



Verwaltung des Glaubens – Verwaltung der Welt Governo della fede – Governo del mondo

Interdisziplinärer Doktorandenworkshop - Workshop internazionale per dottorandi
Rom, 1 Juni 2015

Report by Alfonso Alibrandi and Brendan Röder

On June 1st, the seminar “Verwaltung des Glaubens – Verwaltung der Welt” for doctoral students organized by BENEDETTA ALBANI (Max-Planck-Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt am Main, MPIeR) and ANDREEA BADEA (German Historical Institute, Rome) took place at the German Historical Institute in Rome. The conference was dedicated to the discussion of various research projects, which all come from the study of sources within the Vatican Secret Archives. In their brief introduction, the organizers sketched out major questions intended to give a common framework to the seminar in which doctoral students working on institutions of the Roman Curia during the Early Modern Period were invited to present their progress in their archival research and to think about issues resurfacing in the discussions.

The first student to present her work was CLAUDIA CURCURUTO (MPIeR / Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz). Her research, by focusing on different concepts of interaction and cooperation, intends to deepen our knowledge of the relationship between the nunciatures and the various Roman congregations. In particular, these concepts are developed in relation to the experience of the Nuncio in Vienna during the pontificate of Innocent XI Odescalchi, which had been assigned to Cardinal Francesco Buonvisi from 1675 to 1689. In relation to the activity of the Cardinal, the research project seeks to understand what were the different duties of the nuncio in the application of the Tridentine decrees, his role as a mediator

between Rome and local entities, and, finally, his powers regarding the administration of justice in relation to his role in the court of the nunciature in Vienna.

In the second talk, CONSTANZE BERINGER (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg) analysed sources on Italian merchants in post-Reformation Nuremberg. The confessionally problematic presence of Catholic traders in a Protestant imperial city was a matter of interest for both the local Protestant as well the Catholic, Roman authorities.

While the former is expressed in the creation of lists of Italian merchants in the city, the latter led to the creation of an account of their situation by the papal diplomat Minuccio Minucci. As Beringer showed, this report was strikingly rich in detail, a fact probably not surprising for an expert on German matters such as Minucci. Though a limited case, the story of Catholic merchants in Nuremberg raises interesting issues of the channels of information flow between the imperial lands and the Papacy, as well as of the relationship between economic and confessional interests.

CONSTANZA LÓPEZ LAMERAIN (MPIeR / Universidad del País Vasco) presented her research project which intends to reconstruct the channels of communications between the Holy See –and more specifically the Congregation of the Council- and the local churches of the “Kingdom of Chile” between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From a historiographic point of view she underlined the importance of reevaluating the traditional stand that the Royal Patronage system inhibited all transferences between Rome and Spanish America. The study will include the search for alternative means of communication as well as mediators acting in the process, considering ecclesiastical authorities as well as secular ones-, individuals and communities. To achieve a better picture of this field, Lopez emphasized the need of archival research in the archives of several central and local actors in Rome (such as the Congregations of the Council and Propaganda Fide), in Spain (such as the Council of the Indies) and in Latin America.

Following this, SONIA ISIDORI (Università degli Studi Napoli L'Orientale) presented her work, a comparative study between the Archdioceses of Naples and Lima between the sixteenth and seventeenth century, through a careful examination of the sources and bibliography. The presentation focused, in particular, on the South American experience by revealing the role of the Society of Jesus in the Archdiocese of Lima, with regard to the disciplinary activities against the phenomenon of "apostasy", here referring to regular clergymen leaving their religious order. During the presentation special attention was given to practices with the purpose of suppressing these behaviours, such as imprisonment and spiritual penances. Finally, as already mentioned, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of the treatment of apostasy in literature dating back to that period which allows us to understand reactions and opinions in relation to the persecution of apostasy.

From the presentation of FEDERICA MELONI (Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia), one should highlight the way in which the activity of a particular congregation of cardinals is studied in relation to a small reality such as one family. In fact, by introducing the terrible vicissitudes experienced by the Jewish family of the Ascarelli in the early seventeenth century, whose children were abducted in order to be baptized, Meloni presented an unusual competence of the Congregation of the Council. In fact, numerous memorials had been sent, written both by the Ascarelli family and the various Jewish communities of Italy, aiming to return the abducted children to their parents. Such an activity, therefore, was quite unusual regarding the "typical" competences of the Congregation of the Council and it allows us to understand the importance that this body had in the aftermath of the Council of Trent.

Also discussing the Congregation of the Council, ALFONSO ALIBRANDI (MPIeR / Université Paris V Descartes) presented his work on one of those competences that could be characterized as "typical" of this office, namely its exclusive competence in the interpretation of the Tridentine decrees. This presentation traced the main steps of the development of the concept of an authentic interpretation of the law, taking as a starting point the Roman law of Justinian and continuing with different medieval doctrines, in both civil and canon law. Precisely in regard to this aspect, the paper focused on the influence of these doctrines on the Congregation of the Council's

competence and compared it with another legal experience of the 17th century that deals with the authentic interpretation of the law that is Article 7, tit I of the *Ordonnance Civile* of 1667, ordered by Luigi XIV in order to reform the procedure of the courts of France.

After this, FLAVIA GATTIGLIA (Università degli Studi di Genova) presented her project, which, through an in-depth study of local sources, especially of the area surrounding Genoa, intends to show how the authorities were informed of the various crimes committed by clergymen during the seventeenth century and how the “scandal” produced by these crimes was perceived by the community. In order to explore this issue, several documents that testify the various complaints to the authorities were examined, first of all the anonymous letters, also called *lettere orbe*. This point was then developed in relation to the various procedures which the defendants were subjected to, not only locally but also at the central level, through a careful study of documents from the Congregation of the Council and the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. This last aspect has provided the opportunity to include the views of offenders of the scandal itself. The project, therefore, aims at understanding the real value of the concept of good reputation and its consequent effect of protection.

BRENDAN RÖDER (MPIeR / Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Muenchen) presented his dissertation research on early modern clergymen with „bodily defects”, a term applying to a variety of physical impairments and chronic diseases that were problematized in relation to clerical status and often referred to in the sources as “irregularitas ex defectu corporis”. As such irregulars could not become clerics or exercise received orders and they often sought dispensation from Rome. Based on about 200 cases from the Archive of the Congregation of the Council mostly dating from the second half of the 17th century, Roeder tried to analytically separate aspects of the phenomenon, such as the notoriety or visibility of disabilities or their relation to the exercise of different functions within the clerical hierarchy. More generally, these topics touch on Church history and the history of the (disabled) body in the context of early modern religion and society.

The final discussion highlighted recurring elements important in all the specific research projects, such as the relation between centre and locality. Recent historiography can serve as an inspiration to rethink these concepts as describing a complex relationship in which importance should be given not only to the various actors and institutions but to the process of communication as such.

The workshop demonstrated some of the multiple directions of doctoral research on the Roman Curia, that intend to expand the knowledge in the field, both in a geographical sense as well as on the level of competences which were shown to be often disputed between various local actors and congregations. Finally, the interplay of competition and collaboration between the Roman congregations themselves has emerged as a research focus common to the various projects, making future exchange desirable. The workshop will hopefully prove as a starting point for further cooperation.

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