

PUBLIC SELECTION BASED ON QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERVIEW FOR THE AWARDING OF NO. 1 EXPERIENCED GRANT LASTING 12 MONTHS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH PURSUANT TO ART. 22 OF LAW NO. 240/2010 AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LETTERS, PHILOSOPHY, COMMUNICATION (A.R.F. 10/F1 - ITALIAN LITERATURE - A.D. L-FIL-LET/10 - ITALIAN LITERATURE) TYPE B

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RESEARCH PROJECT

“Patronage, arts and letters in Aldobrandini Rome”

Research structure: Department of Letters, philosophy, communication

Duration of the grant: 12 months

Scientific Area: 10 – Antiquities, philology, literary studies, art history

Academic recruitment field: 10/F1 – Italian literature

Academic discipline: L-FIL-LET/10 – Italian literature

Scientific Director: Prof.ssa Clizia Carminati

The Roman literary and artistic context at the cusp of the 16th century overall coincides with the pontificate of Clement VIII (1592-1605) and appears characterized by the active patronage of the two cardinal nephews, Cinzio Passeri and Pietro Aldobrandini. In the history of the Papal See, Barberinian Rome is better known – also thanks to new studies conducted in recent years – than the Rome of the Aldobrandini; yet the latter is by no means less important in terms of innovations brought about by the presence of literati, artists and patrons. Even though a recently published work by C. Robertson (*‘Rome 1600’*) has studied the Rome of the Aldobrandini and the most prominent Roman families in terms of geographical and architectural distribution and patronage, a critical reconstruction of the entire context including the indispensable literary aspect – with the possible exception of Torquato Tasso and his circle – is still needed. The crucial connection is that between literary activity – in conjunction with the artistic and musical production – and the patronage of cardinals and patrician families aiming to achieve cultural and political prestige and consensus.

The circle of Cinzio Aldobrandini – soon to be rivalled by that of his cousin Card. Pietro – constitutes the first point of interest, together with Orsini’s circle for what concerns the patronage of patrician families. It’s no coincidence that Torquato Tasso had close links with each of these prominent people, so that his last years in Rome offer a guideline and a way in to the research. After the election to the papal throne of Ippolito Aldobrandini and the consequent appointment of his nephew Cinzio as Secretary of State (1592), Cinzio himself managed to found a literary and artistic circle in order to achieve his political prestige, where Tasso took a relevant place. Although Cinzio’s relation with Tasso is quite well known, more needs to be unveiled about Cinzio’s academy and its regular attendants (Antonio Querenghi, Giovan Battista Strozzi, Giovan Battista e Girolamo Vecchietti, Francesco Patrizi, Angelo Ingegneri, as well as Chiabrera, Guarini, and a musician like Luca Marenzio among others), primarily through the biographical study of their profiles and literary outputs. The knowledge about Tasso’s relationships among the circle members could help to illustrate the system of mutual relations that governed the cultural activities of the group.

In the same years (last decade of 16th century), a further pole of attraction for artists and literati alike was the circle of the Duke of Bracciano Virginio Orsini. Virginio is best known as the patron of illustrious musicians, mainly madrigalists, he had met in Florence in the circle of the Camerata de’ Bardi. He was also a great supporter and estimator of literary personalities of the calibre of Gabriello Chiabrera, Jacopo Corsi, Lorenzo Giacomini, Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane, Battista Guarini, Giovan Battista Strozzi il Giovane, Alessandro Tassoni and Giovan Battista Marino, as well as an attendant of academies such as those of the Crusca, the Alterati and subsequently the Umoristi. Such a network hasn’t yet been examined in detail: numerous unpublished documents of relevance are preserved in the Fondo

Orsini in the Archivio Capitolino in Rome, where unpublished correspondence shows the relations of the Duke of Bracciano with literati and musicians. Tasso himself was in correspondence with the Duke, looking for his support since his marriage with Flavia Peretti (1589), nephew of the predecessor pope Sixtus V and dedicatee of Tasso's publication 'Il Tempio in lode di Flavia Peretti Orsini' (1591). Even more neglected is the Accademia dei Pastori della Valle Tiberina, founded on the Aventine by Fabio Orsini in 1588 and expanded in subsequent years thanks to the support offered by Virginio, who became its leader ("Prince") and obtained for it the protection of the Aldobrandini. The academy took inspiration from Arcadic ideals; its members gave themselves Arcadic epithets, and overall its organization and literary activity testify to a revival of classical imagery and the pastoral genre with a characteristic Late Renaissance inflection. Tasso was among its most prominent members: he composed for the academy the pastoral poem *Rogo amoroso*, in which he sang the death of Fabio Orsini's beloved Corinna. Antonio Piccioli also played a central role in the academy: his 'Prose tiberine', which he published in 1597 with a dedication to Virginio Orsini, best allows a reliable reconstruction of the context and activity of the Academy of the Pastori Tiberini, but has been strangely bypassed and let alone made available in a modern edition.

Another important character operating under the aegis of the Aldobrandini was Card. Giovan Battista Deti - the founder, with the Venetian Giulio Strozzi, of the Academy of the Ordinati, which met in Deti's palace from 1608 onwards and acted as a counterpoint to the rival and better known Accademia of the Umoristi. On this latter institution a large bibliography is now available; nevertheless, a clearer picture of its relationships, as well as antagonisms, with the academy led by Deti is needed. Around Deti used to gather some of the most eminent primates, together with such literati and scientists as Galileo Galilei, Giovan Battista Strozzi il Giovane, Margherita Sarrocchi, Ottavio Tronsarelli, and the very same Virginio Orsini.

An interdisciplinary approach will permit a clearer understanding of the relationships existing between the political power and the cultural world in such a complex scenario as that of papal Rome. A constant comparison between the events of literary history and those of the history of the arts and of music - the three areas which constituted the main object of patronage - will help explore neglected aspects of how consensus was gradually built with the concourse of the cultivated society and its contribution to the *république des lettres*, particularly through poetry and prose focussed on figurative and artistic matters. The results will include a monograph.

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