei, then in Paris, in late July.<sup>764</sup> The Pope, convinced by Laderchi's argument, decided to refer the work for prohibition. Fontanini, reporting this to Passionei, was careful to excuse the Pope himself of direct responsibility: “Sua Santità, che non ha tempo di leggere tutti i libri, supponendo che il Religioso dicesse il vero, diede ordine, che si proibisse”.<sup>765</sup> The force of Laderchi's referral was to associate Tillemont with political Gallicanism, in Fontanini's words, with “autori che puzzano come Natale Alessandro”, Noel Alexandre's large scale ecclesiastical histories having been censored in the 1690s.<sup>766</sup>

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<sup>763</sup> ‘note sur la persecution de Dece’, Tillemont, *Mémoires*, tome 3, pp. 699-718.

<sup>764</sup> Fontanini to Magliabechi, Magliabechi et al., *Clarorum Venetorum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae.*, pp. 265-67, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1707.

<sup>765</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 30.7.1707, Appendix I, pp. 432-3.

<sup>766</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 27.1.1708, *ibid.*, pp. 385-7; on Noel Alexandre, see Jean-Louis Quantin, “Entre Rome et Paris, Entre Histoire et Théologie, Les Selecta Historiae Ecclesiasticae Capita Du P. Noel Alexandre et Les Ambiguités de l'historiographie Gallicane,” *Memoire Dominicaine* 20 (2007): 67–100.

Whilst orchestrating the Italian defence of Mabillon, Fontanini at this point took responsibility for objecting to the prohibition of Tillemont's *Mémoires*. He sent a letter directly to the Index along with his 'revisione' of Laderchi's incriminating letter.<sup>767</sup> Here he made explicit how prohibiting Tillemont on account of his critical ecclesiastical erudition would be counter-productive, would discredit the entirety of ecclesiastical history, including the works of Baronius, who also "rigetta francamente moltissimi Atti de' Santi Martiri, come spuria, ed aprocrifi".<sup>768</sup> Fontanini and the Circolo Tamburo had previous experience in 'saving' laudable works from censorship, not only in the case of Mabillon's works, but also the attempts to prohibit Benedetto Bacchini's publication of the *Liber Pontificalis* by Agnello Ravvenate.<sup>769</sup> It was fundamental for Fontanini and his colleagues to disassociate rigorous sacred erudition from politicized Gallican historiography, of the sort developed, for instance, by Ellies Louis Dupin. In this context the Laderchi-Capassi case was only superficially about local hagiography: most fundamentally it represented the tension between two historiographical models and methods in Post-Tridentine Catholicism: the 'triumphalist' histories of Baronius' dogmatic supporters (more so than Baronius himself), and the 'nostalgic' critical approach of Tillemont and his followers.<sup>770</sup>

In spite of the polemics, Fontanini insisted to Passionei that his machinations with Capassi against Laderchi, and their targeting of his *Acta*, was not personal, but necessary for the upkeep of the scholarly regime:

e mal inteso in dire, che noi siamo nemici del P. Laderchi, voi sapete; che se poi la Causa del Tillemont ha tirato secco il Cresci per questo non si puo dire, che noi siamo suoi nemici, ma bensì contrari alle sue sciocche idee.<sup>771</sup>

By engaging sympathetic cardinals and deploying his scholarly contacts, Fontanini was successful in dissuading the Congregation of the Index from prohibiting Tillemont's

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<sup>767</sup> Sending a transcription to Magliabechi in attachment to his previous letter, Fontanini to Magliabechi, Magliabechi et al., *Clarorum Venetorum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae.*, p 268-70, letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> July 1707.

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>769</sup> In the light of Bacchini's *De Ecclesiasticae Hierarchiae Originibus* (1705); on this case, see Momigliano, 'Benedetto Bacchini', pp. 125-8.

<sup>770</sup> Presented as a strong dichotomy, see Ricuperati, "Cesare Baronio, La Storia Ecclesiastica, La Storia 'Civile' e Gli Scrittori Giurisdizionalisti Della Prima Metà Del XVIII Secolo.", pp. 780-81; That this is what is going on beneath the surface is only suggested at several points in the exchange, for instance when Tillemont is invoked directly in the *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, p. 59, 68-70.

<sup>771</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 18.2.1708, Appendix, Serrai, pp. 387-90.

*Mémoires*. This was appreciated by the Italian community of critical scholars at large, with Fontanini writing to Magliabecchi, presumably in response to the Medici librarian's praise:

non sol da Firenze, ma da Napoli e da Padova io ho avuto i ringraziamenti, e benedizioni per aver impedita la consaputa proibizione<sup>772</sup>

Fontanini's Neapolitan praise here could well have come from Matteo Egizio. Egizio played an indirect role in the defence of Tillemont, just as he had in the defence of Mabillon. If Fontanini's primary objective was safeguarding the regime of critical scholars against its critics such as Laderchi, he recognised that the most effective way of achieving this was through sustained – anonymous – polemics. Another commentary on Laderchi's *Acta* appeared, dated 1708, though the work seems to have circulated in 1709 and 1710. The *Epistola ad R. P. Jacobum Laderchium* was published, officially, in Padova under the pseudonym Joannis Storchii. 'Storchii's' *Epistola* followed a similar format to Capassi/Gatti's *Nugae*: pedantic criticism of the arguments set forth by Laderchi in his *Acta* and *Lettera* were interspersed with more theologically charged accusations. Storchii focussed on Laderchi's presentation of the Priscillianist heresy, which Laderchi misrepresented in Trinitarian terms, *contra* its presentation by Augustine, as a form of anti-trinitarianism.<sup>773</sup> More methodologically Storchii challenged Laderchi's conviction that there should be an absolute accordance between Scripture and the thought and theological formulae of key Church Fathers and Church Councils. Storchii, like Capassi, maintained the argument of dual authority in ecclesiastical history: scripture and Tradition. This claim was accentuated by Storchii accusing Laderchi of essentially following the Calvinists, the Lutherans and the Socinians in discarding the dual authority of Scripture and Tradition in favour of an excessively dogmatic, and as such anachronistic, reliance upon the Scripture alone.<sup>774</sup>

The author of the *Epistola* has been judged to be Tommaso Maria Minorelli, a core member of the Circolo Tamburo.<sup>775</sup> But Fontanini was possibly also a co-author; he certainly took a large degree of editorial responsibility, arranging for the work to be

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<sup>772</sup> Fontanini to Magliabecchi, 20.8.1707, *Clarorum Venetorum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae.*, pp. 271-3.

<sup>773</sup> Storchii, *Epistola*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>774</sup> Storchii, *Epistola*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>775</sup> M Palumbo, "Minorelli, Tommaso Maria," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 74 (2010).

published in Naples through Egizio, and dedicated to Egizio's fellow Neapolitan Gaetano Lombardo. Fontanini first wrote to Egizio regarding the *Epistola* in December 1709, proposing that he would “tramarei col mezzo di V.S. Ill.ma”.<sup>776</sup> Fontanini was precise about how the packages of Storckio's *Epistola* should be transmitted, so as to avoid suspicion by the Vatican's authorities. The work was sent regularly in small batches from Naples to Rome, to be distributed across the Italian peninsula, right through to mid-May 1710.<sup>777</sup>

Surveying the polemics unfold from Venice, Apostolo Zeno and the other editors of the *Giornale* were keen to make clear their support for those defending Tillemont and ‘il buon critico’ against Laderchi's machinations, and to this end published in the third volume a long review essay of all the texts involved in the controversy.<sup>778</sup> Zeno put considerable effort into properly identifying, to the best of his ability, the authors of the anonymous texts, as well as receiving the texts to review himself, “sotto l’occhio” rather than have to reply upon secondary reviewers.<sup>779</sup> This was key to ensuring the respectability of the *Giornale*, even as it made clear its support for one side in the polemic. At the same time Zeno expressed, in his letters to Antonio Francesco Marmi, his frustration with the tone of the polemics:

veramente le scritture de P. P. Laderchi e Capassi son degne del destino, a cui vengono condannate. Anziche tali, possono chiamarsi libelli; e persone religiose e Cristiane dovrebbero serbar meglio tra loro il precetto della carita, e non valersi l’un contra l’altro di armi cosi dannevoli<sup>780</sup>

Accordingly the *Giornale* judged the *Nugae Laderchianae* to be essentially erudite, but cruel and excessively personal:

non puo negarsi, che questa operetta non sia dotta, giudiziosa, e piena d’argomenti Sali: la direi ancora piu degna di lode, se l’Autore si fosse temperato alquanto nell’invettive, e avesse trattat meno crudelmente il suo Avversario, non

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<sup>776</sup> Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 27.12.1709, BNN MS XIII C90 212 .

<sup>777</sup> Further references: Fontanini, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 20.01.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 213, 01.03.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 214, 27.03.1710, BNN MS XIII C90, 17.05.1710, BNN MS XIII C90 218.

<sup>778</sup> GLL, vol. 3, 1710, pp. 194-269.

<sup>779</sup> See Zeno, Venice to A.F. Marmi, Florence, 10.8.1709, letter 198, p. 21; 21.09.1709, letter 200, p. 26-7; 21.12.1709, letter 206, pp. 39-40; 12.4.1710, letter 214, p. 50-1, all from *Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, vol. 2, Venezia 1785.

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid.*, Zeno to A.F. Marmi, Florence, 21.09.1709, letter 200, p. 26-7.

mai da lui nominato, che non vi aggiunga titoli derisori e pungenti, persino a quello di eretico.<sup>781</sup>

Immediately following the long review essay of the polemics initiated by Laderchi's *Acta* a new history of San Crescio and the Tuscan martyrs was reviewed. This was the *Storia di S. Cresci e de' SS. Compagni martiri* published in 1710 by Marco Antonio Mozzi. Mozzi was a Florentine Canon, and had been the recipient of one of Bacchini's manuscript letters objecting to Laderchi's *Acta*.<sup>782</sup> Mozzi's *Storia* lacked the personal venom of Capassi and Fontanini/Minorelli's polemics, and the work generally received praise and accreditation from most quarters (by the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* as well as by Cosimo de' Medici, to whom it was dedicated). Mozzi cited appreciatively Bolland, Ruinart and Mabillon in its introduction, and made no mention of Capassi or Laderchi, although it was undoubtedly composed in light of the controversy regarding his attempted prohibition. Most substantially, Mozzi concluded that the manuscript of the acts of San Cresci in question was composed in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century: it must, therefore, be treated with critical distance, as a historical artefact, and this is the approach Mozzi deploys.<sup>783</sup> Mozzi does refer to Tillemont directly once in the *Storia*, when he discussed the date of the beginning of the Decian persecution.<sup>784</sup> Significantly he resolves this question by accepting a degree of ambiguity, citing several opinions dating the first martyrdom to 249, 250 and 251: Mozzi's strategy is close to that used by Egizio in his *Serie*.

Unsurprisingly, with its critical method, prudent restraint and moderation, as well as serious attention to manuscript sources, the *Giornale* was enthusiastic about Mozzi's *Storia*, praising its opposition to, but really transcendence above, the poor scholarship of Laderchi and the prejudice of his critics. The review in the *Giornale* concludes:

Anche veramente quest'opera è stampata con singolare magnificenza. L'autore l'ha scritta con uno stile proprio, e purgato; e come nelle sue ragioni va cauto, e

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<sup>781</sup> GLI vol. III, 1710, p. 252.

<sup>782</sup> Momigliano, "Benedetto Bacchini."; Bini claims that Mozzi colluded with the anti-Laderchi plotters: Bini, "Giacomo Laderchi, Oratorio.", note 24.

<sup>783</sup> Mozzi, *Storia*, p. xi-xii.

<sup>784</sup> *Ibid.*, p. Xvii.

non prende impegni si facilmente, così nelle sue conghietture dimostrasi  
giudizioso<sup>785</sup>

With the appearance of Mozzi's *Storia*, the polemics surrounding Laderchi's *Acta* were essentially resolved, though Laderchi seems to have retained a sense of injustice, reprinting his *Lettera ad un Fiorentino* in 1711, and then in 1726 a theoretical criticism of the excess and abuse of the 'critica di oggi'.<sup>786</sup> Recomposing the range of texts provoked by Laderchi's *Acta*, and situating the controversy alongside the Italian defence of Mabillon and Tillemont from slander and censorship, shows how hagiography and sacred erudition attained at least some of its 'heat' from the more fundamental ecclesiastical-historical methodological formulae being contested in the Catholic world circa 1700. This was certainly how Fontanini saw things. In his letters to Passionei in 1706, whilst preparing his commentary on Germon, Fontanini noted the publication of a life of Saint Clement by Filippo Rondinini, a respected ecclesiastical historian and scholar who published several hagiographic texts in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>787</sup> Several months later the draft for an anonymous book was circulated, objecting to Rondinini's work. Upon reading the manuscript, Fontanini remarked that "non ho mai letta cosa più ardita in mia vita, e pure porta in fronte un panegirico dell'anguilla maggiore... L'autore loda, e segue il Germon."<sup>788</sup> Fontanini would like to suppress the publication, and suggests that if Passionei were in Rome, and not in Paris, they might be able to work together to this end, as they had intervened together in the case of Bacchini's *Agnellus*, as Fontanini would with Tillemont's *Mémoires*: "Certo egli ha fatto l'onnipotenza perché il libro non uscisse alla luce, che non merita, ma non si è potuta impedire. Se voi foste stato qui ad aiutare forse si sarebbe soppresso."

In the same year, a work composed by 'Antonino Pio' was being produced to counter the anonymous critique of Rondinini, the point of contention being the context and dating of the moving of the body of Saint Clement from Rome to Pescara. On this point Fontanini judges that "questi Benedetti Italiani dovrebbero rispondere, poiché essi vengono calunati per fabbricanti di tante imposture... petulante".<sup>789</sup> The Abbazia di San Clemente a

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<sup>785</sup> Mozzi's *Storia* is the final review of the series in the GII, vol. 3, 1710, pp. 269-287.

<sup>786</sup> *Lettera ad un Fiorentino*, 1711; *La Critica di Oggi o sia l'abuso della critica odierna*, 1726.

<sup>787</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 21.9.1706, in Serrai, Appendixm, pp. 406-9; *De S. Clemente papa et martyre eiusque basilica in urbe Roma*, 1706.

<sup>788</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 16.11.1706, Appendix, Serrai, pp. 410-13.

<sup>789</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 16.11.1706, Appendix, Serrai, pp. 410-13.

Casauria was an ancient Benedictine monastery, and had housed relics of Saint Clemente, the fourth Bishop of Rome. Among the 'caluniati', to whom the Italian Benedictines ought to respond, Fontanini suggests "il Germon si vede questo libro avrà gusto di trovar compagni, che lo superino in baldanza." For Fontanini, the contested lives of the saints were primarily 'proxy' conflicts in the defence of critical method against the 'cattivo gusto' of Germon and the Jesuits.

### Religious Orders and the Republic of Letters: Criticism and Devotion in Camaldolese Hagiography

This was not necessarily always the case, and Fontanini's call for a response from the "Benedetti Italiani" is worth pursuing. The lives of saints were not only contested as contexts for more fundamental ideological differences; they were also disputed because of the connections between specific saints and specific religious institutions and cultural structures in the present.<sup>790</sup> Looking at a corollary to the polemics surrounding Laderchi's *Acta* demonstrates this dynamic, as well as how religious orders contributed to the architecture of erudition in early 18th century Italy.<sup>791</sup> It is also a valuable case study as it shows methodological divergence within religious orders, and how formal institutional structures within scholarship interfaced in a complex way with intellectual-methodological frameworks.

Benedetto Bacchini, as we have seen, was a well-connected scholar working in the tradition of Mabillon, close to the Roman set of Fontanini and to his student Muratori, two figures who represented in 1707 important poles in the architecture of Italian critical scholarly culture. As presented above, this is one context in which Bacchini's commentaries on Laderchi's *Acta* can be interpreted. Bacchini was also, however, a Benedictine monk, and spent much of his life moving between the extensive network of Italian Benedictine monasteries, which had also provided points of reference for Mabillon, Montfaucon and other Maurists moving around the Italian peninsula, and became, towards the end of his life, Abbot of the Benedictine monastery of San

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<sup>790</sup> On hagiography as a genre bound to religious identity in post-Tridentine Italy see Simon Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the Preservation of the Particular* / Simon Ditchfield. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>791</sup> On this context in general, see the work of Barzazi, *Gli affanni dell'erudizione*.

Colombano di Bobbio, close to Piacenza. A key site in that network was the Benedictine Abbey of Montecassino, and a key figure in the decades around 1700 was its librarian, and Vicario Generale, Erasmo Gattola. From Montecassino, Gattola was a host to and correspondent of many French Benedictines, and translated Mabillon's *Traite des Etudes Monastiques* into Italian, as *La Scuola Mabillona* a work printed in Venice in 1707 which would become an influential representation of the Maurist scholarly method in Italy.<sup>792</sup> He was also the subject of the dedication of Bacchini's controversial *De ecclesiasticae hierarchiae ordinibus* 1703, a work which prepared the ground for Bacchini's *Agnellus*. Another scholar adhering to the Rule of St. Benedict, though this time a member of the Camaldolese Order, who was suspected of having collaborated in the criticism of Laderchi, was Guido Grandi. Grandi was a scholar and mathematician based at the University of Pisa: Apostolo Zeno suspected Grandi was the author of the *Nugae Laderchiana*, and it is likely he contributed to its circulation.<sup>793</sup>

Grandi and Bacchini had a specific reason to criticize Laderchi, only tangentially related to his *Acta di S. Crescii*. In 1702 Laderchi had published an earlier work of hagiography, his *Vitae S. Pietri Damiani*. Saint Peter Damian was an 11<sup>th</sup>-century Italian Benedictine monk, a cardinal and religious reformer. He spent most of his life at the monastic hermitage at Fonte Avellana, where he wrote the life of the 10<sup>th</sup>-century monk Saint Romuald, the ascetic founder of the Camaldolese order. The first book of Laderchi's *Vitae* had made several controversial claims about the life of Peter Damian. Laderchi claimed that Peter Damian was not a follower of the Camaldolese reform of the Rule of St. Benedict, and instead followed a distinct congregation of monks at the hermitage in Fonte Avellana. Saint Romuald, Laderchi claimed, did not give forth a coherent constitution common to Camaldolese Order and the monks at Avellana, the latter following instead the reforms of Ludolfo, Archbishop of Gubbio. The unification of the Camaldolese order and the monks at Avellana under a common congregation didn't take place until the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, overseen by Arnold de Wyon.<sup>794</sup>

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<sup>792</sup> See Montfaucon, *Diarium Italicum*, p. 231; see E Di Rienzo, "Gattola, Erasmo," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 52 (1999).

<sup>793</sup> Zeno, Venice to A.F. Marmi, Florence, 10.8.1709, from Zeno, *Lettere*, letter 198, p. 21; Barzazi sees Grandi as collaborating with Fontanini in saving Tillemont's *Mémoires* from censorship A. Barzazi, *Gli Alfanni dell'Erudizione*, pp. 264-91.

<sup>794</sup> See *Vitae San Pietri Damiani*, pp. 39-54.

Saint Peter Damian's *Vita Romualdi* was the founding document in the religious identity of the Camaldolese Order, and Laderchi's unravelling of the continuity of the first century of their order's history was a challenge to Camaldolese monks, as well as to Benedictines at large. Nonetheless Laderchi's *Vitae* didn't receive any immediate commentaries: it seems that it was primarily after the controversy surrounding his *Acta* had begun, that scholars began to take action. The first work attacking Laderchi's *Vitae* was an anonymous set of four books, nominally published in Paris, titled *Sejani et Ruffini dialogus de Laderchiana historia S: Petri Damiani*. The work is dated 1705, but was probably printed later: its publication is described by Fontanini to Passionei in late November 1707:

Si stampa un Dialogo curiosissimo contra la vita di S. Pier Damiani sotto data di Parigi diviso in 4. Colloqui. Nel P.o si ricerca se veramente possa aver composti quei tre Tomi in tre mesi come dice, nel 2.do scopre 33 errori di Grammatica. Nel 3.o le inezie dello stile, e della profanazione della sagra scrittura. Nel 4.o 101 error di storia<sup>795</sup>

These four 'colloqui' assumed the form of an imagined dialogue between two scholars, 'Seiani' and 'Ruffini', and each discussed a different technical aspect of Laderchi's reflections upon the life of San Romualdo, titled in order 'calculus', 'ferula', 'scutica' and 'censura'. The work is a damning and vitriolic critique of Laderchi's scholarship. The *Sejani et Ruffini Dialogus* remained anonymous in its review by the *Journal de Scavans* and when referred to in the *Giornale*.<sup>796</sup> Most likely the author was Grandi: the work is attributed to him in his 1744 biography.<sup>797</sup> In the same year that the *Dialogus* was circulating, Grandi published a much more scholarly, less polemical work, based on extensive research, which offered a new definitive history of the early centuries of the Camaldolese order. Grandi's *Dissertationes Camaldulenses*, like the *Sejani et Ruffini Dialogus*, is divided into four volumes: the first two focusing on the origins of the order and the life of Saint Romuald, the third on the miracles and visions attributed to Romuald, and the fourth on the relationship between Saint Peter Damian and Saint

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<sup>795</sup> Fontanini to Passionei, 26.11.1707; the work was explicitly related to the Germon-Mabillon debate in its review in the *Journal des Scavans* 1708 (pp. 607-9).

<sup>796</sup> GLI vol 12, p. 187.

<sup>797</sup> *Vita del Padre D. Guido Grandi, Abate Camaldolese, Matematico dello Studio Pisano, Scritta da un suo Discepolo*, Venezia, 1744, p. 33-34; this is the source cited in his *DBI* entry: Ugo Baldini, 'Grandi, Guido', *DBI*, vol. 58, 2002.

Romuald. In the fourth book Grandi tackles Laderchi's claims head-on, though drawing upon historical research rather than personal attacks to make his case.<sup>798</sup>

Grandi's strategy for discrediting the aspects of Laderchi's arguments which were problematic for the Camaldolese order was therefore twofold: on the one hand, an anonymous polemic loaded with personal criticism; and on the other a dense, thoroughly researched scholarly tract which presented itself as transcending polemics. In the case of the latter, Grandi strengthened the credibility of his account through a rigorous criticism and cross-referencing of texts and sources. This had quite radical implications for the history of his order. Much of the third book of Grandi's *Dissertationes* offered a critical, even dismissive, reading of the miracle of the 'scala mistica', a vision which appeared to Saint Romuald atop a Tuscan mountain, depicting white robed monks ascending to heaven. This vision was the widely accepted basis for the Camaldolese wearing white robes, in contrast to the black of the Benedictines. Grandi's dissertation systematically doubts that the miracle took place, citing first and foremost that neither it, nor the change of monastic habits attributed to it, is mentioned in the life of Saint Romuald by Saint Peter Damian himself.<sup>799</sup> Grandi then traced the construction of the vision through later hagiography of Saint Romuald, showing discrepancies between different accounts, and how the centrality of the vision only became widely accepted from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>800</sup> The change of habit from black to white is accredited to more mundane developments within the order of monks at Fonte Avellana, which in fact predated the life of San Romuald. Dismantling the legend central to the Camaldolese's identity as a distinctive order was a challenging argument, as recognised in the review of the *Dissertationes* in the *Giornale*, recognising that the argument "paruto strano per la sua Novita ad una gran parte de Monaci della sua Religione".<sup>801</sup> Here Grandi's commitment to "esaminare le cose, o di vederle esaminate secondo le regole della buona critica"<sup>802</sup> was not directed towards undermining the credibility of the order; on the contrary, better establishing the true

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<sup>798</sup> The works were reviewed in the GLI, vol. 9, 1712, from p. 320; tomo 12, 1712, from p. 166; Grandi had written previously on the lives of San Piero Damiani and San Romualdo, and the *Dissertationes* served to draw together these fragments into a coherent whole: see Baldini, 'Grandi, Guido'.

<sup>799</sup> Grandi, *Dissertationes*, ch. 2, pp. 10-24.

<sup>800</sup> And most substantially with the publication of the *Annales Camaldulenses* by Agostino Fortunio: Grandi, *Dissertationes Camuldenses*, ch. 4, pp. 61-79.

<sup>801</sup> GLI, vol 12, 1712, p. 166.

<sup>802</sup> Ibid.

history of the order, and purging it of falsities constructed later by “i moderni” is both presented and received as a service to both scholarship and faith.

Grandi was not the only Camaldolese monk to confront Laderchi’s distortive *Vitae* of Saint Peter Damian. Comparing Grandi’s works, and especially his critical methodology, with the series of works published between 1706 and 1716 by the Camaldolese hermit Filippo Maria Macchiarelli gives insight into how divisions in historical methodology were also embedded within Religious Orders. Macchiarelli was born in Naples as Niccolo in 1660 – he assumed the name Filippo Maria only upon entering the Camaldolese order aged 40, in 1701. After becoming a priest, Macchiarelli travelled widely throughout the Italian peninsula, before being appointed as Vicario of the Badia di San Marco in Puglia, and then, in retreat from ecclesiastical office, entering the Camaldolese hermitage on Monte Corona in Umbria. There Macchiarelli dedicated himself to spiritual reflection, as well as researching the history of the Camaldolese order.<sup>803</sup>

Macchiarelli published his *Apologie Romoaldine* in 1709, four commentaries in which Macchiarelli “rispondesi a molti scrittori moderni; the four-part *Apologie* aimed to defend the early history of the Camaldolese order against both Laderchi and Grandi. As Paoli notes in his *vita* of Macchiarelli, the fourth of the *Apologie* had already been published in 1706, though without a date, under the title *San Pier Damiano, Apologia... con cui si risponde al P. Giacomo Laderchi*, a work dedicated to Erasmo Gattola, ‘priere Cassinese’.<sup>804</sup> This short work explicitly objects to Laderchi’s *Vitae* and its argument against a direct continuity between San Romulodo and San Pier Damiano.<sup>805</sup> Here Macchiarelli more or less follows Grandi’s arguments in his *Dissertatione*, though Grandi is not named as a reference. Grandi is not cited in Macchiarelli’s first *Apologie* either, even as the essay is a direct objection to Grandi’s skeptical reading of Romauld’s vision

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<sup>803</sup> For Macchiarelli’s life I draw upon his biography by Sebastiano Paoli, ‘Vita del Padre D. Filippo Maria Macchiarelli Eremita Camaldolese’, unpaginated preface to Macchiarelli’s posthumously published *delle Notizie Storiche della Vita di San Romaldo e degli altri suoi Beati Discepoli*, 1716.

<sup>804</sup> The appearance of this first *Apologia* is noted by Fontanini: Fontanini writes to Passionei about “un Romito Camaldolese” who has written “contro un libro per quanto mi scrive poco caritativo, perche ha detto, che S. Pier Damiani non fu Monaco Camaldolese”, Fontanini to Passionei, 4.10.1706, Appendix, *Serrai*, pp. 416-18.

<sup>805</sup> Macchiarelli, *Apologie*, ‘Di S. Pier Damiano seguace di S. Romaldo’ pp. 215-245 (the first two *Apologie* are paginated 1-98, then 99-148 respectively; the second two are paginated 1-46, 47-77 respectively).

of the 'scala celeste'.<sup>806</sup> Macchiarelli gives a series of explanations for why San Pier Damiano didn't refer to the 'scala celeste' directly, but the gist of his argument is that, while Grandi raises several valid doubts about the history of the vision, these do not constitute sufficient grounds to dismiss the vision as historical fact all together. Macchiarelli raises and references some specific counter-arguments and historical authorities, but also appeals to the force of tradition:

Gli argomenti a favore della Visione di Romoaldo, son positivi, forti, e giustificati; positive e forti, perche han per cittadella una Tradizione non iscritto così gagliarda, ed inespugnabile, che da veruna parte gli si puo dar'assalto, non che fare breccia per superarla... ad essi fan baloardi tre secoli, e mezzo di tradizione scritta, chiara, e tangibile.<sup>807</sup>

In contrast, the arguments set forth by Grandi are deemed "pochi, negativi e sterili, i quali ne pongon, ne metter possono cosa alcuna in essere" and essentially just orientating around a single philological discrepancy.<sup>808</sup>

That there is a methodological discrepancy at play between Macchiarelli and Grandi is made more explicit by the substance of the other two *Apologie*, the second claiming that San Romuald lived to the age of 120, an argument which could ensure a direct biographical relationship between Romuald and Peter Damian,<sup>809</sup> and the third establishing the absolute doctrinal coherence of the early Camaldolese order.<sup>810</sup> In the opening pages of his second apologie Macchiarelli even explicitly distinguishes his study from that of the "signori Criticostorici, ed Antiquari", who return to sources, and manuscripts, and reassess the credibility of historical facts.<sup>811</sup> Though he praises such scholars, this is not Macchiarelli's objective, which he presents as "ricavare della stessa vita del Damiano, ponendo in considerazione il principio, il mezzo, ed il fine di essa."<sup>812</sup>

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<sup>806</sup> "della scala celeste contemplate in sogno da S. Romoaldo", *ibid.*, pp. 1-98; Macchiarelli's references to the *third* dissertation of a Camaldolese history, and his direct, paginated, citations identify his target as Grandi.

<sup>807</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87-8.

<sup>808</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84.

<sup>809</sup> Second Apologia: della morte nel mxxvii e della vita di anni cxx di S. Romoaldo, *ibid.*, pp. 99-148.

<sup>810</sup> Terza Apologia: Della Dottrina e del sapere di cui fu provveduto S Romaldo, *ibid.*, pp. 149-214.

<sup>811</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102, and 104.

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104.

Macchiarelli expanded his *Apologie Romoaldine* with a series of ten *Notizie storiche della vita di san Romoaldo e degli altri suoi beati discepoli*, dedicated to Innico Caracciolo, published in 1716 after Macchiarelli's death, though the preface and the dates of the acceptance from the state censor indicate it was completed by July 1714. Here he explicitly cites Grandi as the scholar against whom he defends the verity of Romauld's vision.<sup>813</sup> Macchiarelli received no response from Grandi, who, as claimed by his 1744 biographer, was planning a commentary on Macchiarelli's *Apologie*, but was dissuaded by the hermits abrupt death in 1715.<sup>814</sup> Grandi's biographer described Macchiarelli as "uomo di santa conversazione, ma imperito de' costumi letterari", which gives some indication of the differences between the scholars.<sup>815</sup> Accordingly, while Grandi's *Dissertatione* received a thorough review in volumes 9 and 12 of the *Giornale*, Macchiarelli's *Apologie* were only mentioned in passing within the review of Grandi's work.<sup>816</sup>

The extent to which Macchiarelli was a hagiographer working in a more 'devotional' and less 'critical' context to Grandi is clarified by situating his work on San Romuald and Saint Peter Damian alongside the rest of his scholarship. In 1713 Macchiarelli published in Naples a short criticism of the argument made by Baronius that Saint Gregory the Great was a follower of Saint Equizio.<sup>817</sup> Although profusely appreciative of Baronius' scholarship, Macchiarelli argued instead that Gregory the Great followed the rule of Saint Benedict, whose life he chronicled. A second argument claimed that Saint Augustine of Canterbury and his followers similarly practiced and promoted the Rule of St. Benedict, and that Benedictine principles drove the ecumenical council in Rome in 610, so being influential in the establishment of Christianity in England. The work was dedicated the Abbate Benedetto Laudati, the Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of San Severino in Naples, and the senior Benedictine monk in Naples.<sup>818</sup>

Macchiarelli published in Naples a second *Discorso Apologetico* in 1713, *La Favola che'l Sacro Corpo del Patriarca San Benedetto dorma nel sepolcro Floriascese dinudata*, this

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<sup>813</sup> Macchiarelli, *Delle notizie storiche della Vita di san Romoaldo*, 1716, pp. 212-18.

<sup>814</sup> *Vita del Guido Grandi*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>815</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>816</sup> *GLI*, tomo 12, 1712, p. 187.

<sup>817</sup> Titled *Di San Gregorio Magno Colitvatore della Regola del Patriarca S. Benedetto Discorso Apologetico di D. Filippo Maria Macchiarelli*, Napoli, 1713.

<sup>818</sup> On Laudati, see Egildo Gentile, "I Benedetti a Napoli," *Benedectina* 7 (1953): 25-60.

time dedicated to D. Gregorio Galisio, a senior monk at Monte Cassino. Here Macchiarelli's polemic was aimed at French scholars claiming that the bodies of Saint Benedict and his sister Saint Scholastic had been moved from the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino to Fleury Abbey, and Benedictine monastery, in Loiret, France. This time Baronius is his chief source discrediting the arguments against Mabillon, and Andre du Saussay.<sup>819</sup>

Macchiarelli's profile as primarily a devotional hagiographer, distinct from the critical milieu of Grandi and Bacchini, is confirmed by considering his *Vita di S. Filippo Neri*, composed in 1699, before Macchiarelli entered the Camaldolese Order. Rather than polemical, as these later texts had been, Macchiarelli's *Vita di S. Filippo Neri* is presented as a spiritual text, as a condensed version of the 1622 *Vita del S. Filippo Neri* by Pietro Giacomo Bacci. The intended function of Macchiarelli's abridged version is presented in the work's preface:

dell'utile, che puoi ricavar dal legger con divozione, e frequenza la Vita di S. Filippo... se con leggere con frequenza la sua Vita ammirabile, ne ricavarai: tenera, e filiale divozione verso di lui, ed una santi invidia: d'imitare in qualche parte le sue belle virtù<sup>820</sup>

Macchiarelli's *Vita* has extensive passages on contemporary miracles accredited to S. Filippo Neri, as well as devotional practices "che si possono praticar da divoti di San Filippo".<sup>821</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has used the dichotomies between a 'triumphalist' and 'nostalgic' model of ecclesiastical history to propose broad-based fault-lines within the Italian Republic of Letters. In the process it has aimed to package theological sensibility into methodological and epistemological dynamics, and thereby acts to refer back to the discourse on 'good taste' in scholarship formulated in chapter four. It has also proposed

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<sup>819</sup> Macchiarelli's *Discorsi Apologetici* were noted briefly, without serious review, in the GLI vol 12, 1712, p. 425, and vol. 13, 1713, p. 495-6, under the sections for literary news from Naples.

<sup>820</sup> Macchiarelli, *Vita di S. Filippo Neri, Istitutore della venerabili Congregazione dell'Oratorio*, p. 6r, 8rv

<sup>821</sup> See especially *Vita di S. Filippo Neri*, pp. 339-53.

a dichotomy between 'devotional' and 'critical' approaches to hagiography, as in part grafting onto different methods in writing the history of the church. Here, however, a good deal of caution is required. A forceful historiographical trope views the ascent of critical history as a secularising development in early modern Europe, thereby extending its opposition to devotional modes in writing the history of the Church and its saints. At the same time, however, criticism in ecclesiastical history and sacred erudition could function itself as a form of devotion, where the process of refining the historical record about religious history was itself sacralised. This was the model of the 'pio letterato' in the Catholic scholarship, represented by Mabillon, Tillemont, Muratori and Grandi.<sup>822</sup> What was being opposed was not, then, devotion and criticism in an absolute sense, but rather two quite distinctive models of scholarly devotion, and with them two distinctive conceptions of truth in history, one based on the scholarly production of sacred erudition, the other based on its consumption.

These methodological and ontological distinctions could both unite and divide institutional forms within the Italian Republic of Letters. The Circolo Tamburo as an extended scholarly entity, structured around scholars like Fontanini and Passionei, incorporating elements of the Maurists in Rome, and engaging with Muratori and Bacchini as satellites, could be seen as, in part, founded upon a shared commitment to critical scholarship and 'buon gusto'. At the same time, it was divergence in approaches to sacred erudition which forged a fault-line within the Italian Camaldolese order between Grandi and Macchiarelli. To understand the scholarly environment in all its complexity, an approach which both takes account of institutions like religious orders as significant, and can see beyond them, to associations based on scholarly accordance and collaboration, is necessary.

It's also necessary to recognise these dichotomies as composed of ideal types, and to take account of the scholars, probably a majority, who fell between the gaps. Upon the death of Macchiarelli in 1715, Sebastiano Paoli wrote his biography which acted as a preface to the former's posthumous *Delle Notizie Storiche* which appeared in 1716. Here Paoli carefully presented Macchiarelli as a model of the devotional scholar, as distinct

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<sup>822</sup>Francoise Waquet, "Ludovico Antonio Muratori, Le 'Pio Letterato' à l'épreuve Des Faits," in *Die Europäische Gelehrtensrepublik Im Zeitalter Des Konfessionalismus*, 2001, 87–103; Waquet, "De La 'Repubblica Letteraria' Au 'Pio Letterato'. Organisation Du Savoir et Modeles Intellectuels Dans L'Italie de Muratori."

from “coloro, che in ordine alle scienze credono esser noi nati non per altro, che per consumare gli anni, e logorare l’ingegno intorno a varie ed inutili questioni”, though Paoli adds that his work can “parere a taluno, che in far cio ci dovesse moderare in parte il suo per altro onorato zelo... anzi che non piccante alquanto, e mordace”.<sup>823</sup> Paoli concluded his brief biography with an account of Macchiarelli’s character and a list of his works, but before this presented Macchiarelli’s closest friends and associates in Naples. This included senior ecclesiastical figures, principally Cardinal Orsini of Benevento, the future Pope Benedict XII, as well as Antonio Sanfelice, the Bishop of Nardo. Most interesting is the group of scholars Paoli lists as associated with Macchiarelli: the late Giuseppe Valletta and his two nephews Francesco and Nicolo Saverio, Nicolo Amenta, Nicolo Carminio Falcone, Matteo Egizio, Erasmo Gattola, Benedetto Laudati – and we might add Paoli to this group too.<sup>824</sup> Comprising of elements of Naples’ promoters of Muratori’s ‘buon gusto’, as well as collaborators with the Benedictines between Paris and Rome, this group might be interpreted as representative of the *via media* in method, interfacing between critical scholars and those composing classic devotional scholarship. It is also the scholarly community, centred around Egizio, at the centre of the following chapter, which unpacks the political, theological and scholarly tensions within the production and reception of a specific work of hagiography: Nicolo Carminio Falcone’s *Istoria Intera di San Gennaro*.

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<sup>823</sup> Macchiarelli, *Notizie Storiche*, unpaginated (pp. x-xxiv), p. Xiv.

<sup>824</sup> Macchiarelli, *Notizie Storiche*, p. xxii.

## Chapter Seven - The Afterlife of San Gennaro: Nicolo Carminio Falcone's *Intera Istoria di San Gennaro* (1713)

The disciplining of scholarship and the defence of criticism in sacred erudition could lead to direct conflicts between individuals and networks of scholars on the basis of clear methodological and intellectual divergence. It is not always easy, however, to draw a sharp line between two distinct and internally homogenous groups defined by their historical method, sense and 'taste': the epistemological orientation of most historical texts was much more ambiguous, even as the political, theological and scholarly tensions surrounding the writing of the past remained live. Hagiography offers a valuable vantage point from which to understand these tensions as they played out in less clear-cut case studies. While two functions of hagiography, as presented in the previous chapter, could be to act as proxy-contexts for underlying intellectual disagreements and, alternatively, to reassess the lives of saints foundational to a specific religious order, much hagiography was local, written in the context of the relationship of a given saint to a town, city or region. Indeed, in the previous chapter, this was the primary rationale for Laderchi's *Acta Passionis SS. Crescii*, commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici as an ode to Tuscany's sacred past.

This chapter will further explore the writing of local hagiography, demonstrating how a contested life of a regional saint could stimulate and reflect both specific and general political, theological and scholarly tensions.<sup>825</sup> The protagonist here is not a specific controversy, individual, institution or intellectual formation, but rather a book: the *Intera Istoria di San Gennaro*, published in Naples in 1713 by the young Basilicatan scholar-priest Niccolo Carminio Falcone. The chapter will consider the conditions surrounding the writing and publication of Falcone's *Istoria*, its reception and criticism in different contexts, and the fate of the text and its author in the ensuing years. This process of reconstruction demonstrates the political and theological contexts of sacred erudition, the rhetoric and practice of criticism in hagiography, and how these themes were contested in a specifically Neapolitan frame.

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<sup>825</sup> On regional hagiography in early modern Italy see Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy*.

To early modern Neapolitan scholars, San Gennaro was not just ‘another’ saint to be revered and chronicled. As the city’s most important patron saint and its protector against natural, human and spiritual disaster, the ceremonial liquefaction of the saint’s blood symbolized his continued commitment to Naples and the wellbeing of Neapolitans. The miracle of liquefaction was described by Biagio Maioli D’Avitabile in his letters to the Roman scholar and director of the Arcadian Academy Giovanni Maria Crescimbeni:

qui si pensa all’anima, per la gran rovina, che ci sovrasta, a cagion degli infausti segni avutine da S. Gennaro, per il sangue comparso duro per quattro giorni, nere, e cinevicio. Il che ha messo in tanta costernazione questa capitale, che non si veda altro che non pubbliche penitenze di giorno, e di notte: e no si sentono altro che pianti, e lamenti. L’anno dell’antico pestilenza il Santo non diede segni tanto terribili.<sup>826</sup>

In D’Avitabile’s account, the blackening and thickening of the blood is seen as a negative portent for the city and its inhabitants. D’Avitabile’s account appears to reflect genuine concern, and thus takes the miracle as significant. In the years around 1700, however, some Neapolitan ecclesiastics felt the credibility of miracles such as the liquefaction to be under assault from reformist and heterodox forces. Foreign visitors to Naples, especially Protestants, balked at the superstition and fanaticism latent in the ceremony of the liquefaction of the blood.<sup>827</sup> Some of their concerns were also felt to be shared by local Catholic reformers. A key charge directed against so-called Neapolitan ‘ateisti’ of the 1690s by their persecutors was that they challenged the credibility of the liquefaction of the blood of San Gennaro.<sup>828</sup> A legal controversy broke out in 1707, in which the Franciscan Accursio di Policastro was chastised by the painter Nicola D’Anfora for criticizing Neapolitans for being too superstitious, referring specifically to the ritual of San Gennaro’s liquefying blood.<sup>829</sup> One of the most alarming criticisms of

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<sup>826</sup> D’Avitabile, Naples to Crescimbeni, Rome, 17.5.1710, BAR *Fondo Arcadia*, MS 26, f. 462.

<sup>827</sup> Franco Strazzullo, *Il 6. centenario del miracolo di san Gennaro: 1389-1989* (Napoli: Fondazione Pasquale Corsicato, 1989).

<sup>828</sup> See Luciano Osbat, *L’Inquisizione a Napoli. Il processo agli ateisti, 1688-1697*. (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1974); Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta. Un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento*, pp. 143-8.

<sup>829</sup> See De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell’età moderna (1656-1799)*, p. 144.

Pietro Giannone's 1723 *Istoria Civile* was the claim that Giannone negated the miracle of San Gennaro, a charge Giannone strenuously denied.<sup>830</sup>

Most of the polemical discussion around the life and miracles of San Gennaro in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century concerned not, however, the credibility of the liquefaction *per se*, but rather San Gennaro's role as a symbol of Neapolitan religious and political identity. The saint was considered the principle custodian of the city's vitality, invoked at moments of crisis, principally volcanic and seismic activity, to protect the lives of Neapolitans. Narrating the life and martyrdom of San Gennaro, and the miracles with which he was associated, was a means to strengthen the bonds tying him to Naples and Neapolitans in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. In researching the life of the saint, however, hagiographers encountered uncertainties, gaps and problems. A paucity of sources, the problems of interpretation and the obligation for the historical record to accord with the contested 'myth', drew their accounts into a range of polemics and controversies, both internal to the world of erudite learning, and structured around the points at which that world infringed upon questions of political and religious authority. As the latter section of this chapter will demonstrate, it was *through* discussions about historical accuracy in critical hagiography that the credibility of the miraculous came into question.

#### The Politics of Hagiography and Nicolo Carminio Falcone's *Istoria di San Gennaro*

In a remark in a letter to Matteo Egizio sent from the Campanian town of Atripalda, the antiquarian Filippo Belli drew Egizio's attention to a recent publication, "in cui si leggono gli splendori della nobile famiglia di Gennaro".<sup>831</sup> Belli conveyed to Egizio the details of a marble inscription, discovered in the ruins of Baiano, and now recorded in the "case de S.S. Spatafora d'Avellino" which suggested, as affirmed in the otherwise questionable history of Avellino by Padre Bellabona, that the family of Gennaro were descended from 'Mavertius', a Roman proconsul.<sup>832</sup> Belli noted the discrepancies

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<sup>830</sup>Michele Miele, "Il Rilievo Di Matrice Illuministica Sul Liquefazione Del Sange e La Replica Apologetica Dei Contemporanei," in *San Gennaro Nel XVII Centenario Del Martirio (305-2005)*, ed. Gennaro Luongo, vol. 2 (Naples, 2007), 89–107.; De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)*, p. 155; Most comprehensively see Gisela Schlüter, "San Gennaro oder die Ohnmacht der Vernunft: Zum Fall Pietro Giannone," *Romanische Forschungen; Frankfurt am Main* 108, no. 1 (January 1, 1996): 50–88.

<sup>831</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 11 June 1713, Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli (BNN), MS XIII C90 5.

<sup>832</sup> Belli's polemics against Bellabona's History of Avellino are documented in chapter two.

between the inscription and the claims in the new publication on the “famiglia di Gennaro”.<sup>833</sup> The book in question was *L’Intera Istoria della Famiglia, Vita, Miracoli Translazioni e Culto del Glorioso Martire di San Gennaro Vescovo di Benevento, Cittadino e Principal Protettore di Napoli*, published in 1713 by the young priest Nicolo Carminio Falcone, and Belli was not the only scholar to raise questions about the truthfulness of arguments raised in Falcone’s hagiographic text.

Nicolo Carminio Falcone (1681-1759) was a priest with his origins in Basilicata. Falcone followed an ecclesiastical career, in 1743 becoming bishop of the small Calabrian town of Santa Severina. In the years running up to 1713, the year of the publication of his *Intera Istoria*, his first serious scholarly work, Falcone was a relatively young priest, freshly ordained from his local diocese in Lagonegro, and probably based in and around Naples as political, ecclesiastical and intellectual centre of the Kingdom of Naples. By January 1714 Falcone relocated to Rome in pursuit of promotion within the church. From Rome he maintained a sparse but relatively intimate correspondence with Matteo Egizio, with whom he had evidently become acquainted in Naples. Egizio and Falcone exchanged a series of letters in that year in which we see Falcone struggling to become familiar with his new social environs, and missing his ‘patria’. After a long pause of seven years, they recommence epistolary relations in 1721, exchanging letters every year or so through to 1733. These later letters present Falcone as well integrated into the erudite and scholarly circles of Rome and Italy, well acquainted with Neapolitan ecclesiastics in Rome, such as Carlo Maiello and Giovanni Bortone, as well as Rome-based scholars affiliated with the drive to reform such as Domenico Passionei and Giusto Fontanini, and Ludovico Antonio Muratori in Modena, with whom Falcone collaborated to compile a history of the Greco-Roman statesmen and historian Cassius Dio.<sup>834</sup> This contrasts significantly with the naïve provincial Falcone of 1714, who in Rome “vivo infelicissima ma a mezzo degli amici affectionatissimi”<sup>835</sup>, agonised over encounters with renowned scholars such as Biagio Garofalo, who pined for news of his “patria lontana”, and recoiled at the Roman Carnevale, “la piu sciocca cosa del mondo”.<sup>836</sup> Faced with the “ragazzi golosi di amore” and the “cortesie ed occhiate delle

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<sup>833</sup> Belli, Atripalda to Egizio, Naples, 11 June 1713, BNN MS XIII c90 5.

<sup>834</sup> See ‘epilogue’ at end of this chapter.

<sup>835</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 03.03.1714, BNN MS XI C 91 57.

<sup>836</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 10.02.1714, BNN MS XI C 91 56.

donzelle di questa indegna citta” Falcone declared staunchly “sed motos prestar componere fluctus”<sup>837</sup>.

Although printed in 1713, the initial efforts to publish Falcone’s *Istoria di San Gennaro* can be dated to 1708-09, as indicated by both the dating of the text’s ecclesiastical and civil licenses and the preface to the text, *A chi legge*, which recounts in depth the stimulus for and gestation of the work. In so far as this preface identifies and summarises the key polemic argument at work in Falcone’s text, as well as the historical sources which informed its production, a close analysis helps us move effectively through the lengthy hagiographic account which follows. Falcone claimed he was encouraged to compose his *Istoria* by the blind Naples-based Sicilian monk Fra Illarione di San Pietro in order to better establish the historical ‘patria’ of San Gennaro, Archbishop of Benevento in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD, but patron Saint of Naples; the work was dedicated to Nicolo Maria di Gennaro, a Neapolitan aristocrat, and supposed descendent of San Gennaro himself. Falcone’s *Istoria* was an interjection into a lengthy and passionately argued historiographical dispute about the birthplace of San Gennaro, with its origins in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but which crystallised as a hagiographic debate in the 1630s, with publications by Camillo Tutini and Antonio Carraciolo in favour of a Neapolitan San Gennaro, and texts by Mario Vipera and Ottavio Bilotta presenting San Gennaro as Beneventan.<sup>838</sup> The controversy was rekindled, according to Falcone, in 1692 by the claims of the Archbishop of Benevento Pietro Francesco Orsini, the future Pope Benedict XIII, that San Gennaro was ‘Beneventi Civis’, stated “come un articolo stato fosse di Fede o un verita indubitata”<sup>839</sup>. This was not strictly true: Orsini only definitively claimed Gennaro as “Beneventi Civis” in 1708, and did so in response to Neapolitan polemicists. In 1704 a ‘panegirico’ asserting the Beneventan heritage of San Gennaro was published by the ecclesiastical press in Benevento by Francesco Trofa, with an oration by the Beneventan Jesuit Giacomo Gaglione.<sup>840</sup> This was countered by two texts by the Neapolitan Carmelite Girolamo Maria di Sant’Anna, in 1707 his *Istoria*

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<sup>837</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 03.03.1714, BNN MS XI C 91 57.

<sup>838</sup> Camillo Tutini, *Memorie della vita miracoli, e vulot di San Gianuario*, Napoli, 1633; Antonio Caracciolo, *Historica demonstratio, quod Sancti Januarij patria neapolis fuit*, Napoli, 1634; Mario Vipera, *Catalogus Sanctorum*, Benevento, 1634; Ottavio Bilotta, *Istorico discorso*, Benevento, 1636. In general, see Angelomichele De Spirito, *La patria contesa: Benevento, Napoli e San Gennaro* (Taranto: P. Lacaíta, 2006).

<sup>839</sup> Falcone, *Istoria*, p. 11.; See Angelomichele De Spirito, “Il Card. V. M. Orsini Arcivescovo Di Benevento e La Polemica Sulla Patria Di S. Gennaro,” *Studi Ianuariani*, 1989, 138–74.

<sup>840</sup> *Le Sagre Pompe del Sannio*, Benevento, 1704.

della vita, virtu e miracoli di S. Gennaro, and later in 1710 an *Aggiunte* to the work, claiming San Gennaro as Neapolitan. Sant'Anna's *Aggiunte* was also a response to another text, published in 1710, as Falcone was preparing his manuscript for print.<sup>841</sup> This was a Beneventan polemic composed by Giovanni di Nicastro, Archdeacon of Benevento, asserting the Beneventan origins of San Gennaro, titled *La Spada di Salomone*.<sup>842</sup> Similarly the *Istorico Discorso* by the pro-Beneventan Bilotta, originally published in 1632, was reprinted in Benevento, presumably under the direction of Nicastro, who became the champion of the pro-Benevento party. The following year a reply to Nicastro appeared, published in Venice and nominally written by Ottavio Liguoro, a priest from Aversa in Campania. *La Sacra Gara* systematically refuted the claims made by Nicastro in the *Spada di Salomone*, and argued that San Gennaro was Neapolitan;<sup>843</sup> in his introduction Falcone suggests that it was written by Sant'Anna, and only appeared under the name of Liguoro, who funded its publication.<sup>844</sup>

This was the polemic context which Falcone's *Istoria* was entering. At stake was not only patriotic enthusiasm, but also commentary upon political and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Although only fifty miles north east inland from then Habsburg Naples, the city of Benevento was located inside the territory of the Papal States. Beneventan-Neapolitan polemics had a lengthy heritage, but the context of the War of Spanish Succession on the Italian peninsula, the contestation of Neapolitan territory and the collision of church and state such a conflict encompassed, served to enhance these underlying tensions. The anti-curial stance of Cardinal Vincenzo Grimani as Viceroy of Austrian Naples during the years of the composition of Falcone's *Istoria*, and the general Habsburg policy towards the Papal States, provided further fuel for erudite polemics.<sup>845</sup>

In this context, controversies in the field of sacred erudition can be seen as the politicization of hagiography according to local conditions. This political tension further

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<sup>841</sup> Girolamo Maria di Sant'Anna, *Istoria della Vita, Virtù, e Miracoli di San Gennaro, Vescovo e Martire*, 1707; *Aggiunte all'Istoria della vita, virtù e miracoli di S. Gennaro*, 1710.

<sup>842</sup> Giovanni di Nicastro, *La Spada di Salamone che decide il suo vero figlio alla madre ovvero Discorso Apologetico Istorico-legal diviso in tre libri*, 1711.

<sup>843</sup> Ottavio Liguoro, *La Sacra Gara fra L'Eccellentissima, ed in Inclita Citta di Napoli, ed il Glorioso S. Gennaio suo Cittadino, e principal Protettore*, 1711.

<sup>844</sup> Sant'Anna had previously published on the antiquity of the Neapolitan church, and the Neapolitan origins of San Gennaro: *Della Antica Cattolica Religione e Chiarissima Nobilita della Fedelissima Citta di Napolim*, 1707.

<sup>845</sup> The political context of Falcone's *Istoria* is explored at length by Giulio Sodano, "il Falso Turpissimo' Di Nicolo Carmonio Falcone Tra Agiografia e Storigrafia Napoletana," in *San Gennaro Nel XVII Centenario Del Martirio 305-2005*, ed. Gennaro Luongo (Naples, 2007), 131-49.

related to the life of San Gennaro in a particularly complex way. San Gennaro was a noted martyr; he thus died confronting heresy and persecution. His persecutor was also, however, the Roman state-representative to Benevento. The extent to which Falcone directly conceived of his San Gennaro in this broader civil and political context is unclear. Nonetheless, as we shall see, the dichotomy of a liberal, civil and independent Naples and a restrictive and repressive Benevento at the mercy of the whims of Roman bureaucrats, is explicitly established in Falcone's narrative.

### The Rhetoric of Criticism in Falcone's *Istoria*

Aiming to definitively conclude the question of San Gennaro's patria, Falcone aimed to undermine all previous pro-Neapolitan scholarship as substandard, presenting all previous scholarship on the matter, including that of Sant'Anna, "un gran ripugnanza tra per sapere esservi nelle vite scritte del Santo, molta mancanza del vero, e molta borra del falso".<sup>846</sup> Falcone instead presented his own work as adhering to the new regime of critical scholarship, with the 'buon gusto del secolo'.<sup>847</sup> In Falcone's words, following "lo stile Bollandani Scrittori"<sup>848</sup> and the "sentimenti del Mabillone"<sup>849</sup> underpins the credibility of his history. The lynchpin of this claim to credibility is Falcone's source, a previously undiscovered manuscript, a 15<sup>th</sup>-century copy of a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century 'legghenda' written by a Basilian monk, 'Emmanuele'. Falcone describes his discovery of the manuscript in the libraries of the Vatican by following some notes of the eminent 16<sup>th</sup> century scholar Bartolomeo Chioccarello, which he found in the newly established Libreria Brancaccio, in the church S. Angelo a Nilo, in Naples. Falcone offers a vivid description of his discovery of the manuscript and his attempts to ascertain its genuineness, with doubts cast by the aforementioned Carmelite Girolamo Maria Sant'Anna postponing the publication of Falcone's *Istoria* into 1710, and then to 1713 (Falcone claims he received the 'green light' following support from Cardinal Cassanate in Rome). The Vatican manuscripts demonstrated to Falcone that San Gennaro was born and raised in Napoli under the given name of Fausto. From a young age 'Fausto'

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<sup>846</sup> Falcone, *Intera Istoria*, 'a chi legge'.

<sup>847</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>848</sup> Ibid., P. 13.

<sup>849</sup> Ibid., P. 19.

performed miraculous feats, and following a rapidly-progressing career in the church was elected – against his will, Falcone is careful to stress – as Archbishop of Benevento.

Recourse to historical truth is presented in both dramatic and sacred terms. The methodology of the hagiographer must be rigorous, empirical and engaged:

nelle Vite de' Santi, vogliamo toccar con mani le cose; vederle al paragon della pietra Lidia; volgerle, rivolgerle sù e giù, dentro e fuori; per veder se resistono al martello delle Storie e Verità, già in altre cose, chiarite<sup>850</sup>

The truth to which the scholar aspires is rendered sacred, just as wilful or undisciplined divergence from the truth is diabolic:

Disse ei medesimo il Signore, che lui era la Via, la Verità, e la Vita. Adunque disse eziandio che'l Calonniatore Infernale era il Precipizio, la Bugia, e la Morte... i Veritieri si dirano figliuoli di Dio i Menzonieri, figliuoli del Diavolo<sup>851</sup>

Reflecting this, as Falcone's *Istoria* evolves into a more conventional *vita*, its condemnation of "superbissimi traditori dell'umano genere"<sup>852</sup> is directed not at Beneventans, or political opponents, but rather towards poor scholars in general.

Using this kind of language, and claiming a definitive history based on newly discovered sources, Falcone's *Intera Istoria* predictably encouraged a polemical backlash, above all from Archdeacon of Benevento Giovanni di Nicastro. Nicastro published two texts condemning Falcone's claims, anonymously in 1713 and 1714, presented as letters addressed to anonymous Venice-based correspondent from Rome and Florence respectively, officially published in Naples, but more likely in Benevento.<sup>853</sup> Nicastro criticized the intentions, arguments and methodologies deployed by Falcone. He accused Falcone of writing to ingratiate himself with political elites in Naples, and distorting his interpretation of the past through the patriotic polemics of the present. Nicastro also cast doubts over the legitimacy, the antiquity, and indeed the existence of Falcone's Greek manuscript, citing a letter he exchanged with Giangrisostomo Scarfò,

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<sup>850</sup> Ibid., p. CXXV-VI.

<sup>851</sup> Ibid., p. CXXV.

<sup>852</sup> *Intera Istoria*, p. CCCXVII

<sup>853</sup> Anon (Giovanni de Nicastro), *Lettera responsiva di N.N. dimorante in Roma... nella quale esprime il suo sentimento intorno alla Intera storia...*, 1713; *Lettera responsiva di N.N. dimorante in Firenze... nella quale esprime...*, 1714.

the Calabrian Basilian monk, claiming that Emmanuelle was simply not a name used by monks of the Basilian order in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>854</sup> Furthermore Falcone's explicit claims that San Gennaro was sanctified whilst in his mothers' uterus, and that his early life was protected by angelic custodians, are judged as heretical.<sup>855</sup> Most damning perhaps, given Falcone's self-fashioning as a serious scholar, Nicastro criticises the "favolosa, acria, capricciosa, vana ed inutile"<sup>856</sup> style of Falcone's syncretic first chapter presenting San Gennaro as a descendent of Javan, son of Japeth, son of Noah, the credibility of his archival research (Nicastro suggests Falcone fabricated the letter from Chiocarelli which gave legitimacy to his manuscript) as well as his academic style (he refers Falcone to the Jesuit Daniello Bartoli's guide to scholarly propriety *Il Torto, o non si puo*<sup>857</sup>). Pushing the knife in, Nicastro also doubts that Falcone really had the support he claimed from scholarly authorities, among them Giusto Fontanini and Matteo Egizio.<sup>858</sup>

A similar critique, marshalled by Nicastro, was directed towards Ottavio Liguoro, who, as we saw, appears to have fronted Girolamo Sant'Anna's 1711 polemic *La Sacra Gara*<sup>859</sup>. Liguoro/Sant'Anna responded in similar style, publishing an exchange between himself and an anonymous 'nobile Beneventano', published again in Naples.<sup>860</sup> The letter accused Nicastro and his co-conspirators of actually being foreigners, of not representing the Beneventan people, and ultimately of libel and defamation. In 1716 Pompeo Sarnelli, bishop of Bisceglia, published *La Verità Trionfante* arguing that San Gennaro was from Benevento, which was in the following year rebutted by another text from Liguoro, *La Vanità Trionfata dalla Verità, o vero Risposta alla Verità Trionfante di Monsignor Sarnelli Vescovo do Biseglia*.<sup>861</sup> This kind of tit-for-tat polemics quickly degenerated into personal attack and defamation, with both parties accusing the other

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<sup>854</sup> *Lettera reponsiva di N.N. dimorante in Roma...*, (unpaginated), f. 37.

<sup>855</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 30-31.

<sup>856</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 18.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 16.

<sup>858</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 44.

<sup>859</sup> Anon. (Giovanni de Nicastro), *Lettera di N.N. della citta di N. indirizzata al M.R. Padre D. Benedetto di Rinaldo... in essa la risposta alla lettera... del sacerdote sign. D Ottavio Liguoro*, 1714.

<sup>860</sup> Anon (Ottavio Liguoro) *Lettera di un anonimo vero nobile Beneventano diretta al sacerdote Ottavio Liguoro*, 1715.

<sup>861</sup> See also Sarnelli's letter written in critique of Falcone's San Gennaro, printed in his *Lettere Ecclesiastiche*, Letter XXVI, pp. 55-57; on Sarnelli see Roma Franzese, "Un Agiografo Di S. Gennaro: Pompeo Sarnelli," in *San Gennaro Nel XVII Centenario Del Martirio: (305 - 2005)*, ed. Gennaro Luongo, (Napoli, 2007), 347-56.

of prioritising ideology over truth. Amidst this escalation, Falcone doesn't seem to have responded, and rather continued with his historical research. In several of his letters to Egizio from 1714 Falcone refers to the "sette lettere" written by "gente col cui ho minor confidenza",<sup>862</sup> and his ongoing discussion with Marco Mondo and Abbate Biagio Garofalo regarding the controversy, but otherwise doesn't seem to have responded, either publically or privately.

### The Primitive Church in Falcone's *Istoria*

Falcone's rhetorical deployment of critical historical scholarship was used to give greater strength to the historical claims of his *Istoria di San Gennaro*. Similarly the shortcomings of his method were the crucial target aimed at by Nicastro in his attempt to delegitimize Falcone's conclusions regarding San Gennaro's patria. Neither sides claims to be safeguarding scholarly standards were taken seriously by the scholarly 'establishment': the controversy was swiftly discarded by the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, concluding "L'acrimonia di tal contesa e assai maggiore, che l'erudizione, con cui ella si tratta, si dall'una parte, come dall'altra".<sup>863</sup>

Beyond patriotic polemics about the life of San Gennaro, Falcone's *Istoria* also, seemingly inadvertently, stimulated a controversy regarding the nature of orthodoxy and dogma in the primitive Church. Considering the specific criticism Falcone received *from within* the ranks of critical historians can animate some of the potential theological and ecclesiological problems which disputed hagiography, and substandard scholarship, could raise.

One dimension of the Benvento-Naples fracas concerned not only the place of birth of San Gennaro, but also the political and religious circumstances of the two cities in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD. Polemicists from both cities claimed theirs to be the *fedelissima citta*, evidenced through a continuous and uninterrupted ecclesiastical chronology. While Beneventans saw Naples in the centuries following Christ as having been wholly

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<sup>862</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 20.01.1714, BNN MS XIII C 91 54 and 30.02.1714, BNN MS XIII C 91 55.

<sup>863</sup> GLI, vol. 20, pp. 436- 440; Nicastro had appealed to the editors of the GLI, hopeful that they would confirm his condemnation of Falcone: "io poi vivo curioso di udire il purgatissimo parere de signori autori del giornale di venezia", *Lettera risponsiva... a Roma*, p. 52.

dominated by a range of pagan Samnite sects, and requiring conversion from Rome via Benevento, Falcone disputed this and asserted the continuity and antiquity of Christianity in Naples. During the years of the primitive church, Falcone presented Naples as a “repubblica... non già soggetta al Romano Popolo”, effectively autonomous in its civil governance from Rome, and harbouring pagans, Jews and Christians. Christian life was protected by the “leggi e libertà” which prevented it being corrupted by “il fuoco della crudeltà idolatra” and being persecuted by “il folle pensiero de Monarchi’ Romani”. Falcone then adds in footnote that “Napoli ne’ tre primi secoli piano piano si converti a Dio,”<sup>864</sup> an internal process spearheaded by beatified individuals such as San Gennaro. Falcone is here claiming that San Gennaro was born and raised in a Christian, or at least Christianizing, Naples. The contrast of tolerant and free, even republican, Naples with repressive and corrupt Rome is explicitly elaborated. The martyrdom of San Gennaro thus represents not only pagan persecution of Christians, but also monarchic Roman persecution of free Neapolitans.

The theology and ecclesiology of the primitive church were among the most rigorously debated historical subjects in early modern Europe, a reflection of their capacity to validate and define disputed standards of orthodoxy.<sup>865</sup> This doesn’t seem to have been the agenda of Nicastro or Falcone, who were primarily concerned with local Church politics. But by wading into contested fields of sacred history, Falcone was inviting riposte from more accomplished scholars, working in the framework of pan-European sacred erudition, rather than that of regional polemics. Remarks made by Falcone in a footnote to chapter vii, book iv of his *Istoria* were seized upon by a group of Neapolitan scholars concerned about the polemicization of scholarship, and the potentially heretical consequences of poor erudition. Their chastisement of Falcone took the form of a commentary on Falcone’s *Istoria* by the Calabrese scholar Giacomo Antonio del Monaco. Del Monaco’s *Discorso... in cui si pruova contro al Rev. Signor D. Nicolo Falcone la Calunnia del Culto Asinino imputato agli antichi Cristiani* was the published form of a letter (dated 14 July 1714) addressed to Carlo Danio, Campanian priest, archaeologist and scholar, and included a lengthy forward by the Naples-based Lucchese Sebastiano Paoli. The three scholars had been collaborating in the years

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<sup>864</sup> Falcone, p. ccxcii, ccxcix.

<sup>865</sup> Most authoritatively see the works of J. L. Quantin (e.g. Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les pères de l’Eglise.*) and B. Neveu (e.g. Neveu and Fumaroli, *Erudition et religion aux 17. et 18. siècles.*).

around 1714 on the excavation of ancient Grumento, near to Falcone's home in Saponara; a published report of the excavation was published by Del Monaco as a letter addressed to Matteo Egizio.<sup>866</sup> Egizio was close to Danio and Paoli, as we shall see, might be seen as a covert collaborator in the defence of critical erudition and theological orthodoxy against Falcone's careless scholarship.

Before looking in depth at the substance of Del Monaco's commentary, it is worth reflecting upon the preface to his work by Paoli, which present the impetus for and function of the *Discorso*. Paoli's preface tied the commentary by Del Monaco to the agenda of 'buon gusto' – the proper use of a critical historical method, the rule of moderation between dogmatism and irreverence, and the foundation of scholarly civility – to avoid needless polemicization and to defend the search for truth in erudition.<sup>867</sup> Paoli used rhetoric very similar to that used by Falcone himself when he invoked the "tribunale della verità".<sup>868</sup> Paoli railed against those scholars who would direct their scholarship towards pre-meditated polemical ends, those who fail to critically reform the standards and assumptions inherited from previous scholarship, imitating the conclusions of Baronius, for example, as well as those 'moderni' who don't sufficiently recognise the authority of the historical record. If these shortcomings hang over Paoli's critique, he doesn't directly tie Falcone to these categories of scholarly vice; rather he sees Falcone as committing a mere "abbaglio di erudizione." This doesn't mean, however, that "non dovesse correggersi",<sup>869</sup> and Paoli and Del Monaco's work aims to make an example of Falcone, to highlight the limitations and potentially dangerous outcomes of poor scholarship, and the need to more stringently regulate scholarly production within the Italian 'Republic of Letters'.

This agenda accords with Del Monaco's method, producing a 200 page *Discorso* as an extended commentary on just one footnote. The footnote in question describes the exchange between San Gennaro and Timothy, the Roman Consulate to Benevento, prior to the former's torture on the orders of the latter as a result of his failure to renounce the Christian faith. Among other things, the Consulate accuses Christians of practicing idolatry, and thus undermines the purity of faith promoted by San Gennaro. In his

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<sup>866</sup> See ch. 2.

<sup>867</sup> See ch. 4.

<sup>868</sup> Falcone, *Istoria*, p. ccxxi.

<sup>869</sup> Paoli, *Prefazio* to Del Monaco, *Discorso*, p. 17-18.

footnote Falcone scathingly criticizes the claims by two 16<sup>th</sup> century hagiographers, Davide Romeo and Paolo Regio, whose accounts of the life of San Gennaro elaborated Timothy's critique of Christian idolatry into a specific accusation of practicing onolatry, or ass worship.<sup>870</sup> Falcone's response is to rebuke Romeo and Regio. On Romeo:

E chi mai de' persecutori disse, che'l nostro Dio era un'Asino? Chi mai d'essi calunnio i nostri da Asinari, e che pignevano Dio con colori, orecchie, ed un de' piedi con ugnà di Asino? Se ne querelan quei secoli, in cui era proibitissimo dipignere iddio sotto qualunque specie di uomo. Or come d'Asino? Se ne richiaman tutte le Passioni de' Martiri, e tutti i Santi Padri, dove parola o vestigio di tal calunia, non si legge: poicche non ardi la tirannide tutta, non l'istesso diavolo, dire, o forse pensar tal cosa. Come adunque qualche non pensarono questi, un Cristiano pote pensare, scriverlo, porlo in bocca a Timoteo, e stamparlo? L'animo fugge di trascrivere il resto; ma la rarità del libruccio il costringe a farlo.<sup>871</sup>

In a similar vein Falcone is critical of Regio's account which suggests that Gennaro's Christians worshipped the cross and crucifix as a sacred symbol – a practice Falcone appears to claim was prohibited and not practiced in the first centuries of the Church. A second line of criticism is Falcone's accusation that Regio presented Gennaro as discussing holy matters such as the Sacrament in his discourse with Timothy, despite the fact that "ne' primi 4 secoli ed oltre fu proibitissimo a' Cristiani parlarne; non che a Pagani, anche a Catacumeni".<sup>872</sup> A similar critique is directed against the life of San Gennaro by Tutini, who presents Timothy and San Gennaro sparring over the mystery of the unity and trinity of God, "quando I Gentili non mai seppero allora di Unità e Trinità di Dio, ne i Cristiani, ne potevano lor parlare".<sup>873</sup>

In short Falcone accuses the 16<sup>th</sup>-century hagiographers of embellishing their historical accounts with details not legitimized by the references in ancient sources. By

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<sup>870</sup> Falcone, *Intera Istoria*, footnote no. 5, pp. cccxc-cccxciii; On Davide Romeo see Gennaro Luongo, "Un Agiografo Calabronapoletano Del Cinquecento: Davide Romeo," in *Erudizione e Devozione: La Raccolte i Vit Ei Santi in Eta Moderna e Contemporanea*, ed. Gennaro Luongo (Viella, 2000), 37–72.; on Paolo Regio see Gennaro Luongo, "Paolo Regio agiografo del Regno di Napoli," *Studi rinascimentali* 9, no. 9 (2011): 169–83.

<sup>871</sup> Falcone, *Intera Istoria*, p. cccxc.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid.*, p. cccxcii.

<sup>873</sup> *Ibid.*, p. cccxciii.

transposing post-Tridentine theological norms into the life of San Gennaro, they both undermined the standards of the critical scholar and, so doing, misrepresented the primitive Church. Other passages of Falcone's *Istoria* elaborate upon the corruption, which, in his narrative, penetrated the Catholic Church from the fourth century onwards:

Nel fine del IV secolo, furono da gli Eretici ripiene di gran bugie le Costituzioni Apostoliche, scritte da Buon Cattolico, nel III o II secolo. Nello stesso IV fu infamato S. Marcellino Papa da Donatisti, come Incensatore degl'Idoli: e fu involta in oscura nebbia da gli Arriani, la Vita di San Silvestro... Altri, che non sol negaron l'adorazione a Santi ed a Cristo; ma come n'avean bruciate le sagrate relique, cosi ne bruciarono gli Atti delle lor vite: e ne scrissero delle nuove, col linguaggio di quel barbaro secolo, piene di novelluzze, e racconti di vecchierelle... Altri in fine, se ben non mutarono il tenore della Storia, perché più pii...<sup>874</sup>

Here and elsewhere Falcone was explicit in his presentation of the various internal and external forces which corrupted the Church from the fourth century onwards, corruptions which were variously repelled and accepted by Popes and ecclesiastical councils. Falcone appears to support an alternative interpretation of the relationship between history and orthodoxy to that of Regio and Romeo. Theological dogma should not be forged and cultivated, but rather preserved, by the Church, its councils and by theology as a discipline. Placing Falcone's account of the corruption of the Roman church in dialogue with his criticism of the perceived anachronism of Romeo and Regio in their account of the encounter between San Gennaro and Timothy potentially raised some difficult questions about the coherence of dogma and its historical development over time. These were precisely the difficult questions which Del Monaco raised in his *Discorso*.

#### Del Monaco's Criticism of Falcone's Footnote

As indicated in the title of his work, the chief objection raised by Del Monaco to Falcone's footnote was the latter's off-hand rejection of the plausibility that in the first

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<sup>874</sup> Ibid., p. cccxvi.

three centuries of the Church ass-worship was attributed to Christians. This is one of the charges directed at San Gennaro in his interrogation by the Roman Consul Timothy. Del Monaco challenges Falcone's position on several counts, some relating to the historical truth of the statement, and others relating to flaws in the critical method deployed by Falcone. This then serves as a platform to build into a more broad-based critique of other aspects of Falcone's footnote, his *Istoria*, and the style of sacred erudition, the relating of theology and scholarship, it represented.

The thrust of Del Monaco's argument is to place the attribution of ass-worship in its discursive, and with it historical, context. Against Falcone's knee-jerk reaction against the prospect of ass-worshipping Christians, Del Monaco stresses that ass worship *was attributed* to Christians by pagans in the first three centuries of the Church. To clarify this he cites once more Davide Romeo, but uses a broader range of sources, including Celio Rodigino (Lodovico Ricchieri), passages of Baronius and the French Protestant Hebraist Etienne Morin.<sup>875</sup> Most substantially Del Monaco rejects Falcone's claim that there was no reference to the calumny in the Church Fathers, and cites extracts from Marcus Minucius Felix and Tertullian identifying the gentile and Jewish attribution of ass-worship to the early Christians:<sup>876</sup>

Noi ritroviamo ne' padri il Culto asinino imputato non solo in una ma in due guise, da Gentili agli antichi Cristiani. Una, ch'eglino venerassero un Capo d'asino: l'altra, che il loro Dio si dipignesse con orecchie, ed un de' piedi con ugnna d'asino, giusta la figura, di cui parlava Timoteo, citata dal Rodigino, negata dal Signor Falcone.<sup>877</sup>

The origins of the attribution of ass worship had two sources: firstly, the long-standing pagan association of Judaism with ass-worship, and secondly a Jewish attribution of ass-worship to the Christians, in an attempt to slander the new sect, and to ridicule Christian worship of Christ. The passage in Tertullian suggests that it was the second type of attribution at play in San Gennaro's biography, and that Timothy identified the

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<sup>875</sup> Drawing upon notes to the year 201 in Baronius' *Annales*, and works of Etienne Morin., and Celio Rodigino.

<sup>876</sup> The pagan attribution of ass-worship to Christians is indicated in chapter XVI of Tertullian's *Apologeticum*, as well as in chapter XI and XIV of the *Ad Nationes*; the citation to Minuzio Felice is to his *Octavius*; the association of Christians with ass-worshipping in antiquity is preserved in the well-known Alexamenos graffito.

<sup>877</sup> Del Monaco, *Discorso*, p. 9.

ass as Christ and not God. Although the pagans were ignorant of the “santissima misteria” binding together the components of the Trinity, they nonetheless perceived a “barlume cosi oscuro e confuso” that the Christians worshipped the “divina essenza” through the representation of Jesus Christ.<sup>878</sup> This coheres with the widely held belief that Christian persecution by the Romans related to their belief and adoration of Jesus Christ, not God as such.<sup>879</sup>

Situating the substantive claims regarding Christian ass-worship within the context of pagan discourse about Christians, and drawing upon a range of sources, ancient and modern, Christian and pagan, Del Monaco competently revises Falcone’s “abbaglio di erudizione”,<sup>880</sup> which is presented as a simple result of the latter’s unfamiliarity with a broader range of texts and erudition, specifically patristics. The second half of Del Monaco’s commentary, however, elaborates upon some of the more fundamental theological errors which mistakes of erudition and scholarly polemics, such as that of Falcone, could encourage, entail or imply.

Initially Del Monaco challenged Falcone’s assertion that in the first three centuries of the Christian Church it was “proibitissimo dipignere Iddio sotto specie di uomo, o come di asino”. If, Del Monaco claims, Falcone meant that in the primitive Church it was prohibited to depict ‘Dio come Dio’ in human form then Del Monaco would be in agreement. It was fundamentally forbidden for Christians to depict ‘God as God’, Del Monaco claims, until at least the papacy of Gregory II and the Seventh Ecumenical Council at Nicea, in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>881</sup> If, however, Falcone meant to say that it was prohibited during the primitive Church to depict Christ – a clear implication given the identification of the ass-figure as Christ, rather than God – then Del Monaco cannot agree. The worship of images of Christ and the Saints, as *simulacra* of God, not as idols, was practiced as an integral component of Christian dogma in the primitive Church. Early Christians, Del Monaco conceded, borrowed a range of practices from pagans, such as funerary rites; there was always, however, a qualitative difference between pagan idolatry - worshipping objects as Gods – and Christian adoration of sacred images

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<sup>878</sup> Ibid., p. 50-53.

<sup>879</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>880</sup> Paoli, *Prefazione* to Del Monaco’s *Discorso*, p. 17.

<sup>881</sup> Del Monaco, *Discorso*, p. 90.

– worshipping certain objects as representations of the Divine.<sup>882</sup> Given their persecution by the Romans, early Christians represented their sacred images in a covert and mobile, rather than monumental, way; this explains the perceived growth in the use of sacred images after the adoption of Christianity as the dominant religion from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD. Indications to the contrary, for example the prohibition on image-worship presented at the Council of Elvira (305-06), are discarded by Del Monaco as only temporary or local prohibitions responding to particular circumstances, or otherwise as prohibitions of a certain kind of sacrilegious images which constituted crude idolatry.<sup>883</sup> They do not refer to the dominant ecclesiastical and orthodox narrative.

Further to this, Del Monaco developed a similar argument, this time directed at Falcone’s claims in the same footnote regarding the adoration of the sign of the cross. Falcone wrote, as cited in Del Monaco’s *Discorso*:

Ne la Croce sola per quest’istesso rispetto fu adorata come nel quarto secolo; ma era in gran riverenza tenuta, e pubblicata per l’insegna del nome Cristiano, sotto la qual bandiera militavano<sup>884</sup>

Here the ambiguity in the words Del Monaco attributes to Falcone is slightly more explicit. Does “ne la croce... fu adorata come nel quarto secolo” mean that the cross was worshiped in the first, second and third centuries, but in a different way to in the fourth and after? Del Monaco would accept and endorse this stance, on the basis that after the fourth century the cross could be adored more publically and enthusiastically, whereas before its worship was clandestine. Or does it imply that prior to the fourth century the cross was adored by Christians only as a civil, rather than sacred, icon, as Falcone’s elaboration about military flags might be read as suggesting?<sup>885</sup> If the latter, “Sig. Falcone ha sbagliato all’ingrosso” because “la Croce fin dalla cuna di nostra Religione fu da fedeli non solo in reverenze tenuta, ma anche adorata per quell segno di Salute e di nostro redenzione.”<sup>886</sup> As with the discourse about depiction of Christ, Del Monaco is keen to counter any suggestion that there was a substantial doctrinal difference

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<sup>882</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-115; p. 149.

<sup>883</sup> Ibid., pp. 118-122; p. 126

<sup>884</sup> Del Monaco, *Discorso*, p. 131. The reference is not from Falcone’s footnote but from p. CCLXXIII in the *Intera Istoria*.

<sup>885</sup> Del Monaco, *Discorso*, p. 132

<sup>886</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

between the primitive church, the Church in later centuries and that of his own day, specifically here that certain aspects of the 'culto civile' of the Christians transposed into religious iconography.

In the context of inter-confessional discourse on the primitive church inherited from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Del Monaco found the suggestion buried within Falcone's *Intera Istoria* dangerous and inflammatory. Protestant scholars, deeply critical of the superstitious and extravagant nature of Catholic devotion, sought to characterize the primitive Church as fundamentally pure, spiritual and wholly incorporeal in its adoration, aligning it with contemporary Protestantism. Among the recurrent "avversarii" of Catholic orthodoxy Del Monaco cites were the Dutch Calvinists Servatius Galleus, Paul Bauldri and Philip Ouseel.<sup>887</sup> More challenging, and less easily discarded, were Catholic Gallican scholars, like Alexandre Noel whose position on the use of sacred images in the primitive Church was more ambiguous.<sup>888</sup> It is highly significant, and not at all subtle, that Del Monaco's commentary concludes his *Discorso* with his restatement of Catholic orthodoxy regarding image worship according to the dogma established at the Council of Trent. In his depiction of the purity of the primitive church, Falcone comes dangerously close to asserting an orthodoxy quite distinct on the fundamental issue of idolatry and the Trinity to that asserted by post-Tridentine counter-reformation.

### The Heretical Consequences of Poor Erudition

The issue at stake, if we take Del Monaco's argument at face value, was not one of willful invocation of heresy by Falcone, but rather accidental implication of potentially heretical positions on fundamental matters of dogma. As Del Monaco demonstrated, the implication in Romeo's text was primarily that Timothy and the ancient gentiles *believed*

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<sup>887</sup> On the Protestant, and especially Anglican, context see Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, pp. 68-79, 'Witness to the truth: the fathers and the protestant view of church history'. There was evidently a great deal of discord within protestant readings of primitive Christianity, not always recognized by their Catholic critics.

<sup>888</sup> Del Monaco, *Discorso*, pp. 125-9 traces the evolution of Noel's position over time, changing from a hard claim that image worship in the early church occurred "nullus aut certe admodum infrequens" in the primitive church, to a soft claim that it occurred "infrequens". On Noel see Quantin, "Entre Rome et Paris, Entre Histoire et Théologie, Les Selecta Historiae Ecclesiasticae Capita Du P. Noel Alexandre et Les Ambiguités de l'historiographie Gallicane."

that Christians were ass-worshippers. For Del Monaco, the notion that Christians could possibly be ass-worshippers was so ridiculous as to not even warrant the rebuttal it received from Falcone. It appears as though, given his limited erudition, Falcone *could not know* the theological ambiguity with which he was presenting primitive Christianity. Del Monaco, though, is merciless in his critique, precisely because the function of his commentary is to warn against the theological issues which can arise, and be exploited, as a result of poor erudition.

Insight into the gravity of some of those theological issues is given by an unsigned letter sent to Matteo Egizio, dated 27<sup>th</sup> August 1714, a month and a half after the printed date of the letter addressed to Danio from Del Monaco. The three-page letter presents in condensed form an argument close to that of Del Monaco's *Discorso*. We might, though, read with interest the final sentence, prior to which the text breaks off, seemingly prematurely:

tra gli sostenitori che l'uso delle Immagini de' primi tempii hanno impugnato, e Cattolici che l'han sostenuto, se i mai intesa questa novelle distinzione delle Immagini il Dio, e di Cristo, la qual distinzione se in senso teologico volesse un momento considerarsi, ella per mio avviso sarebbe sospetta, e piu che sospetta di Arianismo<sup>889</sup>

It seems highly unlikely that Falcone was an Arian. Arianism was an arch-heresy, and in essence a nuanced form of anti-trinitarianism. In its theological substance Arianism indicated a Christological assertion that prioritized God the Father over God the Son, and disputed that they are of the same essence, and completely one with the Holy Spirit. Genuine Arians were around in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and anxiety about anti-trinitarianism was widespread.<sup>890</sup> It's difficult, however, to see indications in Falcone's *Istoria*, nor in its critique in Del Monaco's *Discorso*, of genuine Arian beliefs. Del Monaco's criticism must relate to the ambiguity identified in Falcone's delineation of Christ and God as symbols of worship in the early Church.

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<sup>889</sup> BNN XIII C90 126, f. 3/3 – the letter is loose and unsorted in Egizio's archive. Before the date at the head of the first page is written "Altm.e" which reads like Altomonte, the Calabrian home of Del Monaco, as indicated in the *Discorso*. On this basis it, and the content of the letter, it seems reasonable to attribute it to Del Monaco.

<sup>890</sup> On the theological substance of Arianism, and other antitrinitarian movements, in English context, see Diego Lucci, "Reassessing the Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England: Recent Studies by Jason Vickers, Sarah Mortimer, Paul Lim, and Others," *Cromohs* 19 (2014): 153–63.

Egizio's implication in Del Monaco's *Discorso*, given his friendship with Falcone, put him in a potentially difficult position. This was recognized by Carlo Danio in Atripalda, who played a role in the editing and publication of the *Discorso*, which he described to Egizio at length in a series of letters from 1714. Danio requested a copy of the *Intera Istoria di San Gennaro*, "composta di quel Sacerdote, suo amico" in February 1714.<sup>891</sup> The following month, having received a copy, Danio wrote to Egizio with his thoughts, which he stated "conforma dell'in tutto al giudizio di V.S.": specifically that the language Falcone uses was "alquanto affettata... lo stile mi pare ineguale, e molte delle cose han bisogno di lima".<sup>892</sup> A case in point was Falcone claim that, in the age of Augustus, Naples was a 'repubblica', which is countered by Danio's observation that "Respubblica, altrim.e praticasi in quei tempi di quello oggidì suona".<sup>893</sup> Similar lines of criticism are developed in Danio's letter from June later that year, and in August, Danio writes to Egizio signaling that Del Monaco has prepared an essay criticizing Falcone's *Istoria*. The dissertation is sent to Egizio, and to sig. Giacinto Ferrari to be considered. Presumably Ferrari and Egizio had some critical remarks, the letter was deemed not yet ready for publication, and two more letters convey to Egizio Del Monaco's developing lines of criticism, formed in dialogue with Paoli. It is in this collective discussion that the policy of censoring Falcone's *Istoria* through his remarks on ass-worship and ignorance of patristics is deemed the most effective path to pursue.<sup>894</sup> Still, Del Monaco was unsure whether to publish his dissertation, hesitant to "farne tanto schiamazzo", and also unwilling to implicate Egizio.<sup>895</sup> Danio had previously suggested that the dissertation would be published under the "somministrazione" of Ferrari, recognizing the potential difficulties Egizio's collaboration might cause for his friendship with Falcone.<sup>896</sup>

### Assessing and Legitimizing Falcone's *Istoria*

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<sup>891</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, 28.2.1714, BNN MS XIII C90 162 .

<sup>892</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples 25.3.1714, BNN MS XIII C90 163.

<sup>893</sup> Ibid.

<sup>894</sup> "se ne richiamano tutte le Passioni de Martiri, e tutti i S. Pre, la distinzione d'Iddio e Cristo sul nostro soggetto, per dirla in confidenza col nostro solito, et antico gergo", Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, BNN MS XIII C90 165, 5.8.1714.

<sup>895</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, BNN XIII C90 167, 16.9.1714; BNN XIII C90 166, 2.9.1714.

<sup>896</sup> Danio, Saponara to Egizio, Naples, BNN MS XIII C90 165, 5.8.1714.

Insight into the manouvering behind Del Monaco's *Discorso* demonstrates how the commentary was not an impassioned polemic written by one individual, but rather a carefully considered and collectively composed argument designed to effectively and efficiently stake out the limits of acceptable scholarship – limits which Falcone had transgressed. This reading is reaffirmed through the public reception of the *Discorso*. Whereas Falcone, Sant'Anna and Liguoro's polemics with Nicastro and Sarnelli were given little notice in the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, a positive review of Del Monaco's publication was accompanied by a series of extracts in volume 27 of the journal, composed in 1716, published in Venice in early 1717.<sup>897</sup> The *giornalisti* agreed with the judgements of Paoli and the methodology of 'buon gusto' and 'buon critico' he sets forth. Concluding that the value of Del Monaco's commentary is in shedding greater light upon the history of the primitive Church so as to counter modern 'Settari' (protestants), the *Giornale* states:

L'esempio di lui dovrebbe servir di stimolo ad altri Italiani per meglio impiegare il loro talento in simil sorta di studio, senza aspettare, che di quando in quando a noi vengano certe opere di là da i monti, erudite in vero e ingegnose, ma insieme pericolose e nocive<sup>898</sup>

The framing of the review in the *Giornale* is a lament about the paucity of serious scholars directing their attention to sacred erudition on the Italian peninsula, and a condemnation of pseudo-scholars who fail to "ricorrono alla fonte per ritrovarlo (il vero)... far parlare i loro studioso lettori piu da ciarlatani, che da letterati, e dove piu si apprende la pompa di un superficiale sapere, che un vero sapere".<sup>899</sup> The praise for Del Monaco's commentary, composed in dialogue with Egizio, Danio and Paoli, by the *Giornale* in Venice consolidates the interpretation of a culture of critical scholarship, working on a case by case basis to enforce scholarly standards.

The *Giornale's* published endorsement of Del Monaco's critique of Falcone may have played a role in the placing of Falcone's *Istoria* on the index of banned books in 1718, a process initiated in 1715. But the errors of erudition regarding idolatry and their heretical implications as identified by Del Monaco were not the major factors in the

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<sup>897</sup> GLI, vol. 27, pp. 354 – 394.

<sup>898</sup> Ibid., p. 356-7.

<sup>899</sup> Ibid., p. 358.

decision to censor Falcone's *Istoria*. The work was submitted to the congregation in May 1715, and reviewed at length by Padre Mario dell Torre, employed as a consultant by the Congregation.<sup>900</sup> Torre used the commentary of "Joanne Nicastro moderno ecc.es Benevento Archidiacono"<sup>901</sup> as a point of departure and, working through Falcone's *Istoria* in a systematic fashion, extracts the points most problematic for the congregation. These were principally Falcone's references to San Gennaro's 'in utero' sanctification, leading to his supernatural reason, and his references to a troop of angels protecting and overseeing San Gennaro as he grew up. These were both discarded as fanciful and challenging doctrinal orthodoxy:

Igitur Carminius tam in conflictione eorum miraculorum, quam un phantastica ad inventionem e variorum prophetarum S. Fausto Januario attributarum. Nedum contra veritate et claritate sed etia contra fide et religione gravis. me deliquit... dixit, et interim dico, quod firmata a Carminio Conclusio est Erronea... sequitur propositionem formalis heretica.<sup>902</sup>

The case was further discussed at the meeting of the Congregation on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1716, where the key theological objections tabled against Falcone were restated,<sup>903</sup> followed by another review, this time commissioned from the Augustinian censor Padre Vincentius a Sancta Francesca, which arrived at the same conclusion, and recommendation, as Del Torre.<sup>904</sup> The Congregation appears to have been unanimous, and the condemnation of the work was formally announced in a decree of 6<sup>th</sup> April 1718.<sup>905</sup>

Just as the main impetus for the 'Giornale's censoring the work – to safeguard and enforce the standards of critical scholarship - aligned with a preservation of orthodoxy according to the Council of Trent, so too did the censorship of the work by the Index incorporate stylistic and contextual concerns beyond those of doctrinal heterodoxy. Falcone seemingly requested to have his book removed from the Index, and in order to achieve this it was demanded that he make amendments to his *Istoria*, removing

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<sup>900</sup> ACDF, Protocollum Congregationis Indicis DDDD (iia71), f. 7-13.

<sup>901</sup> Ibid., f. 7.

<sup>902</sup> Ibid., f. 10, 12.

<sup>903</sup> The minutes of the case, *ibid.*, f. 109v.

<sup>904</sup> Ibid., ff. 119r-124r.

<sup>905</sup> The decree is in ACDF protocolli, GGGG Iia74, f. 791.

tendentious, fanciful or heretical claims. These were made in agreement with Giusto Fontanini, Archbishop of Ancyra, who was commissioned by the Index to oversee the editorial process. This was a convoluted process: Fontanini and Falcone discussed the amendments prior to the 'feria' on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1726.<sup>906</sup> Many of the corrections related to removing miraculous aspects of San Gennaro's early life deemed heterodox, but others related to poor Greek translations, the political references in the *Istoria* to the excommunicated viceroy Grimani, and the general tone of specific passages:

il passo di Card. Grimani dice così: mando son questi segni che favia il santo nella morte de giusti. A me pare di accomodarlo così: mando son questo, segni che faccia il santo nella morte di giusti, o de peccatori, ma son segreti occulti del Redentore<sup>907</sup>

Fontanini was especially critical of the first book of Falcone's *Istoria*, a sprawling syncretic genealogy of the family of San Gennaro, drawing upon the Old Testament and pagan mythology: "Le ricerche della natività e natura di Giano, io parimente non l'approvo, e presentamente le dico insulse".<sup>908</sup>

The notes in the Index indicate that Falcone was co-operative on both counts, and his amendments were confirmed at the meeting in April, although no new edition of the *Istoria* appears to have been published.

The rhetorical and epistemological force of Falcone's *Istoria* had rested upon his claims to have discovered a wholly new manuscript detailing the life of San Gennaro. Falcone had dated this manuscript to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century AD, and so within two centuries of the life and death of San Gennaro, which gave authority to the claims of his *Istoria*. As we have seen, this claim had already been met with doubt by Falcone's pro-Benevento polemicists. The Congregation of the Index also raised questions about the validity of Falcone's manuscript. Upon granting permission for a new updated edition of the *Istoria* to be printed in 1726, they stated that it would have to incorporate a new 'lettera dallo stampatore al lettore' including "molte testimonianze d'huomini erudite" giving their support to Falcone's claim that the manuscript was a 15<sup>th</sup>-century copy of a 5<sup>th</sup>-century

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<sup>906</sup> ACDF Protocullum Congregationis Indicis GGGG (IIa74). ff. 124-5; ff. 175-193.

<sup>907</sup> Fontanini to Falcone, letter dated 18.2.1726 - "Protocullum Congregationis Indicis GGGG (IIa74), f. 184, underlining in original.

<sup>908</sup> Ibid., f. 184.

original penned by the Basilian monk Emmanuele in the reign of Theoderic.<sup>909</sup> Falcone would need to demonstrate that he had the support of his peers, including those who had criticized his *Istoria* and his scholarship

Keen to legitimize his manuscript, his *Istoria* and his reputation, Falcone appears to have actively sought the testimonies of prominent scholars. He had limited success, and this may have been the reason why no new edition of the *Istoria* appeared. In the 32<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Venetian *Giornale*, in 1719, a fragment of a letter from Sebastiano Paoli to Scipione Maffei, sent on behalf of a group of Neapolitan scholars, engaged directly with the manuscript's legitimacy. Paoli informed Maffei of three Greek manuscripts which have come to his attention. The first Paoli claims to have been given by an Albanian priest whilst travelling through rural Basilicata and Calabria; it related to the publication of Paoli's research on the sacramental rites of the orthodox Christians practicing in the Italian south. The two other manuscripts are Falcone's, one of which is the *Cronache* of San Gennaro. Paoli recognised the controversy around the manuscript, and condemned the attacks "troppo acerbamente gli si scagliarono" of "alcuni letterati beneventani", placed in a different context to the "modestia del Sig. D. Giacomo Antonio del Monaco... più dotto e più gentile avversario".<sup>910</sup> Ultimately Paoli was explicit in his support of the manuscript's credibility, stating his sentiment here aligns with other "letterati periti d'antichità".<sup>911</sup>

Paoli inserted a few extracts from the manuscript, and elaborated on the note at the end of the thirty-one chapter manuscript, where several indicators are given as to the age of the manuscript, principally the name of the Bishop of Naples at that time, and the synod of Pope Symmachus, which dated it around AD 500. He then presented a list of other Neapolitan scholars who subscribe to the authenticity of the manuscript: it includes Andrea Matone, Matteo Egizio, Niccolo Amenta, Giuseppe Lucina, Domenico Greco, Francesco Baldassar Porcelli, Marco Mondì, Giuseppe Antonini, Alessandro Pompeo Berti. This was a reputable group, with which Falcone would have gladly associated himself. Proving the antiquity of the manuscript seems to have become an obsession for Falcone. Upon reinitiating his correspondence with Egizio in 1721, Falcone reported having shown his manuscript to "monsig. Maiello, monsig Bortone e da monsig.

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<sup>909</sup> ACDF, Protocullum Congregationis Indicis GGGG (IIa74), f. 125.

<sup>910</sup> GLI, vol. 32, 1719, p. 59.

<sup>911</sup> GLI, vol. 32, p. 81.

Fontanini” in Rome for their support. Fontanini held the manuscript “più di due mesi, che l’ha tenuto in casa per meglio osservarlo” before dating it to the early 16th century: Falcone transcribed Fontanini’s confirmation, which makes no reference to the text being a faithful copy of a 5<sup>th</sup>-century original.<sup>912</sup>

The judgement of Fontanini appears alongside those of Maiello, Bortone and the other above listed scholars in in the *Prosphneticon ad Eruditos Adversus Opposita ad M.S. Codicem Monachi Emmanuelis et ad Eiusdem Acta Graeca quae ipse vulgavit S. Januarii Martyris Et Episcopi Beneventi*, published by Falcone in 1758, the year before his death.<sup>913</sup> The dates proposed by the scholars vary wildly in the subscriptions – evidently Falcone did not receive the definitive support for which he hoped. Furthermore, there were no references from two established scholars whose support Falcone indicated he would seek, Domenico Passionei and Giovanni Vignoli, who perhaps were unwilling to lend their authority.<sup>914</sup> Unable to conclusively date his manuscript, the credibility of Falcone’s *Istoria* was irredeemably compromised.<sup>915</sup>

### Giacomo Grazini and Sceptical Hagiography

In the cases reviewed above, doubts raised about the credibility of Falcone’s *Istoria* could broadly fit into two categories, or both at once: they could be instrumental in the validation of a polemical argument, here of either political or theological significance, or they could be instrumental in disciplining the scholarly culture, to maintain standards of erudition. As demonstrated, these categories could support and undermine one another, depending on how they were wielded. A third context to the critique the *Intera Istoria* received, more aligned with a general scepticism regarding the miraculous in history, is

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<sup>912</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio Naples, 18.10.1721 BNN MS XIII C.91 59.

<sup>913</sup> Falcone, *Prosphneticon ad eruditos aversus opposita ad M.S. Codicem Monachi Emmanuelis et ad eiusdem acta Graeca quae ipse vulgavit S. Januarii Martyris et Episcopi Beneventi*, 1753, p. 6-9.

<sup>914</sup> “Io ho intenzione di farlo anche osservare da Monsig. Passionei, e dal dottissimo sig. Abate Vignoli secondo custode della lib. Vaticana. E poi contentarmi di tanti valentuomini che piu che bastano a copia mi della calunna, e a far conoscere la verita della cosa”, Falcone, Rome to Egizio Naples, 18.10.1721 BNN MS XIII C.91 59.

<sup>915</sup> The authenticity of Falcone’s Greek manuscript was discussed by scholars throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century: Roberto Romano, “Quel ‘Falso Spudorato’ Della Vita Greca Di San Gennaro Scritta Dal Pseudo-Emanuele Monaco,” in *San Gennaro Nel XVII Centenario Del Martirio, 305-2005*, vol. 2, (Naples: 2007), 109–31.

highlighted by several manuscript letters recovered recently from the ‘Dossier on San Gennaro’ in the archives of the Bollandists, in Louvain.

At various points through the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Jesuit scholars working under the auspices of the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum* made expeditions to Naples, assembling references, notes and manuscripts with which to compose an authoritative account of San Gennaro’s life. Within the dossier held in Louvain are two letters from Falcone addressed to Conrad Janning, a Dutch Jesuit and Bollandist scholar, who travelled extensively and spent long periods of time in Rome. In these letters, one from January, the other from November 1714, Falcone admitted to Janning extensive doubts about the Greek manuscript, and suggested that he had composed his *Istoria* under duress from ‘Il P. Illarione’, the priest who proposed Falcone publish the text for polemical reasons. Falcone clearly felt unable to be explicit about his “dubbii e sospetti”, which he deemed to be “troppo pericoloso per me... in questa citta tanto pia.”<sup>916</sup>

The Falcone of the *Istoria* is replete with rhetorical authority, both regarding the history he recounts and the validity of his sources, wielding unflinchingly the ‘hammer of history’. In these private letters, we see instead the doubts and uncertainties persisting behind his scholarship. As Godding remarks, “l’autore dell’*Intera Istoria di S. Gennaro* e quello della lettera sembrano due persone diverse”.<sup>917</sup>

Falcone appealed to Janning to safeguard his reputation among the Bollandist Jesuits; he also warned Janning about taking seriously and responding to a new attack levelled against Falcone, that of Giacomo Grazini, titled *Apologia per li Miracoli di S. Gennaro*. The implication was either that Falcone himself plans to respond, or that responding at all would serve to give undue credibility to Grazini’s book. Grazini appears as an obscure figure, though he was well-connected within the Neapolitan scholarly environment.<sup>918</sup> Grazini was the author of the 1707 *Discorsi Critici sul’Istoria della vita di S. Amato*, a study of the life of San Amato, published under the pseudonym Francesco Noia, which

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<sup>916</sup> MS Boll. 145, ff. 311bis-316 – the letters are reproduced in part in Robert Godding, ‘Il Dossier di San Gennaro negli *Acta Sanctorum*’, Gennaro Luongo, *San Gennaro nel XVII centenario del martirio: (305 - 2005) : atti del Convegno Internazionale (Napoli, 21 - 23 settembre 2005) 1. 1.* (Napoli: ECS, 2007), pp. 37-55; I here rely on Godding’s transcription.

<sup>917</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

<sup>918</sup> Grazini is listed among Naples’ greatest intellects of the period in Lorenzo Giustiniani, *Memorie storiche degli scrittori legali del Regno di Napoli*, vol. 1 (Naples, 1788)., p. 227; see GLI, vol. 32, p. 456.

was indexed in 1711 for its skepticism towards the miraculous.<sup>919</sup> Grazini's *Apologia*, appeared in Naples in 1714 under the pseudonym of Ruberto Beni. The *Apologia* assailed Falcone from several directions. Early passages of the *Apologia* concern the apocryphal nature of the Falcone manuscript.<sup>920</sup> Grazini's key argument here is that 'Emmanuele', the supposed author of the manuscript, misrepresents the ecclesiastical structures and hierarchies of the 3<sup>rd</sup>-century Church in his account of San Gennaro. The manuscript depicts the appointment of bishops being made by the Pope and in Rome; Grazini is explicit in stating at length that this was a later custom, and not used in the primitive Church, where ecclesiastical authority was decentralized:

fin da primi secoli Christiani furono i Vescovi eletti, e consagrati da Vescovi della Chiesa vicine in presenza del Clero, e Popolo della Chiesa vacante, il quale proponeva i suoi desideri intorno alle persone, che doveano essere elette, e rendeva testimonianza della vita, e costumi di ciascuno, e finalmente acconsentiva all'elezione<sup>921</sup>

This was a potentially controversial ecclesiological stance to hold, in that it embedded the authority of local bishops in regional communities, rather than in the Rome. This is not Grazini's objective here, however: rather he uses the discrepancy to undermine Falcone's manuscript. That Emmanuele reproduced customs which were only normalized after the 7<sup>th</sup> Century indicated that the author couldn't have been a 5<sup>th</sup> century monk. Alongside philological doubts, the manuscript's credibility was compromised.<sup>922</sup>

The main crux of Grazini's *Apologia*, as indicated in the work's subtitle, concerned Falcone's treatment of the miracles associated with San Gennaro, a compendium of which substantiated the fifth and final book of the *Intera Istoria*. Grazini's objection

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<sup>919</sup> On Grazini and his *Discorsi*, see Stone, *Vico's Cultural History*, p. 128-130. The *Discorsi* were published anonymously, but were identified as Grazini's by Falcone himself, *Intera Istoria*, p. ccxi.; on the identification of the *Discorsi* as Grazini's by Costantino Grimaldi in his *Discussioni*, see Comparato, "Ragione e Fede Nelle Discussioni Istoriche, Teologiche e Filosofiche Di Costantino Grimaldi"; Grazini (Noia)'s 1707 *Discorsi* is an important context for his *Apologia*: the censorship case for the *Discorsi* is recorded in ACDF Protocollum Congregationis Indicis AAAA, p. 1053; and Protocollum Congregationis Indicis BBBB, pp. 25-8, 35-8, 125-32. The decision to ban the book, made by decree on the 20 January 1711, followed several reviews, including a sympathetic one from the Neapolitan scholar Carlo Maiello, Protocollum Congregationis Indicis BBBB, ff. 125-132, reported to the congregation at the meeting of the 17th January 1710

<sup>920</sup> Grazini (Beni), *Apologia*, p. 3-4.

<sup>921</sup> *Apologia*, p. 30, pp. 30-38.

<sup>922</sup> On Grazini's other doubts about the manuscript, see pp. 52-55.

concerns a specific miracle which Falcone “condonati per favole... in poche righe con molta franchezza scredito”.<sup>923</sup> The miracle in question concerned the mysterious restoration of the nose of the statue of San Gennaro at the cemetery in Pozzuoli, after it was supposedly severed by a pirate’s scimitar in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>924</sup> When the nose reappeared on the statue in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, it was deemed a miracle. Contra this, Falcone claims “nel IX. secolo poi, vi fu accommodato un’altro naso con colla” and to validate this interpretation, he states “come or si vede da chi ha occhi. Questo è il vero. Tutto l’altro, che ne hanno scritto... mal pratici nostri, o che ne dice il volgo inesperto, son ridicole favolozze”.<sup>925</sup> Grazini here acts the offended *religioso* and disputes Falcone’s mundane interpretation of a replacement nose glued on.<sup>926</sup> As his critique develops, however, it becomes clear his agenda is not a defence of the miraculous *tout court*, but rather a call for a more consistent effort to shine “luce d’un buon critica” against miracles deemed superstitious in the excess.<sup>927</sup> Why, Grazini asks, did Falcone “avuta ragione alcuna per rifiutar questi miracoli, ma che ne aveva molte per accettarli”?<sup>928</sup> Lengthy passages describe the practice and duty of the scholar to challenge the evidential basis for miracles, including those passed down through popular and vernacular traditions:

le tradizioni che scorrono da generazione d’uomini in generazione, hanno sovente l’origine lontana, ed oscura, & in conseguenza non ritrovabile, e perciò deve allora il prudente Critico andar minutamente osservando, per quali canali ella è passata, misurando i fini, che poteano avere coloro, che l’han tramandata, & insieme se credibile, o verisimile sia ciò, che ella divulga. Dopo tutta questa diligenza, che dev’essere molto esatta, allora si giudica.<sup>929</sup>

The proof must always rely upon secular history, and not revelation. Thus Grazini compares the validation of miracles to the truth of sacred history. The truth of the Old Testament, Grazini asserts, is essential, “perche sappiamo essere stata scritta

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<sup>923</sup> Grazini, *Apologia*, p. 1; The miracle is fully described in Pompeo Sarnelli’s *Guida de’ Forastieri*, p. 26, as cited in Grazini, *Apologia*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>924</sup> The traditional story, supported by Grazini, accredits this act of vandalism to ‘saraceni’, who afterwards discarded the nose into the sea; Falcone instead blames iconoclasts among the Neapolitan nobility, a claim Grazini rebuts.

<sup>925</sup> Falcone, *Intera Istoria*, p. ccclvii.

<sup>926</sup> Grazini, *Apologia*, pp. 86-105, describe the problems of gluing stone noses onto statues.

<sup>927</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>928</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141, see also p. 121.

<sup>929</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

coll'assistenza dello Spirito Santo; ad ogni modo si puo sostenere anche la di lei verità senza ricorrere alla autorità Divina"<sup>930</sup> If, however, the dogmatic authority of sacred history were removed, "che non ci permettere dubbitarne", then the essential narrative of the Old Testament would remain intact, as historical fact.<sup>931</sup>

Although explicitly in defence of orthodox biblical history, this is actually a crucial move by the critic: the credibility of miracles relies upon their assessment from a viewpoint external to the authority of religious truth. Grazini clarifies his rationale:

Perche sia lecito di sospettare delle tradizioni, bisogna aver qualche soda ragione cavata da ciascuna d'esse in particolare, altrimenti il dir, che poteano i Popoli ingannarsi, o alterare, o fingere le cose, è un voler procedure da temerario, e non da discrete, e prudente critico.<sup>932</sup>

Scrutinising tradition is presented here as a means to 'shore up' the credibility of sacred history. But if the "soda ragione" is found lacking, if the sources are not available, then the dogma of sacred history and miracles are open to being undermined. Grazini formulated a normative critical approach to miracles based on reason, and implicates Falcone, which explains why the latter was keen to avoid association with the former. That this implies a stronger distinction between reason and faith, and its political implications, is perhaps implied by the citation, the final line in Grazini's text, "sarebbe stato molto ben fatto seguitando l'avviso di Gesù Cristo Signor Nostro il dare *Quae sunt Caesaris, Caesari, & quae sunt Dei, Deo*".<sup>933</sup>

Epilogue: Falcone after San Gennaro

Grazini's commentary on Falcone's *Intera Istoria* represents the 'sharp edge' of critical sacred erudition. Its effects, however, in further damaging Falcone's reputation seem to have been limited, and the controversy surrounding the Greek manuscript of the Acts of San Gennaro appears to have quickly lost its heat. Judging from his letters sent to Egizio in the 1720s and 1730s Falcone had little trouble integrating himself into and

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<sup>930</sup> Ibid., p. 114 .

<sup>931</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>932</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>933</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

maintaining a modest role in scholarly and ecclesiastical circles between Rome and Naples; it seems, in light of Egizio's association with the condemnation of Falcone's *Istoria*, the two scholars simply did not discuss his *Istoria* at length. Falcone asks several times for news of Paoli, seemingly unperturbed by Paoli's role in criticizing his *Istoria*.<sup>934</sup> Falcone notes in January 1724 hearing of the death of Nicastro of Benevento two years earlier: "io non ne sapea niente,"<sup>935</sup> indifferent, if still bearing a grudge. At around the same time, however, Falcone was commencing a new research project which would ultimately do considerably more damage to his international reputation as a scholar.

In a short letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 1723, Falcone sent seasonal greetings to Egizio. Following this he explained to Egizio how he had discovered "sotto un torchio" the final three 'lost' books of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, which he planned to print in the coming year, in Greek and Latin, dedicated to the Pope, with a long preceding letter.<sup>936</sup> Falcone hoped to print the work in Rome; he was also considering printers in Leipzig or Holland, on the basis of better print quality. In September the following year Falcone announced "Il mio Dione e già fuori, dico, i promessi ultimi tre libri di lui, perche tutta l'opera è facile che si stampi in Lipsia dal Sig. Dirschio [sic.] per imcombenza che sen'ha presi Monsig. Gentilotti qui, che V.S. Ill.ma sa essere stato Bibliotecario di S. M. Cesaria".<sup>937</sup> The work was not mentioned again in their exchanges, though there is some continuing explanation of the practicalities of publication in Falcone's letters to Muratori.<sup>938</sup> Falcone's Greco-Latin Cassius Dio did appear in 1724, marked as printed in Rome, not Leipzig, and dedicated to Cardinal Giovanni Battista Tolomei, not the Pope.<sup>939</sup> Unlike polemics about San Gennaro, which were of relatively localized interest between Naples and Benevento, the gravity of the subject meant Falcone's publication of Cassius Dio entered a pan-European scholarly field. Within this field the inadequacies of Falcone's scholarship, already latent in his *Istoria*, were more systematically revealed.

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<sup>934</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 25.04.1722, BNN XIII C 91 61; 22.01.1724, BNN XIII C 91 63.

<sup>935</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 22.01.1724, BNN XIII C 91 63.

<sup>936</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 18.12.1723, BNN XIII C 91 62.

<sup>937</sup> Falcone, Rome to Egizio, Naples, 15.9.1724, BNN XIII C 91 64.

<sup>938</sup> Falcone's 58 letters to Muratori are held, with the rest of Muratori's correspondence, in the BEUMo AM, 63.22, with the letters concerning the Cassius Dio sent between 1724 and 29.

<sup>939</sup> Nic. Carminii Falconis, *Cassii Dionis Romanae historiae: ultimi Libri Tres*, Roma, 1724. Falcone's Cassius Dio is noted in brief in the GLI vol. 37, 1726, p. 497.

In the years around 1724 the Hamburg-based scholar Johann Albert Fabricius was also beginning to gather documents relating to the *Roman History* of Cassius Dio. This project was taken up through Fabricius' extensive notes by his son-in-law and pupil Hermann Samuel Reimarus after the former's death in 1736. Deploying his Italian connections, especially with Cardinal Querini in Rome and Scipione Maffei in Venice Reimarus inquired into the substance, quality and circumstances of Falcone's *Cassii Dionis Romanae Historiae*. Rigorous analysis of the 1747 reprint of Falcone's text revealed to Reimarus the false premise of Falcone's recovery of the 'lost' books of Cassius Dio (they were actually plagiarized versions of Plutarch), and the poor quality of Greek and Latin translation rife in Falcone's text. Built upon his comprehensive critique of Falcone, Reimarus' 1750-52 edition of Cassius Dio thence became definitive.<sup>940</sup>

This is a useful note with which to bring this chapter to an end. Moving outside of the polemics of Southern Italian scholarship, it is a reminder that this case must be integrated into a pan-European scholarly environment. Following Falcone's *Intera Istoria* traces and ties together the different aspects of criticism which could be directed towards sacred erudition: political polemic, earnest scholarly critique and more ideologically motivated appeals to skepticism in historical writing. While there could be an element of continuity between these lines of criticism, and they could be deployed strategically and collectively, they were also conceptually distinct from one another, reflecting and representing different tensions in the relationship between the writing of history and its objective. Attempts to discipline historical scholarship in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Italy and Naples consisted of the sketching and militating of lines distinguishing the acceptable from the unacceptable in scholarly practice. Falcone's *Intera Istoria* hovered around the margins of 'good taste', which makes it a valuable case in the interpretation of scholarly propriety and its transgression in a Neapolitan context.

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<sup>940</sup> The full narrative is presented in Ulrich Groetsch, "Reimarus, the Cardinal, and the Remaking of Cassius Dio's Roman History," in *Between Philology and Radical Enlightenment: Hermann Samuel Reimarus, 1694-1768*, ed. Martin Mulsow (Brill, 2011), 103–58; a slightly different chapter, with the same title, is available in Groetsch, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768)*. In both Groetsch identifies Falcone as 'Falco', but we can be sure it is the same individual.



## Chapter Eight - Conclusion

Researching and writing about the history of history inevitably provides fertile ground for meditation upon the historian's craft: its meaning and its end. This thesis has aimed, first and foremost, to offer an empirical study of how history was written in a regional context in the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. To this enquiry some concrete, historical conclusions can now be offered, both of specific regional and general significance. The substance of these conclusions, however, and the process of arriving at them also prompts and demands a broader reflection upon the function and form of history, and upon the theoretical and methodological convictions which underpin the historian's work. This brief concluding section will also offer some remarks in this direction, which aim to demonstrate how the *doing* of history can influence its *meaning*.

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, networked communities of Italian, and in this thesis especially Neapolitan, scholars sought to reform the researching, writing and more generally production of historical thought and scholarship. This 'turn' to history was a response to an intrinsic desire among scholars to cultivate more accurate studies of the past; it was also a response to the instrumentalization of history for political and ecclesiastical-theological purposes. Scholarly credibility was a virtue in and of itself; it also underpinned the claims of history to be an authority capable of resolving controversies to do with civil and religious power.

The case studies surveyed in this thesis have shown how it was between these two poles that scholars carved out a historical method and sensibility. The second and third chapters have orientated around the figure of Matteo Egizio and have stressed the continuities in scholarly method between antiquarianism and text-based historical scholarship and chronology. The fourth chapter has then shown how this 'antiquarian epistemology' was essential to the codification of 'good taste' on the Italian peninsula, as a scholarly ideal and epistemic virtue. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters have moved within the Italian Republic of Letters to demonstrate the mechanics of how this historical method and scholarly ideal was applied and enforced, most essentially within sacred history, between erudition and theology.

*Disciplining* is a useful metaphor with which to understand this reformation because it encompasses different dimensions of this process:

Firstly, the disciplining of historical scholarship concerned the historians practice, which was encouraged to be critical and empirical, and to eschew prejudice and the extremes of both dogmatism and Pyrrhonic scepticism. In this sense, history was itself increasingly demarcated, in an informal way, as a distinct realm of learning and an activity to which certain norms and regulations were appropriate. This is the first form of disciplining, based around the relationship between the scholar and their practice.

Secondly, the disciplining of historical scholarship concerned the nexus of intellectual convictions which underpinned these practices, constituting a kind of “*Weltanschauung*” or *habitus*. This was a cosmology based upon a pious reverence for an unattainable truth, which recognised the limits of human knowledge and therefore exercised epistemic moderation, and which was ‘preservative’, instinctively opposed to rationalism and disruption. Central to this form of disciplining was the relationship between the scholar and the self; the *via media* between the dogmatist and the sceptic was not only a practical tool for writing critical history, but also a way of life.

Thirdly, the form of disciplining which this thesis has done most to demonstrate has been the institutionalization of these practical and conceptual norms through the ‘Republic of Letters’. Hierarchical networks of communication, and the activity and establishment of institutions within the scholarly landscape acted as structures through which conflicts between scholars were resolved and the codification and regulatory norms within scholarship, concerning both practices and ideas, was enforced. The central relationship in this process of disciplining was between the scholar and the ‘community’ of scholars they worked amongst. In this sense, historians collectively sought to discipline themselves.

By offering a dense and strongly situated study composed of specific case-studies, individuals and contexts, this thesis has aimed to elaborate the continuities between these three forms of disciplining. By giving a special emphasis to the collaborative and collective nature of the disciplining of scholarship, it has aimed to interpret the ways in which historical writing was changing in early 18<sup>th</sup> Century Europe, but also the underlying structures and processes behind this change. This latter emphasis is crucial

in the methodological and theoretical arguments this project has sought to argue and to represent.

In very different, and often contradictory, ways the history of ideas and political thought and the history of scholarship both remain wedded to narratives of intellectual change over time; furthermore, although they understand the significance of context in different ways, for both sub-disciplines it tends to imply the relationship between the 'intellectual' strata and the rest. The great innovation of the history of knowledge, building upon the history of science, is to place more emphasis upon how intellectual production is, in many ways, *its own context*. Subsequently, the social mechanics whereby the 'intellectual' or 'scholarly' relates to 'the political' and 'the religious', for instance, are complex, contingent and need to be reconstructed empirically. Drawing attention to the changing *infrastructure of knowledge* over time, rather than tracing trajectories of ideas, even ideas as manifest in practices, potentially offers new ways of understanding environments and narratives within intellectual history

One of the important findings of the regional case-study offered herein is the substantive qualitative continuity between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-century scholarship, and that practiced and theorised in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy. While Egizio and his collaborators felt themselves to be at the sharp-end of an ongoing collective project of bettering understanding of the past, this didn't inherently imply the condemnation of their scholarly predecessors. Not only were they consciously working in a 'late humanist' context, they also aimed, and were largely successful, at institutionalizing the methods and convictions of this approach to scholarship and to the past.

In the case of Naples, as elsewhere on the Italian peninsula and European continent, this reading of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century intellectual culture clashes with much some historiography, which tends to prioritise political and intellectual rupture as a foreshadowing of proto-enlightenment. But the nominally scholarly virtues placed centre-stage by Egizio, Muratori, the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* and their collaborators – moderation, the valuing of the particular, epistemic modesty, impartiality, reverence of truth – played a central role in 18<sup>th</sup>-century European culture at large. The shift in the organization of knowledge which informed the codification of good scholarship in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italy led to an explication of these virtues, for instance in the context of 'taste'. In this sense, two further enquiries would be of value to

extend the arguments here posed. Firstly, an interrogation of the cross-pollination between erudition and politics through the lens of a *habitus*, sensibility, or taste, and in the exercise of moderation over ideology, in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. Secondly, a more far-reaching enquiry into the durability of the ordering of scholarship which this thesis has traced, and the extent to which it influenced the substance of intellectual production in the long 18<sup>th</sup> Century and into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The emerging centrality of conceptual frameworks of order, of system and of complexity to 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europeans has been widely recognised, in fields such as scientific, economic and political thought.<sup>941</sup> What has been less explored is how this related to the very structures of scholarly production themselves, increasingly systematised, ordered, complexified and disciplined. To do so would further the project of binding intellectual cultures to infrastructures of knowledge, and contribute to a fuller understanding of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe.

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<sup>941</sup> Sheehan and Wahrman, *Invisible Hands*; Peter Hanns Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2005).

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## List of Protagonists

Amenta, Nicola (1659-1719) – Neapolitan lawyer, scholar and playwright. Member of the Neapolitan ‘Sebezia Colonia’, with name Pisandro Antiniano.

Antonini, Giuseppe (1683-1765) – Baron of San Biase, lawyer and antiquarian, historian of ‘Lucania’.

Bacchini, Benedetto (1651-1721) – born Bernardino, Benedictine monk, based in Parma, Reggio and Modena. Historian and scholar, influenced by French Maurists, founder and editor of the short-lived *Giornale de’ Letterati* in 1690s, and tutor of Ludovico Antonio Muratori.

Bellabona, Scipione (1603-1656) – Campanian scholar, Franciscan monk, historian of native Avellino.

Belli, Filippo (1665-1719) – Campanian scholar and antiquarian, native of Atripalda, implicated in the ‘Processo degli Ateisti’ in the 1690s.

Bellisomi, Francesco (1663-1741) – Pavian priest and scholar, imprisoned by Inquisition in 1701 for relations with Protestants, and, after escaping, fled to Northern Europe.

Bencini, Francesco Domenico (1664-1744) – Maltese-born Rome-based ecclesiastical historian, appointed to chair in dogmatic theology in Turin in 1720. Associate of ‘Circolo Tamburo’.

Bianchini, Francesco (1662-1729) – Veronese scholar and scientist, astronomer and antiquarian, based within Roman Curia.

Bouhours, Dominique (1628-1702) – Parisian critic and scholar, member of the Society of Jesus, and driver of ‘Neoclassical’ literary reform.

Capassi, Gerardo (1652-1737) – Florentine Servite monk, theologian and scholar – close to the ‘Circolo Tamburo’.

Caravita, Niccolò (1647-1717) - Neapolitan aristocrat and lawyer, leading member of the anti-curial party in Naples.

Caruso, Giovanni Battista (1673-1724) – Sicilian lawyer and scholar, historian of Sicily, critic of papal claims to regional ecclesiastical authority.

Ciaffoni, Bernardino (circa. 1615-1683) – Franciscan monk and theologian from the Marche, critical of probabilism in his *Apologia in favore de’ S.S. Padri*, posthumously published in 1696.

D’Avitabile, Biagio Maioli (circa 1670-post1744) – Neapolitan theologian, scholar and poet, native of Agerola. Founder and administrator of the Neapolitan ‘Sebezia Colonia’ of the Accademia dell’Arcadia, and close friend of Nicola Amenta.

Danio, Amato (1619-1705) – Lawyer and scholar, originally from Saponara (Grumento Nova), rose to rank of ‘Regio Consigliero’ under last Spanish Habsburg Viceroy.

Danio, Carlo (??- ??) – Priest and antiquarian, nephew of Amato Danio. Assumed position of ‘Arciprete’ in hometown of Saponara (Grumento Nova) in 1700, and became keen local historian.

De Angelis, Domenico (1675-1718) – Scholar, theologian and lawyer from Lecce, regularly in Naples, historian of Salento and its nobility.

De Benedictis, Giovanni Battista (1622-1706) – Neapolitan Jesuit and theologian, defender of scholasticism and Aristotelianism against exponents of ‘modern’ philosophy in Naples, especially Costantino Grimaldi. Used pseudonyms ‘Aletino’ and Francesco de Bonis.

De Cristofaro, Giacinto (1664-1725) – Neapolitan mathematician, scholar and philosopher, implicated in ‘Processo degli Ateisti’.

De’ Ficoroni, Francesco (1664-1747) – Rome-based antiquarian and collector, well-connected with northern European scholars, critic of Bernard de Montfaucon.

De’ Franchi, Francesco (??-??) – Jesuit and historian from Campania, author of *Avellino Illustrato*, 1709

Del Monaco, Giacomo Antonio (1680-1736) – Calabrian scholar, antiquarian and priest from Altomonte, director of the library of the Oratorians in Naples from 1720, collaborated with Carlo Danio and Matteo Egizio.

Di Capua, Leonardo (1617-1695) – Prominent member of the Accademia degli Investiganti in Naples in late 17th Century, promoter of ‘modern’ experimental philosophy and natural science, author of the *Parere... narrandosi l’origine e il progresso della medicina, chiaramente l’incertezza della medesima si manifesta*, 1681.

Du Fresnoy, Nicolas Lenglet (1674-1755) – French scholar and publisher, circulator of clandestine manuscripts and printer of bibliographical works.

Egizio, Matteo (1664-1745) – Neapolitan antiquarian and scholar, politically favoured after restoration of Bourbon power in Naples from 1734. Appointed Royal Librarian in 1741.

Enriquez, Enrico (1701-1756) – Originally from Salento, pursued a career in the Church, holding senior offices in 1740s and 50s.

Falcone, Nicolo Carminio (1681-1759) – Priest and scholar originally from Lagonegro in ‘Lucania’, rose to Bishop of Santa Severina in Calabria in 1743.

Fontanini, Giusto (1666-1736) – Scholar and titular archbishop, originally from San Daniele del Friuli. Based within Roman Curia from late 17<sup>th</sup> century, and central member of the ‘Circolo Tamburo’.

Forlosia, Nicolo (circa 1685-1758) – Neapolitan scholar and lawyer, close to anti-curial party, spent most of his career in Vienna, served as Imperial librarian from late 1720s.

Foscarini, Alberto (??-??) – Dominican priest from Puglia, taught in seminaries in Taranto and Bari.

Francolino, Baldassare (1650-1709) – Rome-based Jesuit, polemicist against ‘Jansenists’ in Flanders and Italy.

Garelli, Nicolo Pio (1675-1739) – Scholar and doctor, born in Bologna, spent most of his life in Vienna, serving as Imperial Librarian from the 1720s to his death.

Garofalo, Biagio (1677-1762) – Neapolitan scholar and antiquarian, in Rome through early decades of 18<sup>th</sup> Century, close to Circolo Tamburo, before relocating to Vienna in 1730s.

Gattola, Erasmo (1662-1734) – born Domenico, Benedictine monk and scholar, Abbot at the Abbey of Montecassino through early 18<sup>th</sup> Century; close to French Maurists.

Germon, Barthelémy (1663-1718) – French Jesuit from Orléans, editor of *Mémoires de Trévoux*, polemicized against Jean Mabillon.

Giannone, Pietro (1676-1748) – Neapolitan lawyer, philosopher and scholar, born in Ischitella. Anti-curialist, condemned by the Church for his *Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli*, 1723, and died in prison in Turin.

Gimma, Giacinto (1668-1735) – Scholar from Bari, important regional node in Italian scholarship.

Grandi, Guido (1671-1742) – born Luigi Francesco Lodovico, Camaldolese monk, scholar and mathematician, originally from Cremona, employed by Cosimo III de’ Medici as Professor of Mathematics in Pisa.

Grazini, Giacomo (??-??) – Neapolitan scholar, hagiographic critic. Wrote under pseudonym of Ruberto Beni and Francesco di Noia.

Grimaldi, Costantino (1667-1759) – Neapolitan scholar and lawyer, critic of probabilism and scholasticism, anticurialist appointed Regio Consigliero from 1710s, before relocated to Vienna after Bourbon restoration in Naples.

Grimaldi, Gregorio (1694-1767) – Neapolitan scholar and lawyer, son of Costantino Grimaldi, collaborated at length with Ludovico Antonio Muratori, and promoter of political reform in Kingdom of Naples.

Laderchi, Giacomo (1678-1738) – Oratorian scholar, born in Faenza, based in Florence and then Rome, continuer of the *Annales* of Cardinal Baronius. Opponent of the ‘Circolo Tamburo’.

Liguoro, Ottavio (??-??) – Scholar from Aversa in Campania, engaged with regional debates on hagiography.

Longo, Giacomo (1658-1736) – Sicilian lawyer and scholar from Messina. Promoter of civil jurisdiction under Savoyard and Austrian rule in Sicily, historian of Sicily and founder of the *Accademia del Buon Gusto Palermitano*.

Mabillon, Jean (1632-1707) – French scholar, Benedictine monk from the Congregation of St. Maur, developed new techniques in scholarly method.

Macchiarelli, Filippo Maria (1660-1715) – born Niccolo, Neapolitan Camaldolese monk, hermit and scholar, wrote lives of saints, spent later years in the Camaldolese hermitage on Monte Corona in Umbria.

Maffei, Paolo Alessandro (1653-1716) – Rome-based scholar, originally from Volterra; associate of the Circolo Tamburo. Wrote polemics under pseudonym Romualdo Riccobaldo.

Maffei, Scipione (1675-1755) – Veronese scholar and critic, founder of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*

Magliabechi, Antonio (1633-1714) – Florentine scholar and director of the Medici library.

Marcel, Guillaume (1647-1708) – Parisian scholar and lawyer, composer of works of chronology.

Marocco, Carlo (??-??) – nobleman and antiquarian from Caiazzo in Campania.

Menniti, Pietro (??-??) – Vicario Generale of the Order of Basilian monks in Southern Italy.

Minorelli, Tommaso Maria (1661-1733) – Dominican monk, scholar and theologian, born in Padua and based in Rome, close to the 'Circolo Tamburo'.

Montani, Francesco (1673-1754) – nobleman from Pesaro; scholar engaged with literary reform

Montfaucon, Bernard de (1655-1741) – French Benedictine from the Congregation of St. Maur, scholar and antiquarian, innovated in fields of palaeography.

Mozzi, Marco Antonio (1678-1736) – Florentine Canon and scholar, wrote extensively on literary reform and sacred erudition.

Muratori, Ludovico Antonio (1672-1750) – Scholar from Modena, follower of Benedetto Bacchini and French Maurist, appointed librarian to the D'Este family.

Nicastro, Giovanni di (1654-1738) – Archdeacon of Benevento, scholar engaged in regional sacred erudition.

Orsi, Giangiuseppe (1652-1733) – Scholar and critic from Bologna, key protagonist in the defence of Italian literature against its French detractors.

Paoli, Sebastiano (1684-1751) – Scholar and priest, member of the Congregation of Cleric Regulars of the Mother of God, originally from Lucca, based at length in Naples, appointed teologica cesareo in Vienna, and historian of the Knights Hospitallier of Malta.

Passionei, Domenico (1682-1761) – Scholar and theologian, central member of the 'Circolo Tamburo', appointed papal Nuncio to Vienna, and then Cardinal.

Raffier, Philippe (1659-1744) – French Benedictine monk, member of the Congregation of St. Maur, appointed Procureur General en Cour de Rome in 1711.

Rainoni, Isidoro (??-??) – Priest and antiquarian from S. Agata di Goti

Riccardi, Alessandro (1678-1726) – Neapolitan lawyer, prominent critic of ecclesiastical claims to jurisdiction in Kingdom of Naples, employed within Austrian bureaucracy.

Sant'Anna, Girolamo Maria di (??-??) – Neapolitan Carmelite monk and scholar, worked extensively on local sacred erudition.

Sarconio, Giovanni (??-??) – Neapolitan priest, defender of probabilism and moral theology against its Neapolitan critics.

Scarfò, Giangrisostomo (1685-1740) – Basilian monk, scholar and theologian, originally from Calabria. Polemicist, under pseudonym Grisofano Cardieletti.

Smith, Robert (??-1760) – English antiquarian from Durham, studied at Cambridge, travelled in Italy in 1730s.

Stosch, Philipp von (1691-1757) – Prussian antiquarian and diplomat, based in Rome and then Florence from 1717 to death.

Tillemont, Louis-Sébastien le Nain de (1637-1698) – French ecclesiastical historian from Paris, most significantly composed the *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique*, published in 16 volumes between 1693 and 1712.

Trevisan, Bernardino – (1652-1720) Venetian aristocrat, doctor and scholar, possessor of rich library, affiliate of *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*.

Valletta, Giuseppe (1636-1714) – Neapolitan lawyer and scholar, owner of Naples' greatest library, defender of civil jurisdiction and modern philosophy.

Vallisnieri, Antonio (1661-1730) – Scientist and scholar from Padua, co-founder of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*

Vico, Giambattista (1668-1744) – Neapolitan scholar and philosopher, composer of the *Scienza Nuova* of 1725, reprinted in 1731 and 1744.

Visconti, Biagio (??-??) – Neapolitan scholar and theologian, professor at the university of Naples, critic of probabilism, teacher of Biagio Maioli d'Avitabile

Zeno, Apostolo (1668-1750) – Venetian librettist and scholar, co-founder and editor-in-chief of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, appointed 'poeto cesareo' in Vienna in 1718.

Zeno, Pier Caterino (1666-1732) – Brother of Apostolo, Venetian priest, member of the Somaschian order, affiliate and then editor of the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*.