

Early Modern European Diplomacy



A Handbook

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8 Representing Spiritual and Secular Interests: The Development of Papal Diplomacy

1 Introduction

Papal diplomacy occupies a unique position among all forms of modern diplomacy, as the doyen of nunciature research Henry Biaudet (1869–1915) concisely states: “Le nonce apostolique n’a jamais été et ne sera jamais un simple ambassadeur.”¹ This is due to the dual nature of the superior of papal diplomats. In fact, in line with the spiritual and secular function of the pope as head of the Catholic Church and ruler of the Papal States, envoys of the Roman curia, legates and nuncios, have both a spiritual and a secular task in representing the interests of the Apostolic See. This is how they differ substantially from their secular colleagues and their missions. But in common with all diplomats, papal envoys are involved in the three main areas of diplomacy: representation, reporting and active politics. In the early modern period papal diplomacy displayed a high degree of systematic order and efficiency. In this respect, within the Italian peninsula, only the Venetians were to achieve a similarly prominent role.

2 From Late Antiquity to Modern Times

The papacy is one of the oldest continuously existing dominions in the world. Correspondingly, the roots of modern papal diplomacy stretch back far into late antiquity. The pope’s need to be represented externally is closely related to his ecclesiastical primacy as bishop of Rome.²

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Maurice Whitehead, archivist of the Venerable English College, Rome, for his proof-reading and his precious suggestions that gave this text a more English shape, as well as Elfie Koller and Susanne Wesely for reviewing this contribution.

¹ Henry Biaudet, *Les nonciatures apostoliques permanentes jusqu’en 1648* (Helsinki, 1910), 4. Since the beginning of research on papal nunciatures, numerous editions have been published editing the correspondence of papal envoys at the European courts, especially concerning the Holy Roman Empire (Imperial court, Cologne, Graz), France and Poland. Their focus of interest is on the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century. In addition, there are scientific publications on the general instructions for all papal envoys between 1592 and 1623.

² Klaus Mörsdorf, “Gesandtschaftswesen, päpstliches,” in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Vol. 4* (Freiburg/Breisgau, 1960), 766–773: 767.

In the late Middle Ages numerous papal legations were undertaken by cardinals for prominent political and confessional reasons (above all in the context of the Western Schism and the subsequent reform councils).³ Next to them appears the figure of the collector, who had been raising taxes for the pope and the Apostolic Chamber since the thirteenth century.⁴ Already in the late Middle Ages the term *nuntius* was used, and in the fifteenth century the title *orator* was also employed for a papal envoy.⁵

Towards the end of the medieval period, papal diplomacy was influenced by the development of the secular diplomacy of the four most important Italian princely courts and states of Humanism and the Renaissance (Naples, Florence, Venice, Milan) and their interaction, a system that together with the Papal States formed the Italian pentarchy.⁶ Indeed, in the course of the fifteenth century, for political, economic and cultural reasons, and in order to satisfy an increased need for information, the main residences on the Apennine peninsula established intense diplomatic contacts that became permanent.⁷ Thus, the Italian states took a leading role in this field in Europe.

During the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern age, the papal diplomatic system became subject to fundamental changes, partly through the stabilisation and expansion of the nunciature system itself. At the same time, the diplomatic agenda of the Roman curia was modified in response to the development of modern secular states in Europe on the one hand, and, on the other hand, as a reaction to challenges to the papacy caused by the Reformation and the appearance of several Christian denominations in Europe alongside Roman Catholicism. After confessional boundaries had been fixed in the course of the sixteenth century, papal diplomats could only operate in territories that remained catholic and loyal to Rome.⁸ Compared with the diplomacy of the Republic of Venice, which had permanent representations in Constan-

3 Ibid., 768; Alexander Koller, "Cardinal Legates and Nuncios," in *A Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal*, ed. Mary Hollingsworth, Miles Pattendon and Arnold Witte (Leiden, 2020), 175–197: 176, 183; Antonín Kalous, *Late Medieval Papal Legation: Between the Councils and the Reformation* (Roma, 2017).

4 Mörsdorf, "Gesandtschaftswesen," 769.

5 For these different forms see Bernard Barbiche, "Les 'diplomates' pontificaux du moyen âge tardif à la première modernité," in *Offices et papauté (XIVe–XVIIe siècles): Charges, hommes, destins*, ed. Armand Jamme and Olivier Poncet (Rome, 2005), 357–370.

6 Riccardo Fubini, "The Italian League and the Policy of the Balance of Power at the Accession of Lorenzo de' Medici," in *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300–1600*, ed. Julius Kirshner (Chicago, 1996), 166–199; Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955), 91–100.

7 Riccardo Fubini, "La 'résidentialité' de l'ambassadeur dans le mythe et dans la réalité," in *L'invention de la diplomatie: Moyen Âge–Temps modernes*, ed. Lucien Bély (Paris, 1998), 27–35; Stéphane Péquenet, "Europäische Diplomatie im Spätmittelalter: Ein historiographischer Überblick," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 39 (2012), 65–95.

8 Heinz Schilling, "The two Papal Souls and the Rise of an Early Modern State System," in *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Roma, 2013), 103–116.

tinople (*bailo*) and England,⁹ the possibilities open to Roman nuncios were much more limited.

The fact that the general conditions of Roman diplomacy had changed became apparent at the latest during the peace mediation leading to the Peace of Westphalia (1648), where the papal nuncio, Fabio Chigi (1599–1667), and the Venetian ambassador, Alvise Contarini (1597–1651), acted as mediators.¹⁰ The peace treaties of Münster and Osnabrück, which established a comprehensive European peace order following the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), finally marked a major turning point for papal diplomacy, as the peace effort was rejected and vetoed by the pope. Thus, the papacy isolated itself on the international stage and came into conflict with the legal and political principles even of the catholic secular powers.¹¹ Nonetheless, towards the end half of the seventeenth century, curial diplomacy managed to make use of the limited room for acting it had imposed on itself and achieved some political successes (participation at the mediation of the Peace of Nijmegen in 1679; organisation of the defence of Vienna in 1683).¹²

3 General Framework

3.1 The Protagonists and Their Titles

The highest form of papal embassy was and still is the legation. The protagonist, a cardinal, appears as an *alter ego* of the pope owing to his powers and his high rank. In the early modern period, the key figure of the papal diplomatic system is however the or-

9 In fact, England does not appear as a destination of a papal diplomatic mission in the early modern period after Henry VIII's (1491–1547) break with Rome. There are however some rare exceptions, for example the legation of Reginald Pole (1500–1558) to England during the reign of the catholic Mary I (1516–1558) and the official nunciature of Ferdinando D'Adda (1650–1719) between 1685 and 1689 under James II (1633–1701).

10 Bernd Roeck, "Venedigs Rolle im Krieg und bei den Friedensverhandlungen," in *1648: Krieg und Frieden in Europa, Vol. 1: Politik, Religion, Recht und Gesellschaft*, ed. Klaus Bußmann and Heinz Schilling (Münster, 1998), 161–168: 163.

11 Konrad Repgen, "Fabio Chigis Instruktion für den Westfälischen Friedenskongress: Ein Beitrag zum kurialen Instruktionswesen im Dreißigjährigen Krieg," in Konrad Repgen, *Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede: Studien und Quellen*, ed. Franz Bosbach and Christoph Kampmann (Paderborn, 1998), 458–486: 473; Heinz Schilling, *Konfessionalisierung und Staatsinteressen: Internationale Beziehungen 1559–1660* (Paderborn, 2007), 596.

12 Sven Externbrink, "Vom Frieden zum Krieg: Die päpstliche Diplomatie, Ludwig XIV. und das europäische Staatensystem vor dem Ausbruch des Neunjährigen Krieges (ca. 1685–1689)," in *L'art de la paix: Kongresswesen und Friedensstiftung im Zeitalter des Westfälischen Friedens*, ed. Christoph Kampmann et al. (Münster, 2011), 529–553; Markus Laufs, "In viam pacis:" *Praktiken niederländischer und päpstlicher Friedensvermittlung auf den Kongressen von Münster (1643–1649) und Nimwegen (1676–1679)* (Göttingen, 2022).

dinary nuncio,¹³ while legates were charged mainly with ceremonial functions¹⁴ after the failure of the French legation undertaken by Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597–1679) in 1625.¹⁵ The collectors in Portugal, the vice legates of Avignon and the apostolic delegates and inquisitors of Malta were ranked on the same level as ordinary nuncios. These functionaries also received their instructions from the papal Secretariat of State, with which they also corresponded regularly. In addition to permanent nuncios, extraordinary nuncios were sent on specific occasions, such as diets and peace congresses, but also to express condolences and congratulations (at the beginning of reigns, on the occasion of the birth of princes etc.),¹⁶ or as missionaries (before the foundation of *Propaganda Fide*).¹⁷

Apostolic commissioners had different tasks and were classified lower in the hierarchy of curial diplomacy. Leone Allacci (c. 1586–1669) was given this title when he was charged with transferring the *Biblioteca Palatina* from Heidelberg to the Vatican.¹⁸ In addition, people entrusted with a military mission, such as Pompeo Frangipane, commander of the papal army in Avignon from 1606 to 1611,¹⁹ were subordinate to the Roman Secretariat of State as well. Finally, there were residents and papal emissaries²⁰ without any diplomatic status operating for the papacy, especially in connection with secret missions.²¹

13 For this term see Knut Walf, *Die Entwicklung des päpstlichen Gesandtschaftswesens in dem Zeitabschnitt zwischen Dekretalenrecht und Wiener Kongress (1159–1815)* (München, 1966), 87–91.

14 Koller, “Cardinal Legates,” 188–189.

15 Francesco Barberini has been sent by his uncle Urban VIII (1568–1644) as a legate to Paris to mediate in the smoldering Valtelline conflict between France, which supported the protestant Grisons in this area, and Spain, for which Valtelline as part of the so-called Spanish Road from Lombardy to the Netherlands had high strategic importance, Bernard Barbiche and Ségolène de Dainville-Barbiche, “La diplomatie pontificale de la paix de Vervins aux traités de Westphalie (1598–1648),” in *L’Europe des traités de Westphalie: esprit de la diplomatie et diplomatie de l’Esprit: Actes du colloque Paris, 24, 25 et 26 septembre 1998*, ed. Lucien Bély and Isabelle Richefort (Paris, 2000), 555–566.

16 For the assignment of Annibale di Capua (1544–1595) to travel to Prague as pontifical ambassador of condolence (on the death of Emperor Maximilian II [1527–1576]) and congratulation (on the accession to the throne of Rudolf II [1552–1612]) and references to other similar curial missions, see: Alexander Koller, “Der Kaiserhof am Beginn der Regierung Rudolfs II. in den Berichten der Nuntien,” in *Kaiserhof – Papsthof: 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Richard Bösel et al. (Wien, 2006), 13–24.

17 For example the famous Jesuit Antonio Possevino (c. 1533–1611), sent to Northern and Eastern Europe by Gregory XIII. See Pierre Blet, *Histoire de la Représentation Diplomatique du Saint Siège des origines à l’aube du XIX^e siècle* (Città del Vaticano, 1982), 261.

18 Alexander Koller, “Bayern und das Papsttum um 1600: Ein Zweckbündnis mit Folgen,” in *Wittelsbacher-Studien: Festgabe für Herzog Franz von Bayern*, ed. Alois Schmid and Hermann Rumschöttel (München, 2013), 331–350: 348–349.

19 See *Le istruzioni generali di Paolo V per i nunzi e legati presso le corti europee, Vol. 1*, ed. Silvano Giordano (Tübingen, 2003), 188–189, 347–352.

20 For example the apostolic protonotary Giulio della Torre (c. 1480–c. 1531), who operated for the Roman curia in Milan during the pontificate of Paul V (1552–1621), see Julia Zunckel, “‘Come la testa dell’Idra.’ La politica milanese di Paolo V fra problemi giurisdizionali e ‘Sacro Macello’,” in *Die*

3.2 The 13 Permanent Nunciatures

Around 1500 seven permanent papal nunciatures were active: in Venice and Naples, at the Imperial court, in France, Spain, Poland and Portugal.²² In many cases there was no definite seat for the nunciature. The Holy Roman Empire, for example, did not have a capital or definite headquarters for the Emperors and their staff: only with Rudolf II at the end of 1576 did the Imperial court settle for more than 30 years in Prague before Vienna became the permanent Imperial residence in the seventeenth century.

Over the course of the sixteenth century, this network was expanded to a system of 13 ordinary nunciatures.²³ Under pope Pius IV (1499–1565), new nunciatures were established in Piedmont (Turin) and Tuscany (Florence) in 1560. Gregory XIII (1502–1585) founded permanent Roman representations in Inner Austria (Graz) and in the Rhineland (Cologne). The tableau was completed by Sixtus V (1521–1590) in 1586 with the establishment of the nunciature to the catholic Swiss cantons (Lucerne) and in 1593 by Clement VIII (1536–1605) with the dispatch of the first permanent nuncio bound for Flanders (Brussels). These four papal diplomatic representations are often referred to by the term “Reform nunciatures” because they were established after the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and dedicated to catholic reform. It should however be borne in mind that the reform programme was also incorporated into the agenda of all other nunciatures founded before Trent, and that the nunciatures established after 1563 had also a political mission.²⁴

With the exception of the Inner Austrian nunciature, which only lasted a little more than 40 years, the other 12 permanent papal representations were to develop their activities continually until the end of the eighteenth century with only a few interruptions.²⁵ In 1785 a new apostolic nunciature (Munich) was established²⁶ as a con-

Außenbeziehungen der römischen Kurie unter Paul V. Borghese (1605–1621), ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 2008), 327–354.

21 Alexander Koller, “Traiano Mario, seine Geheimmission nach Graz und Prag und der gescheiterte antiosmanische Ligaplan Gregors XIII. von 1579,” in *Päpste, Privilegien, Provinzen: Beiträge zur Kirchen-, Rechts- und Landesgeschichte: Festschrift für Werner Maleczek zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Giessauf et al. (Wien, 2010) 197–212.

22 Blet, *Histoire*, 185–202; Biaudet, *Nonciatures*, 95–101.

23 Lists of all ordinary papal nuncios and the duration of their missions can be found in Biaudet, *Nonciatures*; and Liisi Karttunen, *Les nonciatures apostoliques permanents de 1650 à 1800* (Helsinki, 1912).

24 Alexander Koller, “The definition of a new ecclesiastical policy by the papal Curia after the Council of Trent and its reception in partibus,” in *Il papato e le chiese locali: Studi/The Papacy and the Local Churches: Studies*, ed. Péter Tusor and Matteo Sanfilippo (Viterbo, 2014), 33–54: 53.

25 For instance official diplomatic relations were suspended between the Imperial court and Rome during the pontificate of Paul IV (1476–1559) after the abdication of Charles V (1500–1558) that Rome had never accepted and recognised, see Alexander Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex: Forschungen zum Verhältnis von Kaiserhof und römischer Kurie im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung (1555–1648)* (Münster, 2012), 2; contacts broke off between the papacy and Venice at the beginning of the interdict by calling back to Rome the nuncio Orazio Mattei (1574–1622) in 1606. See Marco Albertoni, *La missione di Decio Francesco Vitelli nella storia della nunziatura di Venezia: Dai primi incarichi alla guerra di Castro (1485–*

sequence of the conflict between the nuncios and the bishops in the Holy Roman Empire over judicial issues (Febronianism). The French Revolution and the occupation of the Rhineland finally sealed the fate of the Cologne nunciature, which had been badly affected by the so called *nunciature dispute*.

The majority of nuncios were accredited to ruling princes and heads of state. Special cases included the pontifical representation in Naples in the sixteenth and seventeenth century (administered by a Spanish viceroy), the nunciature to the Venetian aristocratic republic and especially that to the catholic cantons of the Helvetian Confederation, the only non-monarchical territory with which Rome had diplomatic relations in the early modern period. All of these nunciatures were basically equal in rank, but the Imperial court nunciature and the four representations established at royal courts (France, Spain, Poland, Portugal) enjoyed higher prestige.

3.3 European and Global Dimension

Despite all denominational and political restrictions, the papacy was the only institution in the early modern period that not only maintained wide-ranging European but also global external relations owing to the fact that the pope as head of the Catholic Church maintained contact with all parts of the world.²⁷

The global character of this institution²⁸ in the early modern period is underlined by the activities of the papacy in Asia (Persia, India, Japan, China), Africa (Ethiopia, Congo)²⁹ and North America, where missions and diplomacy were linked closely. In the case of North America,³⁰ missionaries could count on the support and assistance

1643) (Città del Vaticano, 2017), 116–117; as a result of the clashes between the papal Corsican guard and the entourage of the French ambassador Charles de Blanchefort, seigneur de Créqui (c. 1573–1638) in Rome, nuncio Celio Piccolomini (1609–1681) was expelled from France in 1662, see Pierre Blet, *Les nonces du pape à la cour de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2002), 26.

26 Bettina Scherbaum, *Die bayerische Gesandtschaft in Rom in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen, 2008), 365–366.

27 See in general: Maria Antonietta Visceglia (ed.), *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna* (Roma, 2013).

28 For the link between diplomacy, foreign policy and missions of the Apostolic See in a global perspective see Giovanni Pizzorusso, “The Pontifical Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* in the Seventeenth Century: Missions, Geopolitics and Colonialism,” in *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Roma, 2013), 149–172; Massimo Carlo Giannini (ed.), *Papacy Religious Orders, and International Politics in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries* (Roma, 2013).

29 For the complex relations between the Apostolic See with Asia and Africa see Giovanni Pizzorusso, “Il papato e le missioni extra-europee nell’epoca di Paolo V,” in *Die Außenbeziehungen der römischen Kurie unter Paul V. Borghese (1605–1621)*, ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 2008), 367–390.

30 Matteo Sanfilippo, “Missioni e colonizzazione in America Settentrionale,” in *Die Außenbeziehungen der römischen Kurie unter Paul V. Borghese (1605–1621)*, ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 2008), 355–366.

of European nuncios. But there were also cases of independent diplomatic assignments of the Roman curia in non-European areas (Persia³¹).

4 Jurisdiction

The difference between a papal and a secular diplomat appears most clearly regarding the judicial powers of the Roman envoys.³² In fact, cardinal legates and nuncios, mostly high-ranking prelates generally holding episcopal rank from the end of the sixteenth century onwards, had to deal with political and religious-ecclesiastical issues for the Apostolic See in line with the spiritual-secular dual function of the pope as ruler of the Papal States and as head of the Catholic Church. So-called faculties defined the scope of action of a papal *chargé d'affaires* in ecclesiastical issues, accurately describing cases, possibilities and limits concerning the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of a papal representative in a specific area, issued in the form of a papal bull or letter in Latin.

Legates had the most extensive powers.³³ This was clearly one of the reasons why the legateship lost importance over the course of the early modern period in favour of diplomatic tasks given to nuncios,³⁴ whose range of canonical powers was much more limited.³⁵

Among other things, legates and nuncios could distribute papal grants, issue dispensations (e.g. from fasting during Lent), conduct church trials (civil and criminal law-suits), carry out visitations, grant benefices, dispense from irregularities (e.g. in the case of impediments to matrimony or priestly ordination), permit church ordinations, absolve from heresy and allow the reading of forbidden books, lease church property and confer academic degrees.³⁶ In the exercise of the faculties and judicial measures, canonical experts and judges (*auditores*) assisted legates and nuncios. In some nunciatures, for example in France with its long tradition of state-church inter-

31 Pizzorusso, "Papato e missioni extra-europee," 375–376.

32 Samuel Steinherz, "Die Facultäten eines päpstlichen Nuntius im 16. Jahrhundert," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 19 (1898), 327–342.

33 Koller, "Cardinal Legates," 178–179.

34 *Ibid.*, 186.

35 Leo Mergentheim, *Die Quinquennalfakultäten pro foro externo*, Vol. 1 (Stuttgart, 1908), 225–306.

36 Examples of faculties: Stanislaus Hosius (1504–1579) (dispatched to the Imperial court in 1560), see Steinherz, "Facultäten," 333–342; Orazio Malaspina († 1582) (nuncio at the same court, 1587–1581), see *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland 1572–1585 nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken: Abt. 3, 1572–1585*, Vol. 10: *Nuntiaturen des Orazio Malaspina und des Ottavio Santacroce*, ed. Alexander Koller (Berlin, 2012), 7–16; Girolamo Portia (1559–1612), *Nuntiatur des Girolamo Portia und Korrespondenz des Hans Kobenzl 1592–1595*, ed. Johann Rainer (Wien, 2001), 31–38; for the faculties of the nuncios operating in Switzerland: Urban Fink, *Die Luzerner Nuntiatur 1586–1873: Zur Behördengeschichte und Quellenkunde der päpstlichen Diplomatie in der Schweiz* (Luzern, 1997), 103–107.

ferences into ecclesiastical rights, the jurisdiction of papal envoys was severely restricted or completely prohibited.³⁷

Although the Council of Trent had recognised and strengthened the rights of ordinary bishops,³⁸ there were continuous conflicts of jurisdiction between the higher local clergy and the papal prelate-envoy during the early modern period. In addition, various disputes also arose between nuncios and the secular authorities on ecclesiastical matters, especially in the field of church property (princely patronage: for example, nomination rights and taxation) and law enforcement. A high degree of escalation was reached in France in 1682 with the proclamation of the Gallican articles³⁹ and in the Holy Roman Empire during the eighteenth century with the outbreak of the conflict between the nuncios and the three archbishop-electors of the Rhineland (Mainz, Cologne and Trier).⁴⁰ But even among nuncios, competences partially overlapped and were not always clear.⁴¹

5 Profile of Legates and Nuncios

Professional experience combined with solid, adequate theological training focussed on canon law and firm anchoring in faith were essential criteria that were applied when it came to the selection of candidates to be entrusted with diplomatic tasks by the popes in the early modern period. In a memorandum for the papal legate Giovanni Morone (1509–1580) to be sent to the Diet of Regensburg in 1576, the Jesuit Petrus Canisius (1521–1597) required that papal diplomats operating in the Holy Roman Empire should have theological expertise (i. e. familiarity with current denominational issues), excellent knowledge of Latin, cleverness, zeal and an impeccable lifestyle.⁴²

While a few lay people with a certain erudite profile were still entrusted with pontifical representation before the middle of the sixteenth century, a clericalisation took

37 Blet, *Histoire*, 373; Pierre Blet, “La nonciature de France et la crise gallicane,” in *Kurie und Politik: Stand und Perspektiven der Nuntiaturrechtswissenschaft*, ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 1998), 98–115; Bertrand Haan (ed.), *Correspondance du nonce en France Gasparo Silingardi évêque de Modène (1599–1601)* (Rome, 2002), 44–45.

38 Steinherz, “Facultäten,” 330; Mörsdorf, “Gesandtschaftswesen,” 769.

39 Blet, “Nonciature de France,” 105–115.

40 For the so-called crisis of the nunciature and the declaration of Ems issued by senior bishops of the Holy Roman Empire: Blet, *Histoire*, 419–437.

41 Walf, *Entwicklung*, 265.

42 Otto Braunsberger (ed.), *Beati Petri Canisii Societatis Iesu epistulae et acta, Vol. 7: 1572–1581* (Friburgii Brisgoviae, 1922), 362; see also Alexander Koller, “Prudenza, zelo e talento: Zu Aufgaben und Profil eines nachtridentinischen Nuntius,” in *Staatsmacht und Seelenheil: Gegenreformation und Geheimprotestantismus in der Habsburgermonarchie*, ed. Rudolf Leeb, Susanne Claudine Pils and Thomas Winkelbauer (Wien, 2007), 45–59.

place inside the Roman diplomatic system as a consequence of the Council of Trent.⁴³ At the same time, there was an increased tendency to send clerics of episcopal rank.

It should be borne in mind that ultimately it was not the pastoral-theological profile of a clergyman that was decisive for his diplomatic assignment, but his legal competencies.⁴⁴ We find a large number of nuncios who, prior to their diplomatic mission, had obtained the curial office of *referendarius utriusque signaturae*, a key position for a career at the Roman curia, for which a doctorate in both Roman and canon law was an indispensable condition. This shows that the papacy placed great emphasis on appropriate skills and experience when selecting diplomatic representatives in view of conflicts to be expected in the field of spiritual jurisdiction.

Owing to increasing Italianisation of the Roman curia (from 1523 until 1978 only Italians were elected popes!), nunciatures of the early modern period were almost exclusively occupied by Italian prelates or members of religious orders.⁴⁵

6 Formation and Career

Jurisprudence clearly dominates the subjects studied by future papal diplomats. Among the nuncios who served at the Imperial court between 1559 and 1655, nine held the degree of *Dr. utr. iur.* (civil and canon law), and six that of *Dr. iur.* As far as can be determined, Bologna, Padua and Pavia appear as the universities frequented by these prelates.

In Rome a special institution to supply the demands of the Roman curia was founded in 1701: at least the present-day Vatican diplomatic academy traces its institution

43 E.g., the poet Giovanni Rucellai (1475–1525) represented Leo X (1475–1521) at the French court. Clement VII (1478–1534) dispatched the Florentine layman Roberto Acciaiuoli (1467–1547) to France and the famous courtier and writer Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529) to Charles V as his nuncios, see Bernard Barbiche, “La nonciature de France aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles: les nonces, leur entourage et leur cadre de vie,” in *Kurie und Politik: Stand und Perspektiven der Nuntiaturberichtsforchung*, ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 1998), 64–97: 68, 84–85; Blet, *Histoire*, 191.

44 Wolfgang Reinhard, “Kirchendisziplin, Sozialdisziplinierung und Verfestigung der konfessionellen Fronten,” in *Das Papsttum, die Christenheit und die Staaten Europas 1592–1605: Forschungen zu den Hauptinstruktionen Clemens’ VIII.*, ed. Georg Lutz (Tübingen 1994), 1–13: 11–12.

45 There were few exceptions to this rule. In fact, the Roman curia chose a non-Italian for a specific mission, if familiarity with the local mentality and language was likely to guarantee a higher chance of success for the assignment, for example in the case of Reginald Pole, see n. 9 above; or in that of Stanislaus Hosius, who had German-Polish roots and held a diocese in the Holy Roman Empire, see Alexander Koller, “Die Nuntiatur von Stanislaus Hosius bei Ferdinand I. (1560–1561): Neubeginn der päpstlichen Deutschlandpolitik nach dem Augsburger Religionsfrieden,” in *Stanislaus Hosius*, ed. Bernhart Jähning and Hans-Jürgen Karp (Münster, 2007), 85–99; in 1593 the Dalmatian Alexander Komulović (1548–1608) was dispatched to Transylvania, Moldavia and Moscow, see *Die Hauptinstruktionen Clemens’ VIII. für die Nuntien und Legaten an den europäischen Fürstenhöfen 1592–1605, Vol. 1*, Klaus Jaitner (Tübingen, 1984), CCV–CCVI.

back to this year, making it one of the oldest training centres of this type in Europe.⁴⁶ Initially, however, it focussed on the training of curial officials in general, and only gradually became dedicated more precisely to diplomatic issues in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁷

After graduation (mostly in jurisprudence), the career of a future nuncio usually began as a secretary in a curial office or outside the curia accompanying a pontifical envoy on his mission. The decisive factor thereafter was to secure an office in the curia that enabled further advancement, i. e. a referendariat, auditoriat or protonotariat. From this position, appointment to a nunciature was achievable. Often, however, in addition to their activities in the headquarters of the curia, future nuncios acquired administrative skills in the provinces of the Papal States, acting as governors.

Another factor for a successful career should not be underestimated in this context: that of patronage. There were prelates whose diplomatic careers were decisively promoted by their own relatives who served the Apostolic See as legates or nuncios,⁴⁸ or by high-ranking ecclesiastical figures such as Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584) as a patron of the first importance.⁴⁹

On average, nuncios were appointed at the age of 45, remaining in post more or less for three years. The term of a nunciature should not be underestimated with respect to the holder's subsequent career, because contacts with key figures at the curia weakened during a longer period of absence.

In focussing on the careers of nuncios after completion of their mission, it can generally be said that it was undoubtedly more advantageous for them to re-enter the Roman curia, if at all possible, before the death of the pope who had dispatched them. Otherwise, with a new pontiff hopes of promotion to the College of Cardinals or transfer to a wealthy diocese and other such expectations could be buried or would be at least reduced.

Almost half of all the 25 nuncios who represented popes at the Imperial court between 1555 and 1648 subsequently became cardinals. Only their colleagues operating in

46 Guido Braun, "La formation des diplomates à l'époque moderne," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 128 (2014), 231–249: 235–236; Hans-Joachim Kracht, "Diplomatenausbildung des Heiligen Stuhls: 300 Jahre – von der 'Accademia degli ecclesiastici nobili' zur 'Pontificia Accademia ecclesiastica': Versuch eines historischen Einstiegs," in *Ortskirche und Weltkirche in der Geschichte: Kölnische Kirchengeschichte zwischen Mittelalter und Zweitem Vatikanum: Festgabe für Norbert Trippen zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Heinz Finger, Reimund Haas and Hermann-Josef Scheidgen (Köln, 2011), 969–995.

47 Angelo Martini, "La diplomazia della Santa Sede e la Pontificia Accademia Ecclesiastica," *La civiltà cattolica* 102 (1951), 372–386: 383–386.

48 Renata Ago, *Carriere e clientele nella Roma barocca* (Roma, 1990), 133.

49 Barbiche, "Diplomatie pontificale," 561; Hubert Jedin, "Nuntiaturreporte und Durchführung des Konzils von Trient: Hinweise und Fragen," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven* 53 (1973), 180–213: 201. I would like to thank the apostolic nuncio Mons. Antonio Filipazzi for kindly sharing with me lists of letters changed between Borromeo and various nuncios that form part of the archival heritage of the Ambrosian Library in Milan.

Madrid and Paris had a higher probability of getting the cardinal's purple.⁵⁰ As for the other nunciatures, the chances of obtaining the cardinalate were rather slim, but these could be increased through the carrying out of further diplomatic missions.⁵¹

Among those who did not become cardinals, the end of the nunciature also meant the end of their careers, usually resulting in a return to their diocese. In the best case scenario, they could secure a new, more profitable diocese and possibly later on be re-activated for a new diplomatic mission.⁵²

We find ex-nuncios promoted to cardinal in various congregations of the curia or – as legates – at European princely courts. Some nuncios later even obtained the papal throne. More than a third of the 38 popes of the early modern period had undertaken diplomatic tasks of the Apostolic See before their pontificate.⁵³ This, too, is a peculiarity of curial diplomacy. In all the other monarchies of the early modern period, successful diplomats at best could become ministers at the end of their career, but not reach the top of the political hierarchy.⁵⁴

50 But there was also the possibility that a high prelate was given the nunciature of Paris or that of Madrid in lieu of the cardinalate he could not obtain, see Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Roma papale e Spagna: Diplomatici, nobili e religiosi tra due corti* (Roma, 2010), 55.

51 The Swiss nunciature seems to be an exception to this rule. Nearly all prelates who had been entrusted with the nunciature of Lucerne between 1650 and 1800 were created cardinals after their mission, Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 199.

52 Giovanni Delfino (1528–1584), ordinary nuncio at the Imperial court 1571–1578, was transferred from the small diocese of Torcello in the Venetian lagoon to Brescia in 1578 and in 1580 dispatched again to the Holy Roman Empire as an extraordinary nuncio to participate at a meeting of the electors in Nuremberg. He never became a cardinal, see Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, LV.

53 Alexander VI (1431–1503), twice legate in Spain; Pius III (1439–1503), legate to the Holy Roman Empire; Marcellus II (1501–1555), legate to the Holy Roman Empire; Gregory XIII, legate in Spain; Urban VII (1521–1590), extraordinary nuncio to Cologne, nuncio of Venice; Innocent IX (1519–1591), nuncio of Venice; Clement VIII, legate in Poland; Leo XI (1535–1605), legate in France; mediation of the Peace of Vervins; Urban VIII, extraordinary and ordinary nuncio of France; Innocent X (1574–1655), nuncio of Naples and Spain; Alexander VII (1599–1667), inquisitor of Malta, nuncio of Cologne, mediator at the peace congress of Münster; Clement IX (1600–1669), nuncio of Spain; Innocent XII (1615–1700), inquisitor of Malta, nuncio of Florence, Poland and at the Imperial court; Innocent XIII (1655–1724), nuncio to Switzerland; Benedict XIII (1650–1730), designated legate to the Imperial court; Leo XII (1760–1829), nuncio of Munich.

54 Apart from Rome and the Papal States, only oligarchic republics such as Venice could offer such a possibility. There are some examples of patricians who, after serving the Republic of St. Mark as ambassadors, succeeded in rising to the highest position of the state, e.g. Leonardo Donà (1536–1612), who was elected doge in 1606 at the peak of the interdict-crisis with Rome. His long diplomatic career as ambassador in Spain, at the Imperial and at the papal courts, paved the way to his obtaining the highest public office in the republic.

7 Contents and Tasks of the Missions

7.1 Assignment

At the beginning of a papal diplomatic mission the general conditions and objectives were explained to the envoy either orally or in writing.⁵⁵

On secular matters, legates and nuncios had to represent the interests of the Papal States and maintain bilateral relations between Rome and the place of deployment. A central political issue appearing like a continuous thread in several nunciatures in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was antagonism towards the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁶ In addition, there was the task of negotiating and maintaining peace. The papacy could look back on a long tradition of resolving conflicts. In the early modern period, emphasis was placed on the idea of the papacy as an authority above the parties, with the pope acting as a common father (*padre comune*). Owing to the general political and confessional situation in Europe, however, papal mediation of peace executed by representatives of the Roman curia lost prestige and influence during the seventeenth century.⁵⁷

Apart from specific commissions tailored to the respective destination, three major issues emerged within the ecclesiastical and religious agenda with which papal envoys had within the area assigned to them:⁵⁸

1. promoting the catholic faith and combating heterodox denominations
2. defence or restoration of papal authority and ecclesiastical immunity
3. responsibility for the clergy and ecclesiastical discipline

Besides official secular and ecclesiastical assignments, nuncios additionally had to carry out private orders for the pope, the cardinals or other people at their destination on the one hand, or to present private concerns of people of their nunciature area on the other (recommendations for scholarship or a job in Rome etc.).⁵⁹ So, nuncios func-

55 These key sources are published for three pontificates between 1592 and 1623: Jaitner (ed.), *Hauptinstruktionen Clemens' VIII., Vols. 1–2*; Giordano (ed.), *Istruzioni generali di Paolo V, Vols. 1–3*; *Die Hauptinstruktionen Gregors XV. für die Nuntien und Legaten an den europäischen Fürstenhöfen 1621–1623, Vols. 1–2*, ed. Klaus Jaitner (Tübingen, 1997).

56 Gaetano Platania, “Un acerrimo nemico dell’infedele Turco: il beato Innocenzo XI Odescalchi,” in *Innocenzo XI Odescalchi: Papa, politico, committente*, ed. Richard Bösel et al. (Roma, 2014), 221–243.

57 Bernard Barbiche, “Le grand artisan du traité de Vervins: Alexandre de Médicis, cardinal de Florence, légat a latere,” in *La paix de Vervins, 1598*, ed. Claudine Vidal and Frédérique Pilleboue (Laon, 1998), 65–72; Barbiche, “Diplomatie pontificale.”

58 Koller, “Definition,” 33–54.

59 E.g. the Florentine architect and fortress engineer Antonio Lupicini (c. 1530–c. 1598), at that time in the service of Emperor Rudolf II, by intermediary of the nuncio submitted an offer to Gregory XIII to transfer the Vatican obelisk to the centre of St. Peter’s square at his own risk, an endeavour that was to be realised some years later under Sixtus V, Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, 329; the same nuncio,

tioned as a cultural link between Rome and the Italian peninsula and the territory they were attributed to, organising the exchange of persons (e.g. castrati for the Imperial chapel for instance⁶⁰), goods and cultural items, some of them as gifts (books, relics, exotic and rare animals or plants etc.)⁶¹, in one direction or the other.

7.2 Orders from the Roman Headquarters

Nuncios were formally subordinate to the pope, but in practice to a papal secretariat for foreign affairs, for which the name of Secretariat of State gradually emerged. This secretariat received its modern form between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries with specific departments, some of which were organised by territorial criteria,⁶² others by the character of the document (letters, princely letters, cipher letters, memoranda).⁶³ At the head of this office stood a secretary (from the middle of the seventeenth century without exception a cardinal).⁶⁴

The popes themselves shaped the official international relations of the Apostolic See to a large extent, above all through the selection of diplomats, but also through personal intervention in the field of correspondence.⁶⁵ Until the abolition of nepotism (1692), the relatives of the popes made cardinals were also able to exert a great deal of influence on foreign policy, partly by being themselves at the head of the Secretariat

Orazio Malaspina, received the order to negotiate the acquisition of an Imperial fiefdom on the Italian peninsula for Giacomo Boncompagni (1548–1612), son of Pope Gregory XIII, Alexander Koller, “Reichsitalien als Thema in den Beziehungen zwischen Kaiser und Papst: Der Fall Borgo Val di Taro,” in *Das Reich und Italien in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Matthias Schnettger and Marcello Verga (Bologna, 2006), 148–164.

⁶⁰ Rotraud Becker, “Aus dem Alltag des Nuntius Malatesta Baglioni: Nichtdiplomatische Aufgaben der Wiener Nuntiatur um 1635,” *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 65 (1985), 306–341 (with other examples).

⁶¹ *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken: Abt. 3, 1572–1585, Vol. 9: Nuntiatoren des Giovanni Delfino und des Bartolomeo Portia (1577–1578)*, ed. Alexander Koller (Tübingen, 2003), 429; Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, 287–288, 298.

⁶² The following three sections were created under Gregory XIII: North-East (Holy Roman Empire, Switzerland, Sweden, Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe, Venice), West (Portugal and Spain) and Northwest (France, Avignon, Savoy, Tuscany, and later on also Naples), see *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken: Abt. 3, 1572–1585, Vol. 7: Nuntiatur Giovanni Dolfins (1573–1574)*, ed. Almut Bues (Tübingen, 1990), XXVIII–XXIX.

⁶³ Ludwig Hammermayer, “Grundlinien der Entwicklung des päpstlichen Staatssekretariats von Paul V. bis Innozenz X. (1605 bis 1655),” *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 55 (1960), 157–202; Silvano Giordano, “Uomini e apparati della politica internazionale del papato,” in *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna*, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Roma, 2013), 131–148.

⁶⁴ Carlo Borromeo, appointed in 1560 by Pius IV, is considered the first in the long line of Roman secretaries of state, see *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica, Vol. 63*, ed. Gaetano Moroni (Venezia, 1853), 279.

⁶⁵ Giordano, “Uomini e apparati,” 133–134.

of State, partly even by establishing their own correspondence with the envoys, as in the case of Francesco Barberini.⁶⁶

In the course of the early modern period papal diplomats stood in contact with and received specific orders from the congregation of the Holy Office, which comprehended Inquisition and Index (control of the book market) and which had been founded in 1542, and from the congregation of *Propaganda Fide*, founded in 1622 and focussed on missionary activities.⁶⁷

As a result of the Italianisation of the Roman curia, Italian became the working language of the papal diplomacy as well. Almost the whole correspondence of legations and nunciatures (instructions and reports) is written in Italian. Latin was reserved only for highly official documents of a legal nature (e.g. the faculty certificates) or for correspondence with the pope.⁶⁸

7.3 Practical Implementation

After the arrival at his destination, the papal diplomat started his official activities with the inaugural audience granted by the sovereign of the territory, where papal credentials were presented and courtesies exchanged. As a rule, visits to important members of the court followed, mainly family members (in the case of ruling princes), ministers and counsellors, ecclesiastical dignitaries and influential lay people (mostly high noblemen) who also received papal letters recommending the nuncio and his mission. These were not only performative or ceremonial acts, but also opportunities to obtain an idea of the character of those who would be decisive for the success of the diplomat's mission.

An essential part of the active work of the nuncios consisted of regular audiences with the head of state as well as meetings and discussions with their most important ministers and confidants on site. In addition, the nuncio collaborated with trustworthy colleagues (such as the Spanish ambassador at the Imperial court in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries),⁶⁹ important ecclesiastical figures (bishops, rectors of seminaries) and laypersons loyal to Rome.

⁶⁶ Andreas Kraus, *Das päpstliche Staatssekretariat unter Urban VIII. 1623–1644* (Rom, 1964); Birgit Emich, "Die Karriere des Staatssekretärs: das Schicksal des Nepoten?," in *Offices et papauté (XIVe–XVIIe siècles): Charges, hommes, destins*, ed. Armand Jamme and Olivier Poncet (Rome, 2005), 341–355.

⁶⁷ See in general Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 280–281; for relations between the nuncios at the Imperial court and these offices: Rotraud Becker, "Die Wiener Nuntiatur im Dienst der Propaganda-Kongregation," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven* 88 (2008), 369–419; Rotraud Becker, "Das Heilige Offizium und die Nuntiatur in Wien," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 95 (2015), 249–281.

⁶⁸ E.g. Bonomi to Gregory XIII, Prague, 1584 VII 13, Archivio Apostolico Vaticano, Segreteria di Stato, Germania 112, fol. 173r.

⁶⁹ Nuncios at the Imperial court received the general order to work closely together with that important figure on all ecclesiastical and religious belongings, see Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, 6, 447;

Supplying pope and Roman curia with information on political and ecclesiastical matters was one of the most important tasks of legates and nuncios. The papal envoys had therefore to establish and maintain a political and ecclesiastical network not only at their residence and its immediate surroundings⁷⁰ but also encompassing the entire area of their nunciature as well, in order to cope with various tasks.⁷¹

Since not all problems could be dealt with at the residence of the nunciature, more or less extensive trips were often made in connection with church matters (visitations). But there were also other occasions associated with travelling, namely when the ruling prince to whom the nuncio was dispatched went to another place himself.⁷²

It is obvious that papal diplomats could maintain contacts and networks as well by letter; above all with their fellow nuncios.⁷³

7.4 Reporting

As a rule, nuncios reported once a week using the ordinary postal service. In cases of emergency, they dispatched a special courier. Parcels transmitted to the Roman headquarters could contain other documents in addition to the weekly report (copies of treaties, decrees of the sovereign and memoranda, petitions and general news that arrived from other places and were forwarded to Rome, the so-called *avvisi*). Sensitive passages were delivered in encrypted form. Nuncios were given their own encryption key for this purpose.⁷⁴ Occasionally nuncios received instructions from Rome to destroy sensitive files before the end of the nunciature.⁷⁵

Archivio Apostolico Vaticano, Segreteria di Stato, Misc. Arm. II 130, fol. 27r–32v (main instruction for Giovanni Francesco Bonomi); see for this form of collaboration and the networks of papal and Spanish representatives at the Imperial court, Tomáš Černušák and Pavel Marek, *Gesandte und Klienten: Päpstliche und spanische Diplomaten im Umfeld von Kaiser Rudolf II.* (Berlin et al., 2020).

⁷⁰ Černušák and Marek, *Gesandte und Klienten*, 189–217.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 145–167.

⁷² Guido Braun, “Reichstage und Friedenskongresse als Erfahrungsräume päpstlicher Diplomatie: Kulturelle Differenzenerfahrungen und Wissensgenerierung,” in *Diplomatische Wissenskulturen der Frühen Neuzeit: Erfahrungsräume und Orte der Wissensproduktion*, ed. Guido Braun (Berlin, 2018), 89–111.

⁷³ Giovanni Delfino communicated with his colleagues in Poland, Spain and Cologne: Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, XIII; for Portia: Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 320–321; for contacts among nuncios in the seventeenth century: Rotraud Becker, “Die päpstlichen Diplomaten am Kaiserhof 1628–1635: Zur Edition der Nuntiaturberichte Giovanni Battista Pallottos, Ciriaco Roccis und Malatesta Baglionis,” in *Päpstliche Politik in der Zeit des Dreißigjährigen Krieges: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Rotraud Becker (Berlin, 2020), 167–182: 179.

⁷⁴ See in general Aloys Meister, *Die Geheimschrift im Dienste der päpstlichen Kurie von ihren Anfängen bis zum Ende des XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn, 1906); for the cipher code, given to Nuncio Germanico Malaspina (c. 1547–c. 1603) bound for Graz: Johann Rainer (ed.), *Nuntiatur des Germanico Malaspina: Sendung des Antonio Possevino 1580–1582* (Wien, 1973), XXIV. See also the chapters by Maria-Elisabeth Brunert and Nadir Weber on reporting and by Elisabeth Lobenwein and Anne-Simone Rous on information gathering in this volume.

The mail service did not always run smoothly: apart from delayed delivery (especially in winter or during bad weather periods, but also in times of political crisis), there were also cases of lost or intercepted packages.

Unlike Venetian ambassadors, papal envoys were not expected to write a final report (*relazione finale*). This corresponds entirely to the concept of the papal envoy as an obedient executor of instructions and inferior official. Submitting and reading out a self-confident, rhetorically sophisticated document, as was the case with the ambassadors of the Republic of St. Mark when they returned to Venice and were received by the senate, would have been unthinkable in Rome. Occasionally, however, final relations were written by legates or nuncios to inform pope and curia.⁷⁶ In addition, there are a few examples of final relations that served as a special instruction for the successor.⁷⁷

8 Representation and Ceremonial

Without doubt, owing to their high ecclesiastical rank, cardinal legates displayed the most elaborate and detailed ceremonial effort and therefore incurred the highest representation expenses among papal diplomats in the early modern period.⁷⁸ The curia attached great importance to an impeccable performance of the required rites. Occasionally, special ceremonial instructions were issued for the legates.⁷⁹ In certain cases, popes even dispatched their own master of ceremonies alongside them.⁸⁰

At his destination, the nuncio was welcomed to the pealing of all the church bells (in Lucerne even with 24 gun salutes).⁸¹ At some nunciature seats or at peace congresses, arrival and solemn entries were sometimes separate acts.⁸² In Spain, the solemn

75 Nuncio Pallotto (c. 1594–1668) however did not comply with this order in 1631, Becker, *Päpstliche Politik*, 179.

76 Guido Braun, “Kaiserhof, Kaiser und Reich in der ‘relazione’ des Nuntius Carlo Carafa (1628),” in *Kaiserhof – Papstthof: 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Richard Bösel et al. (Wien, 2006), 77–104; Giordano, *Istruzioni generali di Paolo V*, 190–193, 1108–1124, 1125–1136.

77 Jaitner (ed.), *Hauptinstruktionen Clemens’ VIII.*, 616–634.

78 Koller, “Cardinal Legates,” 179–180.

79 See Silvano Giordano, “La legazione del cardinale Franz von Dietrichstein per le nozze di Mattia, re d’Ungheria e di Boemia (1611),” in *Kaiserhof – Papstthof: 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Richard Bösel et al. (Wien, 2006), 45–58; Giordano, *Istruzioni generali di Paolo V*, 778–780.

80 The master of ceremonies Paolo Alaleone (c. 1557–1643) participated in four legations, Günther Wasilowsky and Hubert Wolf (ed.), *Päpstliches Zeremoniell in der Frühen Neuzeit: das Diarium des Zeremonienmeisters Paolo Alaleone de Branca während des Pontifikats Gregors XV. (1621–1623)* (Münster, 2007), 28–29.

81 Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 155.

82 Elisabeth Garms-Cornides, “‘Per sostenere il decoro.’ Beobachtungen zum Zeremoniell des päpstlichen Nuntius in Wien im Spannungsfeld von Diplomatie und Liturgie,” in *Diplomatisches Zeremoniell in Europa und im Mittleren Osten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Ralph Kauz, Giorgio Rota and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Wien, 2009), 97–129: 118–122.

entry seems to have been reserved for legates.⁸³ At the Imperial Diet, entries and other ceremonies were made – if at all – in a reduced form at the request of the Emperor out of consideration for protestant princes.⁸⁴

The inaugural and the farewell audience were ceremonially highlighted and followed certain rules.⁸⁵ The papal representative wore choral vestments at the first and last encounter with the princes or heads of state and their entourage.⁸⁶

During his mission, the papal representative took part, together with other ambassadors, in all major secular and ecclesiastical celebrations.⁸⁷ He also assumed certain important liturgical functions himself.⁸⁸ In Spain and France, the nuncios do not seem to have performed any official liturgical functions.⁸⁹ Unfortunately, there is still no comprehensive study of ceremonial issues of papal diplomacy in the early modern period.

During the Ancien Régime, with its rich semantic language of ritual symbols, ceremonial was of great importance because it marked the social rank and thus the prestige of a single person at court and in other major social contexts (peace congresses, diets). In feudal and courtly societies in particular, the claim to a certain position in ceremonial acts was a first-rate political issue in order to make one's own status visible or to defend it. Conflicts in this context, so-called disputes of precedence, were the order of the day in the early modern period and led to serious and long-lasting animosities. Papal ambassadors were not spared.⁹⁰ In any case, according to the rules of protocol at the Imperial court, a field that fell under the competences of the major stew-

83 Philip II (1527–1598) welcomed the legates at the town gate of Madrid bareheaded, Christina Hofmann-Randall, *Das spanische Hofzeremoniell von 1500–1700* (Frankfurt/Main, 1985), 136.

84 See the disputes about the *entrée* of nuncio Pannocchieschi d'Elci (1598–1670) at the diet of Regensburg in 1653, Stefano Andretta, *L'Arte della diplomazia: Teorie e prassi della diplomazia nell'Italia del XVI e XVII secolo* (Roma, 2006), 205; for the ceremonial aspects of Imperial Diets in the sixteenth century see Alexander Koller, “La dieta di Augusta del 1582 come spazio di esperienza diplomatica: L'esempio dei rappresentanti della curia romana,” in *Diplomatische Wissenskulturen der Frühen Neuzeit: Erfahrungsräume und Orte der Wissensproduktion*, ed. Guido Braun (Berlin, 2018), 113–134.

85 Černušák and Marek, *Gesandte und Klienten*, 192.

86 Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur* (with further information about ceremonial aspects), 156; Garms-Cornides, “Beobachtungen zum Zeremoniell,” 123.

87 For example Giovanni Delfino attended the funeral of Emperor Maximilian II in Prague in 1577, Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, 88–92; a year later his successor participated in the solemn procession of Corpus Christi day in Vienna, overshadowed by riots, *ibid.*, 426–428.

88 Examples for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Elisabeth Garms-Cornides, “Liturgie und Diplomatie: Zum Zeremoniell des Nuntius am Wiener Kaiserhof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert,” in *Kaiserhof – Papstthof: 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Richard Bösel et al. (Wien, 2006), 125–146: 134, 136, 140; see also Rotraud Becker (ed.), *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken: 4. Abt., Siebzehntes Jahrhundert, Vol. 5: Nuntiatoren des Ciriaco Rocci: Außerordentliche Nuntiatur des Girolamo Grimaldi (1631–1633)* (Berlin, 2013), LII.

89 Garms-Cornides, “Liturgie und Diplomatie,” 127.

90 Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, 126; Garms-Cornides, “Beobachtungen zum Zeremoniell,” 125–126; Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, 91. On diplomatic ceremonial see also the chapter by Toby Osborne.

ard, the nuncio was always granted pre-eminence among diplomats.⁹¹ This position as head of the diplomatic corps (*doyen*) was finally codified in the regulations of the congress of Vienna in 1815 for catholic countries, with the simultaneous allocation of legates and nuncios to the group of ambassadors under international law.⁹²

9 Everyday Life

9.1 General Conditions

Legates and nuncios were human beings who, as a rule, operated in an unfamiliar foreign context. Especially during missions to Central and Eastern Europe, they were confronted with a world that was completely different to their own in many respects (origin, mentality, culture, education) and to such an extent that they often met with prejudices and stereotypes.⁹³ Texts such as diaries,⁹⁴ travel reports, household organisation regulations, written practical information to pass on to future diplomats, last wills etc. can be useful in reconstructing the everyday life and individual fates of the pontifical envoy. These documents reveal significant details concerning their sometimes burdensome and dangerous journeys, speak about the challenges of an unfamiliar foreign climate and food and about periods of weakness and disease. Even the official correspondence can provide information in this field, despite its genre-typical style, which follows the institutional contemporary rules of discourse between superior (pope/state secretary) and subordinate (legate/nuncio).

9.2 Travelling

Travelling was an essential part of diplomatic service in the early modern period, especially the journey to the destination and the return after the end of the mission, both of which were associated with hardship and considerable logistical problems and obstacles.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 374.

⁹² Mörsdorf, "Gesandtschaftswesen," 770.

⁹³ Wolfgang Reinhard, "Historische Anthropologie: Frühneuzeitliche Diplomatie: Ein Versuch über Nuntiaturreporte 1592–1622," in *Wahrnehmung des Fremden: Differenzenerfahrungen von Diplomaten im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Michael Rohrschneider and Arno Strohmeyer (Münster, 2007), 53–72.

⁹⁴ *Acta Pacis Westphalicae*, ed. by the Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Künste in Verbindung mit der Vereinigung zur Erforschung der Neueren Geschichte e.V. represented by Konrad Repgen, Serie III: Protokolle, Verhandlungsakten, Diarien, Varia, Abteilung C: Diarien, Vol. 1/1: *Diarium Chigi 1639–1651*, ed. by Konrad Repgen (Münster, 1984).

⁹⁵ A comprehensive treatise about the journeys of papal legates and nuncios has not been published yet. Some travel reports have been published, e.g.: *Nuntiaturreporte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzen-*

Before papal envoys started their mission, horses, carriages and provisions of food had to be procured. Travel usually followed the postal routes, but could also be modified for climatic conditions, safety reasons, or political considerations. Nuncios who were sent to Switzerland had to plan their trip to Lucerne so that they were still able to cross the St. Gotthard before the pass became snowed in.⁹⁶ For diplomatic reasons, as an official reception in francophile Venice would have prejudiced his start at the Imperial court, Malatesta Baglioni (1581–1648) crossed the Adriatic Sea from Ancona to Rijeka (Fiume) in 1634 before reaching his destination.⁹⁷ Bartolomeo Portia (c. 1540–1578) feared for his life when he had to pass through protestant areas, where several ambushes had been planned on him.⁹⁸ In the reports of the nuncios we occasionally read of travel delays and hindrances owing to bad weather and road conditions.

The journeys of legates, thanks to the large number of retinues and the usual ceremonial (carrying the cross, solemn entrances, use of the canopy),⁹⁹ attracted much more attention, but caused many more logistical problems at the same time.

During their mission papal diplomats could be forced to travel as well, for example in the company of the Emperor to Imperial and provincial diets,¹⁰⁰ or as part of the ecclesiastical reform agenda to visit dioceses, monasteries, seminaries etc. But there were also trips of pure interest and curiosity, such as the visit paid by Giovanni Delfino in May 1577 to Dresden, residence of the leader of protestant princes in the Holy Roman Empire and therefore a somewhat uncommon destination for a papal nuncio in this period.¹⁰¹ From the seventeenth century onwards, coaches were used too as a means of transport. Fabio Chigi, for example, had a second, more representative carriage built, when he started his mediation in Münster, on which he applied an inscription taken from the Bible (Lk 1.79): *in viam pacis*.¹⁰²

den Aktenstücken: *Abt. 2, 1560–1572, Vol. 2: Nuntius Commendone: 1560 (Dezember)–1562 (März)*, Adam Wandruszka (Graz, 1953), 57–170; Jan Wladyslaw Wós, “Il Diario di viaggio in Polonia di Giovanni Paolo Mucante, maestro delle ceremonie del cardinale legato E. Caetani,” *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 3 (1973), 605–613; Alessandra Anselmi (ed.), *Il diario del viaggio in Spagna del cardinale Francesco Barberini scritto da Cassiano Dal Pozzo* (Aranjuez, 2004); for the journey of nuncio Ottavio Santacroce bound for Prague in 1581 see Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 342–345.

⁹⁶ Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 159 n. 514.

⁹⁷ *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken: Abt. 4, Siebzehntes Jahrhundert, Vol. 7: Nuntiatoren des Malatesta Baglioni, des Ciriaco Rocci und des Mario Filonardi; Sendung des P. Alessandro D’Ales (1634–1635)*, ed. Rotraud Becker (Tübingen, 2004), LVII–LVIII.

⁹⁸ Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 316.

⁹⁹ Koller, “Cardinal Legates,” 180–182.

¹⁰⁰ Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 343.

¹⁰¹ Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, 136–138.

¹⁰² Vlastimil Kybal and Giovanni Incisa della Rocchetta (ed.), *La nunziatura di Fabio Chigi (1640–1651), Vol. 1.1* (Roma, 1943–1946), 380.

9.3 Lodgings

During their travels, papal diplomats found accommodation mainly in religious institutions such as monasteries, but also in inns and sometimes they accepted the invitation made by a high-ranking ecclesiastical or lay person to stay overnight, especially in larger cities.¹⁰³ For example, nuncio Ottavio Santacroce (1542–1581) was a guest of the Fugger family in Augsburg in 1581.¹⁰⁴

At their destination, early permanent nuncios rented premises to meet their requirements of space (residence, law-court, chancellery, archives). Towards the end of the sixteenth century and in the course of the seventeenth century with the nunciature assuming a permanent character and in order to reduce costs, buildings were rented for a longer period of time or acquired, in Paris (Hôtel de Sens, Hôtel de Cluny, Hôtel de Broglie),¹⁰⁵ in Vienna (the so-called House *am Hof*, ‘at court’)¹⁰⁶ and in Madrid (in the central quarter of *La Latina*).¹⁰⁷ In Cologne and Lucerne, however, houses were only rented.¹⁰⁸

9.4 Household

The staff of a nunciature (*famiglia*) was a mixture of a spiritual and a secular household. Since a nuncio had to fulfil numerous representative duties, we find many employees who were necessary for this part of the service (e.g. at receptions or visits). In this regard, the household of a nuncio hardly differed from that of any other secular diplomat, nobleman or bishop of the time. The closest collaborators (*famiglia alta*) included a judge (*auditor*), several secretaries and chaplains, the steward (*maggiordomo*) and the stable master. The *famiglia bassa* encompassed various valets, table servants, barbers, cooks and stablemen. To complete the panel, further staff were hired on site, such as a doctor, a procurator and, if necessary (especially in Poland and in the Holy Roman Empire), an interpreter. The number of servants was still relatively small in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁹ Around 40 employees served Francesco Buonvisi (1626–1700) at the end of the seventeenth century in Vienna.¹¹⁰ Similar numbers are given for the nunciature in Paris.¹¹¹

103 Where they were not always welcome, Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 393.

104 Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, XXIX.

105 Jean Lestocquoy, “La nonciature apostolique et l’Église de France de 1535 à 1610,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France* 153 (1968), 319–328: 327; Barbiche, “Nonciature de France,” 81–82.

106 Irmtraut Lindeck-Pozza, “Das Gebäude der Apostolischen Nuntiatur in Wien,” in *Beiträge zur neueren Geschichte Österreichs*, ed. Heinrich Fichtenau and Erich Zöllner (Wien, 1974), 160–175.

107 Ana Vázquez Barrado, “El palacio de la nunciatura de Madrid, Obras de restructuración (1650–75),” *Hispania Sacra* 52 (2000), 507–538.

108 Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 89.

109 Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 318, 394; Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, XXXIV–XXXVI.

110 Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 363; see Becker, “Alltag,” 312.

The everyday life of the *famiglia* was subject to strict rules, above all concerning general behaviour. This included, e.g., the obligation of the servants to confess and to receive communion once a month, a ban on playing cards or dice, etc., as well as instructions that took into account the fact of living in a multiconfessional environment. Therefore, encounters with heterodox people or the entering of non-catholic churches and acquisition of books in Latin or German without previous permission were strictly forbidden.¹¹²

There were also useful hints passed on sometimes in writing from nuncio to nuncio or steward to steward regarding the internal organisation of the nunciature.¹¹³

The nunciature household was usually completely male; women were only allowed in the kitchen area in certain contexts.¹¹⁴

9.5 Finance

Legations and nunciatures were among the most expensive curial offices.¹¹⁵ Apart from expenses for travelling (including transport vehicles, purchase of and provisions for horses), there were enormous costs of accommodation and food for household members and guests, staff salaries, clothing, heating, but also for much other secular and liturgical expenditure, above all for remaining in contact with Rome (purchase of pens and paper, costs for the postal service and special couriers¹¹⁶) and last but not least: tips.¹¹⁷

Like many of their secular colleagues, papal diplomats were notoriously underfunded. Nuncios usually ran hopelessly into debt despite the often considerable support from their own families, since their official salary and additional subsidies given by the popes could not cover the high expense needed for travelling, representa-

111 See Barbiche, “Nunciature de France,” 80; in Graz, the household of the nuncio contained 24 persons at the beginning of the seventeenth century, see Elisabeth Zingerle (ed.), *Nuntiatur des Girolamo Portia 1599–1602* (Wien, 2012), LXVIII; for the staff of the Swiss nuncio: Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 124–151.

112 Alexander Koller, “Nuntienalltag: Überlegungen zur Lebenswelt eines kirchlichen Diplomatenhaushalts im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,” in *Impulse für eine religiöse Alltagsgeschichte des Donau-Alpen-Adria-Raumes*, ed. Rupert Klieber and Hermann Hold (Wien, 2005), 95–108: 102–103.

113 Alexander Koller, “Vademecum für einen Nuntius,” *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 49 (2007), 179–225.

114 Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 363. The author of the aforementioned collection of practical information for the Viennese nunciature at the end of the seventeenth century emphasises that this is a German practice and recommends employing older women so as not to cause scandal.

115 Ago, *Carriere e clientele*, 75.

116 Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, 24, 98, 156, 181.

117 Konrad Repgen, “Die Finanzen des Nuntius Fabio Chigi: Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte der römischen Führungsgruppe im 17. Jahrhundert,” in Konrad Repgen, *Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede: Studien und Quellen*, ed. Franz Bosbach and Christoph Kampmann (Paderborn, 1998), 353–403: 396–398; Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 386–387.

tion, household and staff.¹¹⁸ Some prelates even refused to accept a nunciature from the outset, despite the negative side effects such a decision might have on their career.¹¹⁹

The specific financial support for legates and nuncios on the part of the curia consisted of a travel allowance (*viaticum*) and a monthly salary, which was not always paid on time. Under Gregory XIII, a fundamental wage reform was introduced. As a consequence, nuncios received a certain amount of *scudi* in gold, depending on the importance of the destination and on the possibilities of supplementary resources (ecclesiastical contributions and taxes).¹²⁰

Monthly salary payments were transferred through procurators who acted for the nuncio in Rome. They received a promissory note from the Apostolic Chamber, which nuncios could redeem as a letter of exchange at a bank,¹²¹ as did Bartolomeo Portia during his mission in the south of the Holy Roman Empire, with the Fugger family in Augsburg.¹²²

Due to the precarious financial situation, all nuncios sought to rise to the rank of cardinal after their diplomatic missions, as the purple opened up the prospect of a significant increase in income.¹²³

9.6 Disease and Death¹²⁴

The stressful factors of missions (journey activities, bad climate, unfamiliar food, general malaise in a ‘foreign’ environment) led to a weakening of the immune system and more or less serious illnesses for many nuncios, especially during long-term assignments associated with intensive travelling. With Bartolomeo Portia, who clearly had a weak constitution, diseases accumulated during his various tasks, some of which last-

118 See in general Biaudet, *Nonciatures*, 67–92.

119 Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 122 n. 248.

120 See the salary table offered by Biaudet, *Nonciatures*, 78.

121 Zingerle, *Portia*, LXXI; Haan, *Silingardi*, 41.

122 Karl Schellhass (ed.), *Die Süddeutsche Nuntiatur des Grafen Bartolomäus Portia (Schlußjahre 1575/1576)* (Berlin, 1909), 430 n. 4.

123 There are some accurate studies about the financial status of papal envoys. For the nuncios acting in Paris: *Correspondance du nonce en France Innocenzo Del Bufalo, évêque de Camerino (1601–1604)*, ed. Bernard Barbiche (Rome, 1964); Haan, *Silingardi*, 40–43; for Girolamo Portia in Graz: Zingerle, *Portia*, LXVII–LXXIII; concerning Giuseppe Garampi (1725–1792), nuncio in Poland and at the Imperial court 1772–1785: Fink, *Luzerner Nuntiatur*, 122–123; the most comprehensive study is dedicated to the finances of Fabio Chigi, nuncio in Cologne and mediator in Münster by Reggen, “Finanzen,” with a meticulous listing of all revenue and expenditure items.

124 There is no general study about the deaths of papal envoys (treating causes of death, funerals, testamentary dispositions, destinies of servants). For the illnesses of nuncios and for the perception of diseases of other persons (above all princes) by nuncios see Guido Braun, *Imagines imperii: Die Wahrnehmung des Reiches und der Deutschen durch die römische Kurie im Reformationsjahrhundert (1523–1585)* (Münster, 2014), 496–518.

ed for several months.¹²⁵ One last serious health crisis, during which he complained about severe colic and stomach pains, finally led to his death in Prague in August 1578. The highest representatives of the Imperial court attended the funeral service in the Bohemian capital.¹²⁶ But even in Bavaria the deceased nuncio was commemorated (during a requiem in Munich the ducal chapel performed funeral music conducted by Orlando di Lasso [c. 1532–1594]¹²⁷). But Portia's two successors also suffered the same fate during their diplomatic assignment a few years later: Orazio Malaspina died in 1582 shortly after his arrival as extraordinary nuncio in Paris, at the Hôtel de Sens. The memorial service took place with Caterina de' Medici (1519–1589) present.¹²⁸ His immediate successor as nuncio at the Imperial court, Ottavio Santacroce, found his final resting place in Prague Cathedral. The panegyric delivered by the Jesuit Johannes Vivarius (c. 1550–1618) during the funeral has come down to us as a rare example of a homily dedicated to a deceased nuncio.¹²⁹

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125 Koller, *Imperator und Pontifex*, 331–333.

126 Koller, *Delfino und Portia*, XVII.

127 Ignaz Agricola, *Historia Provinciae Societatis Jesu Germaniae Superioris, ab anno 1541 ad annum 1600, Vol. 1* (Augustae Vindelicorum, 1727), 184.

128 Koller, *Malaspina und Santacroce*, XIX.

129 Alexander Koller, "Die Leichenrede des Jesuiten Johannes Vivarius auf den Nuntius Ottavio Santacroce († 1581)," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 118 (2010), 395–414.

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