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**Saluti cordialissimi a tutti studiosi di affari Cesarini.**

“A Baron explains his Lordship over a feudo: Giuliano Cesarini in 1556”  
Thomas V Cohen, York University, Toronto

In the best humanist tradition, I begin with an apologia. Indeed, with two apologies. First disclaimer: when Gwen invited me, I protested; here we have an Orsini conference, and I have no Orsini on tap. I don't even have a Colonna. The best I can offer us is a Colonna in-law with a Sforza mother. Well, she said, come anyway, so come I do, happily, to learn what I can about the Orsini, and about what they can tell me about the habits and culture of Rome's highest nobility. Second apology: here I sit with John Marino and Ingrid Rowland, so I certainly owe you a spicy story, with high drama, droll plot twists and sudden shifts in voice and genre. My writer's habits ask me to expect of my own self no less. Today, though, I offer you a not a wild gallop but a canter, or maybe even just quiet trot through Roman history. I take as my topic neither sex nor violence, but a mere series of conversations, and a letter, nothing to rattle the spirit. But I will do my best to make the story not only useful to all present, but also interesting to hear.

The conversations I take up here were far from casual. They took place in Castel Sant'Angelo, in May and July of 1557. The letter came three years later. Conversations? Well, in to tell the truth, interrogations. On the one side of this edgy exchange of words were the highest judicial officials of the papal state – *governatore* Cesare Brancaccio, *fiscale* Alessandro Pallantieri and a judge named Desiderio Guidone just back from probing loud complaints in distant fiefs. On the other was those fiefs' baron, their prisoner, Giuliano Cesarini, hereditary *gonfaloniere del popolo romano* and, till recently, master of the testy fiefs in question. By the time he testified, Cesarini had been jailed for

five months and longer. The authorities had clapped him in Castel Sant'Angelo in early January and, as things turned out, would keep him there until pretty late next year, the fall of 1557, when Spanish victory in Paul IV's war finally freed him.

Thanks to the vassals' vivid complaints and the politics of his trial, Cesarini's interrogations turned almost exclusively on charges against his feudal lordship. Prior to his trial, papal *commissari*, visiting his unhappy fiefs, had taken ample depositions against him and, in court, their questions, thought framed in the law's language, echoed local grievances. Cesarini's replies, then offer a portrait, if only partial, of how he and others like him talked, and even thought, about aspects of their roles as lords of men and places. Cesarini, though no Orsini, surely talked with Orsini peers, so, if judicious, in listening to him we eavesdrop on all barons.

Now, with Tom Kuehn in the room, I am forced to qualify this claim, and quickly. Indeed, were Kuehn miles away, I would have to say the same. Cesarini, on the stand, though he perhaps expressed some inner thoughts, or at least his outward lordly habits, did so under circumstances neither neutral nor normal. On trial, and at real risk, he spoke far from freely. So, to the court, he expressed his lordship constrained by the politics of the instant and the conventions of the law. He had to shape his language, by guile, by reflex, to fit the political and legal doctrines of his antagonists. His self-presentation was therefore, on one level, performative, a performance of good lordship for hearers who had clear notions, legal, and moral, and also social, of what good lordship, or bad lordship, meant. Moreover, Cesarini, like many Roman nobles, had served the state; furthermore, as *gonfaloniere*, he had long consorted with the Campidoglio's civic nobles. So, though a baron, he was conversant with assorted dialects of state, not all baronial in flavour.

On the other hand, to call Cesarini's words in court performance is hardly to discount them. Testimony before a magistrate was always a performance, but so, too, was other talk. Barons, like other Romans and humans everywhere, were eternally performing

themselves. Amidst so many performances of lordship, there was no master role that demoted the others, no single truest baronial mode of speech and thought. After all, even interior monologues, and musings and dreams, perform. So the issue we must confront here is not how Cesarini's words, to his antagonists in Castel Sant'Angelo, distorted some true baronial nature, but, rather, how they might have corresponded to other discourses, elsewhere in the signorial repertory. So, like the postmodernists, we dismantle our author, our witness, but do remember that, in the middle of words' tangle, he was still there.

But back to Cesarini in jail. Why did a man so rich and influential moulder so long in prison? For high-handed lordship, however brusque and flinty? Hardly! What crime had he actually committed? What reason of state kept him, malarial and anxious, so tightly confined? Because the papal state is murky, the full answer eludes us. We do have many hints. Cesarini, by birth, upbringing, and marriage, had always hewed to the house of Hapsburg. As a hot young man furious at judicial intrusion into his family's felt immunities from surveillance, he had cut off Rome's governor's right hand. Imperial connections had sheltered him from retribution. His career was military, imperial and papal service, and political, three governorships for Julius III. Cesarini's tastes were noble: two Roman palaces full of classic art, music, expensive horses, great packs of dogs for his beloved hunt.<sup>1</sup> When Paul IV leaned towards France, Cesarini, with his Sforza mother and his Colonna wife, quickly sided with a pro-Spanish clique around Cardinal Sforza that, all 1555, felt growing pressure from the pope and his Carafa kinfolk. By the fall of 1555, Cesarini himself was fretful. Papal officials, claiming the need to inspect the books, sent inspectors from Macerata to his two eastern fiefs. To parry them, Cesarini's local partisans swore-in local soldiers to scout the streets and man the gates and, at

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<sup>1</sup> *Sf/Ces 89 #12*, Ceccarelli, *Historia de la casa cesarina* (1579), "la sua corte fu sempre tenuto come mai Regia percioche oltre a buon numero di valorosi *epiani* [ Cristiani? ], de lanciespezzate et di Gentilhuomini honorati tratenuti da lui, tenne musica, hebbe paggi nobili per suo servigio, et sopra tutto bellissima stalla piena di cavalli di Gran prezzo. Si diletto della caccia tenendo gran numero [58r] de cani."

tumultuous meetings replete with harangues and cheers, evoked from the townsmen a renewed oath of loyalty. In December, Cesarini's muleteer four times smuggled bullion from his Sabina fortress at Rocca Sinibalda, secreted in saddlebags under pears and apples. Finally, on New Year's Eve, Cesarini paid a call on his Colonna in-law, princess Giovanna d'Aragona, held under house arrest in her Roman palace at the Santissimi Apostoli. Whatever he said to her remains unknown, but a few hours later, the princess and a small entourage, disguised, escaped Rome and fled to the Abruzzi. The pope, furious, promptly hanged the captain of the San Lorenzo gate and, as swiftly, clapped Cesarini into prison.

No sooner was the baron jailed than his vassals in three fiefs rebelled. These movements were only half connected. In the Marches, the inhabitants of Monte Cosaro and Civitanova, two towns just five kilometers apart, must have acted in concert. Certainly, when they lined up to testify to the papal judge who came to hear their grievances, witnesses from both sang from a single hymnbook; Cesarini and his ministers had been high-handed, they complained, and contemptuous of civic rights, statutes, and modes of governance. There, the path to rebellion was probably parliamentary; nothing in the record suggests racket or rough handling. At Rocca Sinibalda, the Sabina village, too high for good wine or olives, the revolt was far more noisy, fraught and violent. There were processions to the boundaries to bring back exiles, tumultuous nocturnal meetings, solemn sanguinary oaths vowing death to all dissenters, and an evening riot aimed at burning out three dissidents who balked at a march on Rome to kiss the papal foot and implore a judge. The next morning, after a solemn reconciliation with the nay-sayers, who in token of submission knelt in church with halters around their necks, march the villagers indeed did. They lodged with a *paesano* at the Pantheon, consorted with their outlaws, connived with a Cesarini rival, and saw Paul IV himself, in whose presence they shouted "Giustizia giustizia!" In a petition penned on a rosary seller's bench on Saint Peter's porch, the villagers complained that they had been living worse than *Luterani* and

threatened to give up their homes and wander the world like *zingari* rather than live any longer under Giuliano.

While all this went on, the rest of Cesarini's lands stayed faithful. He owned other feudal villages in the eastern Sabina --Torricella, Stipes, Ginestra, Belmonte, and Frasso - - tightly clustered, a short walk south or north or west of Rocca Sinibalda. His richest lands, however, lay at lower altitude, between the Alban hills and the Tyrrhenian shore, towards Nettuno. These were big casali like Campo Selva, pasture lands, rich but malarial, populated thinly by transhumant herdsmen and migrant harvesters; nobody could rebel there because almost no one lived there all year round.

We do not know why the other Sabine fiefs remained loyal to their lord; their tranquility left no paper trail. But certain things both made the Marchegiana fiefs stand out and rendered Rocca Sinibalda different from its neighbors. Let us take Rocca Sinibalda first. For one thing, it was a newer acquisition than its neighbors. With the Cesarini, the other Sabina holdings went back further, some of them into the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Rocca Sinibalda, meanwhile, had passed from hand to noble hand, even, briefly, belonging to an Orsini. In the first decades of the sixteenth century, the lords were a branch of the Mareri, a noble family mostly Abruzzese. Then, in 1526 or 1527, with papal backing, Cardinal Alessandro Cesarini pried it loose from a Mareri who had offended Rome. The Cardinal offered payment, but Mareri, who had Savelli in-laws,

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<sup>2</sup> ASR, Sforza-Cesarini, Pergamene, 1, 841, doc. 1, 1444, donation of part of Montelione and **Toricella** to Sinidea Brancaleone, wife of **Orso Cesarini**, father of **Gabriele**, by her brothers. Sf/Ces I 841, doc.29, 1466 26/6. By this point, Gabriele, Giulano's grandfather, is the holder here, and is winning a lawsuit against Pietro Angelo **Orsini** for two thirds of Montelione. Sf/Ces I 842 , doc 2,26 Oct 1468: **Frasso** passed from the Brancaleone to **Gabriele** Cesarini; Sf/Ces I 843, doc 20,148312/9: sale of the whole of **Torricella** to Gabriele Cesarini by the Brancaleone of Montelione. There are traces of lawsuits and raids and sack by the Orsini, both in Montelione and Torricella, from 1471 to 1513 (earlier and I 844, doc. 22,1505, For 1513, I. 845, doc. 9,1513, now lost but in 1875 inventory). I have no mention of Stipes till 1559: I 851, 23; ASR Coll. Not. Cap. 175 Camillus Benimbene, 1467-85 (ff), f. 82r, record the purchase of **Belmonte** by Gabriel Cesarini in1477. As for **Ginestra**, see Sf/Ces I 846 doc.13, of 24 May 1528, where, with Belmonte, Frasso, and Torricella, they are Cesarini already: "Monitorio penale etc spedito dalli chierici di Camera ad istanza del Cardinale, e di Gio: Giorgio Cesarini contro Gio: Batta. Savelli, e suoi vassalli di Sabina per aver scacchneggiati li castelli di **Belmonte**, **La inestra**, **frassina**, e la **Torricella** con asportarne molta robba fino al valore di 3m scui spettante alli sudd.i instanti, loro parenti, e vassalli etc à restituire li sudd.i beni, ò il loro valore, altrimenti etc"

balked, and an up-country feudal war flared. For four years, Savelli and Cesarini troops and peasant levies ravaged the district. On the ground, to judge by surviving papers, the Cesarini villages had the worse of it; in May of 1528, the cardinal and Giuliano's father, the cardinal's brother, won a *monitorio* against the Savelli commander for sacking four villages that cost Cesarini and his tenants, says the claim, 3000 scudi damages. Rocca Sinibalda's turn came three years later, just before peace broke out, when Savelli forces broke in, killing four men, stealing much stock and gear, and wrecking much. For physical damage at Savelli hands, Rocca Sinibalda was not the only village, but there war's social damage may have cut deeper. The village still housed Mareri partisans and the cardinal's local lieutenant, Giacomo Muti, a prominent Roman civic noble linked to the cardinal by kinship and life-long clientage, governed harshly. Suspecting links between villagers and turncoats fled to Savelli places, Muti summoned seven heads of household to the castle, arrested them, tried them brutally and fast, dealt them mallet blows to the head and then hanged them, disgracefully, from his battlements, heads down. The families of the dead fled to Savelli villages and the castle confiscated lands and goods. The war over, return was hard. A quarter century later, Rocca Sinibalda still had its vivid, epic memories and a penumbra of embittered exiles with Savelli and Mareri ties.

Peace's return failed to smooth lord – village relations. Cardinal Alessandro imposed on Rocca Sinibalda new feudal rules and duties, many sure to raise his income. Rome's great Sack had wrecked his splendid palace and cost him, some said, 200,000 ducats.<sup>3</sup> The cardinal's agents took to auctioning standard banal rights: mill, inn, food shop, bake oven, threshing contract. Peasants chafed, as all these had been free to any. Moreover, the cardinal set guards to the doors, curbed visitors and curtailed the right to marry outside the fief. He also clamped a lid on dowries and on legacies outside a tight agnate line, pocketing all excess. These things rankled. What chafed worst, it seems, was

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<sup>3</sup> Judith Hooke, *Sack of Rome, 1527*, London: Mamillan, 1972, p.170

the campaign to replace the old castle, so useless in the Savelli war. Thinking big, the cardinal hired the great artist and military engineer, Baldassare Peruzzi, to construct a hybrid, part bastion, part palace. It was to be Lazio's last private castle fit for war, and it was massive. It rose slowly, for two decades, on the backs of the village's mules, and its men, and women, ill paid, if paid. This project literally consumed the village; avid for stones, beams, and tiles, the cardinal knocked down not only his old castle, but the church and many houses and out-buildings, paying compensation but riling many. The earthworks behind the bastion, a hanging garden, brought soil and trees from around the district, as did a game park, and the kilns for their bricks and mortar devoured communal forests hitherto good for running the many swine the villagers salted and exported. What irked too was the trek to Rome. First-step justice was local; the castle had its magistrate, who laid down fines, cast folk in jail, and impounded sureties and forfeits. But most appeals entailed a two-day ride or hike to Rome, to the palace, to see Muti, who for two decades and more stood in for the cardinal and then his nephew, Giuliano. None of this explains precisely why, with Cesarini jailed, Rocca Sinibalda bolted, but it does show reasons why it might have.

In the Marches, things were very different. The Sabina, like most of upper Lazio, was deeply feudal, and would remain so until the old regime went under. In the Marches, by contrast, fiefs were rare. This was a zone of semi-independent communes, polities far more self-reliant than in Sabina, better staffed, more articulated, more inured to democratic rights, rituals, and procedures. There the Cesarini had no roots at all. Let us hear our prisoner, Giuliano, tell the odd tale of how he came to be a lord of the Marches: the pope, he said, had wanted a great load of grain from the abbey of Chiaravalle, near Senigallia, a place Cesarini administered for his in-law, cardinal Sforza Santa Fiora.

And because I did not want to get involved with the Apostolic Camera, I bought that amount of grain and...I gave the grain to his Holiness, who gave me, as a pledge for the sale price a gem called the Carbuncle. And then, some time later, the Reverend Montepulciano said that his Holiness wanted to use the money from

that grain, and that he would give me the town of my choice, one of four or five, and he gave me a list, among which was Civitanova, and I decided to take it. It was given to me down to the fourth generation, or to the third, not counting my person, for 500 scudi in income, not counting extraordinary payment, for the sum of 14,000 scudi.<sup>4</sup>

To clarify: rather than pay the baron for the grain, the pope offered him a fief that yielded 500 scudi per year, on a capital calculated at 14,000 to fit the grain sale debt. A notional yield, then, of some three-and-a-half percent. Cesarini arrived not as lord, but as mere governor, but soon set out to firm up his hold. The next four years were turbulent, as townsmen in Civitanova and Montecosaro absorbed their change of masters. Among his agents, Cesarini installed some locals, inevitably stirring rivalries, and then used them to goad his partisans to back his projects. One goal: to evict the priors from their palaces, to lodge his own officials. Another: to assume full lordship. A third, when revenues proved disappointing: to shoulder the whole fiscal burden, pocketing the towns' incomes and assuming their outlays too. His backers supported these campaigns by whipping the town councils, pushing voting out into the open, with two open ballot bowls for yea and nay that left dissenters no place to hide. As at Rocca Sinibalda, the distance to Rome made justice slow and hard. In all three fiefs, Cesarini's aloofness rankled. Neither Marchegiana town suffered the misery that stirred up Rocca Sinibalda, but the regime was new, its roots shallow, and, to quote Machiavelli's *Prince*, (chapter three), "it is the new state that makes troubles." Moreover, "When you are on the spot, you can see troubles getting started, and take care of them right away; when you do not live there you

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<sup>4</sup> ASR Gov. TC, 29, case 7, ff. 1 r-v: Al tempo della S<sup>ta</sup> Memo. d. Julio Fui ricercato dal Car<sup>le</sup> Monti Pulciano in quel tempo Thesoriere di S<sup>ta</sup> che io volessi far' opera con Gio. batt.a mio nipote che volesse dar' quella quantita d grani che se trovava in quel tempo nella Abbazia de Chiaravalle, et perche lui non voleva impacciarsi con la Camera Jo comprai dca quantita di grani; Come appar' per Intstr<sup>to</sup> p.<sup>co</sup> per la somma che in esso si contiene, et detti d.ci grani à S. S<sup>ta</sup> quale me diede per prezzo di detti grani in pegno una Gioa chiamata Il Carbonchio, poi passati de di il detto R<sup>mo</sup>Monte Pulciano mi disse che S<sup>ta</sup> se voleva servir' delli danari di detti grani, che che mi darebbe una terra ad elletione mia de quatt<sup>o</sup> o cinque che me ne diede una lista fra le quali era Civita nova, et me resolvetti a pigliar' dc.a terra mi fo data in quarta generatione. (et nominatione: added in margin), o in Terza non computata la persona mia per cinquecento scudi symbol] d'intrata, non computando [l'entrate: x-out] straordinarij per la somma de quattordici Mila scudi de moneta



hear of them only when they have grown great and there is no longer a cure.”<sup>5</sup>

To make sense of Cesarini’s forensic self portrait, as man, as lord, it helps to know not only rebellion’s roots, but also the stakes for him. Nothing in the surviving transcripts touches on the flight of the Colonna princess; interrogation rather, circles around his governance of three fiefs. But we cannot know what interrogations escaped the archives. Did the state had hold Cesarini from January to May without a single formal hearing? Unlikely! When he lost his case, one charge was *laesum maiestatis*, but, with no sentence, just its eventual repeal, it is hard to say on what that grave accusation hinged. It seems weightier than the tenants’ grumblings would warrant. Still, even at his glumest, Cesarini is unlikely to have thought his neck at stake. The issue, rather was how to keep his rebellious fiefs. In all three places, locals were petitioning for church lordship. In Civitanova, and Montecosaro, that change would just set the clock back five years, pre-grain-and-carbuncle. Rocca Sinibalda had not been a papal fief, but in feudal Lazio seizures came often. The papacy often removed fiefs from lords, for justice or politics, and then, for cash or politics, returned them or passed them off to others. Rocca Sinibalda was a poor place, good mostly for wood and migrant flocks, but the great castle, an imposing fortress, well stocked in arms and powder, lay, as village smugglers knew, just down the mountain from the Regno’s long and flimsy border. With a Spanish-papal war looming, the papal state might well want to keep the place for good. And then there was also the risk that the Carafa nephews might covet Rocca Sinibalda, just as they coveted the Colonna state near Rome.

Cesarini, then, had every reason to placate his accusers. Not an easy task, for a man so haughty that, as his family’s obsequious chronicler, Ceccarelli, striving to sugar a man not sweet by nature, reported of him: "He was feared by everyone and equally

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<sup>5</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince* Robert M. Adams ed and tr., Norton Critical Edition, New York and London: Norton, 1977, pp. 5, 7

beloved."<sup>6</sup> Nothing in the trial transcript gives Cesarini's body language or tone of voice, but the abrupt, often mulish exchanges often have a bluntness suggesting a tongue tightly reined and scorn precariously masked. Nonetheless, Cesarini does try to strike to pose of a good lord, governing in conformity with the laws and spirit of the State of the Church, and in consonance with general principles of good governance and signorial good comportment. Let us look, first at his stance towards himself, then at his expressed views on his relations with first the papal state and then with his subjects, and finally, at his policies, as he conceived or expressed them.

As lord, Cesarini was Olympian. In this, his tenants concurred. In their reports, he often seems remote, harsh, and ominous. To the court, a hostile witness recalled wryly:

The lord was cruel. We could not have an audience. And, one time, I spoke with him and he rebuffed me as though I were a dog<sup>7</sup>.

Cesarini, in court, seems aloof from those who looked to him. About them, he seems to know little. This ignorance stretches not only to his tenants, but also to his own officials, and to the very layout of his lands. To a degree, like any top man on the spot with judges, he might have found obliviousness a handy ploy. Still, his ignorance is strikingly thorough and consistent. The list of what he forgets or never knew is long: his tithes-share at Rocca Sinibalda – “I have not tried to learn what they are”<sup>8</sup>; the local chapels -- “I saw in passing some walls and ruins that might have been, but I do not know and I did not ask.”<sup>9</sup>; the identity of those who accused a Monte Cosaro Jew of illicit sex<sup>10</sup>; the

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<sup>6</sup> Cecarelli, "Historia della Casa Cesarina," f. 56r: "Vivendo con perpetuo splendor' di liberalità et di Grandezza d'animo da tutti era temuto et parimente amato."

<sup>7</sup> 27, 105v, witness 7: "Il sig<sup>re</sup> era crudele noi se ne poteva havere audientia et una volta Io ce parlai me rebutto come uno cano"

<sup>8</sup> io ho godut. le entrat. della Rocca siccome le ho trovat. dopo la morte del Car<sup>le</sup> mio bona memoria, ne ho innovato Cosa alc<sup>a</sup>, ne ho cercato de saper' che cose se siano [29.6, 38r]

<sup>9</sup> Rdit Non so come se chiamino ne come se nominassero Ma **ho visto passando** de li qualche **muraglia et vestigio** che poteva esser' che fossero ma io non lo so ne lho **dimandato**, ne a tempo mio ne de memoria ce sono state d.ce capelle che io sappia anzi dico eche a tempo mio non ce e stato mai **capella** [29,6, 38r]

<sup>10</sup> [29.6, 38r]: Rdit Io non me ricordo particolarmente da chi ma era **publica voce** in Monte Cosaro

campaign of Civitanova's priors to have their palace back<sup>11</sup>; the practice of unpaid *corvée* on Sundays -- "I do not know about it or give the order...if I had known, I would have taken care of it."<sup>12</sup>; the extraordinary *opera* of repairing the mill—"I wasn't the one to burden the people except in the ordinary matters, nor did I know it, and if they had issued a formal complaint I would have taken care of it."<sup>13</sup> He often knows little about his own dependents. Don Sante, for instance, economic manager and party chief in Monte Cosaro: "I knew he was a priest, but had no idea what offices he held, nor even that he was a priest who could say mass."<sup>14</sup> Could he vouch for the good character of ambassadors to him from Civitanova? "I have not had enough contact with them that I could say."<sup>15</sup> Cesarini is also vague about his *ministri*. He lists some of his *luogotenenti* from Civitanova in the past five years: "the second was Messer Giovanni Lorenzo from Civita Ducale, and Messer Giovanni Battista da Trevi, and then there was another one from Rimini, or from Monte Fiore, but I forget his name, but the *depositario* was always Messer Federico Toffini."<sup>16</sup>

One could go on, heaping up examples of aloof indifference to what went on in towns and villages. But, to be fair and balanced, note that sometimes Cesarini does know details. Rocca Sinibalda had had for many years a single priest, Don Tibaldo, restless, and careless in bed, for whose concubine's abortion Fra Santo, the crooked friar with a musket up his cassock, had once helped procure: As Cesarini remembers the affairs of this church at his patronal disposition:

<sup>11</sup> Rdit io non so altro se non che ultimamente me fo detto che desideravano haver' questo palazzo [29.7 3r] il quale gli lo feci consignar' subito

<sup>12</sup> Io **non l'ho saputo** ne ordinato ne so quello ve dite c<sup>a</sup> questa che se io l'havessi saputo ce **haverei provisto** [29.6, 3r]

<sup>13</sup> ditto re work on mill: Rdit da me **non e stato ordinato** che se gravi il populo se non nelle cose ordinarie, en manco l'ho saputo che se me ne havessero fatto **querela** ce haverei provisto [29.7, 3r]

<sup>14</sup> An temp<sup>e</sup> date commissi<sup>[s]</sup> sciverit d. d.num Santem Clarignanum eius depositarium fuisse clericum canonicum Prothonotarium, et cum clericali **bireto** pub<sup>ce</sup> inceder' Rdit Io sapevo che d.co don Sante era prete ma non sapevo ness<sup>a</sup> dignita che avesse, ne tampoco so che sia prete da messa[29.7, 21r]

<sup>15</sup> perche io **non li ho hauto tanto in pratica** che possa saperlo [29.7, 6r]

<sup>16</sup> **29.7, 6v** Il secondo [the luog.te] fo Mr Gi. Lorenzo da Civita Ducale et Mr Gio. Batt.a Ulmi da Triene [Trevi?], **et un altro da Rimini o da Monte Fiore che nonme ricordo il nome** ma il dep<sup>o</sup> e stato sempre Mr Fed<sup>co</sup> Toffino [he has had CN for 5 years]

Because Giovanni Lorenzo Collini was young and he wanted to study some, I recommended that church to another mass priest, I forget his name. And then Giovanni Lorenzo decided to marry, and the benefice was open, so I gave it finally, as the late cardinal had, into the hands of don Tibaldo, but because his life in the past had not been too good, as he had made some mistakes, and, in as chaplain at village of mine had impregnated a woman, I did not choose to give the benefice, as I wanted to see if he had changed to a better way of life.<sup>17</sup>

How then does Cesarini present himself, as lord. In his own words, he is a *barone*. “I thought to do what is fitting to *baroni* ...”<sup>18</sup> Over his feudi, he has “*dominio*”<sup>19</sup> *Dominio* is not *cura*, the task that falls, rather, to “*chi governa*”, that is, to who administers in his place, as, for instance, Giacomo Muti did ruthlessly at wartime at Rocca Sinibalda.<sup>20</sup> In the most general, the lord, all lords, and all *ministri*, collectively, are *i superiori*.<sup>21</sup> Before the court, Cesarini ever again reaches for his cardinal uncle, who arranged his marriage and the fancy wedding, and passed him the Sabine fiefs, calling him often “*il mio cardinale*.” Before the court he never evokes his longer lineage, the two other cardinals, the direct ancestors, much less distant Julius Caesar, mythic progenitor; he does however flag ancestors in a later letter to a cardinal, where he protests the long line, by *avi* and *proavi*, of faithful service to the church. As a lord, Cesarini has privileges, feudal rights bound by custom, “*jurisdictioni solite et consuete*” just like those of other signori “in other places in the neighborhood, where there are other lay lords as patron”(here he parries a challenge to his appointments to a benefice). Note

<sup>17</sup> Gio. Lorenzo Collina, et per esser' **giovane** assai et perche volea che **imparasse** q<sup>al</sup>che cosa raccomandando detta chiesa ad unaltro Prete da messa che non me ne ricordo il nome Venendo [29,6, 39r] poi d.co Gio. Lorenzo in eta se resolvette voler' **pigliar moglie**, et restando d.co benef<sup>o</sup> io lo diedi finalmente nel modo che l'hanno dato il Car<sup>l</sup> bo: me: in governo a don **Tibaldo**, et per che per la sua vita non troppo bona per il passato haver' f.co alc<sup>i</sup> errori, et fra li altri stando in unaltra terra delle mie per cappellano **impregno una donna** no me resolvetti a darli il benef<sup>o</sup> volendo vedere se se fosse mutato a miglior vita

<sup>18</sup> io pensavo de far' quello che se conviene alli **baroni** che hanno il **ius patronato** [29.6, 41r] re giving Tibaldo a bull (having one arranged for him). Note that Cesarini calls himself a barone.

<sup>19</sup> Dui giuramenti lanno dato il p<sup>o</sup> fu qn. fu **pigliato il possesso del dominio**. [29.7, 12v]

<sup>20</sup> finche si visse il Car<sup>l</sup> mio io non hebbi mai **cura** di d.co castello [29,6, 34v] et dopoi la morte sua io ne ho lassato la cura a **chi governa** p<sup>a</sup> cioe a Mr Jac<sup>o</sup> Muti [this re Rocca Sinibalda ]

<sup>21</sup> con verita fusse referta la **volunta** del **pub<sup>co</sup>** a **li superiori** e non con fraude venendosi persone pocho amorevoli, [re ambasciatori of CN: 29.7, 31r] note the package of words that invite one another.

how these claims lack absolutism; Cesarini's defense is legalistic in terms and feel. Accordingly, to the judges, he portrays his lordship as circumscribed by his duty, his *dovere*, to do the right: "If they had put in a legal complaint [*querela*], I would have provided, as *il dovere* required."<sup>22</sup>

How, in such a mix of attitudes, does power look? What is the language of command, request, grace, and pardon? How regal, how godlike is a baron when speaking to the state? Not very. Cesarini "gives commission"<sup>23</sup> to his subordinates, or "gives orders"<sup>24</sup> An order [*ordine*] was both a command, express and instantaneous, and also a scheme, or ordinance. So, for instance:

I found things this way, that nobody could go out, or spend the night outside the village, and this *ordine* was put in place by the late Cardinal, with this idea [*anima*] in mind...<sup>25</sup>

or

"There was an *ordine* made in the cardinal's time that one could not marry except with a certain [restricted] dowry."<sup>26</sup>

In parallel with orders, that come down from on high, are *usanze*, which might be of local origin, and the two, *ordini* and *usanze*, made a ready duo: "I have observed the orders and usages that I found there."<sup>27</sup> And such orders, when lordly, follow policy; they have *ragione*.<sup>28</sup> As he gives his orders and lays out his *ragioni*, a lord "provides," "dispenses,"

<sup>22</sup> Rdit Io non so niente et se per d.ce comunita ne fosse stato f.co **querela** io haverei provisto secondo il **dovere** havesse voluto [29.7, 15v] (Re interference of ministri in councils]

<sup>23</sup> non era cominciato a fabricar' se e cominciato dopoi io non lo so, potrebbe bene esser' che **fosse stato dato commiss**<sup>e</sup> che se cominciasse perche eravamo restate d'accordo [re CN, re destroying church of corpo di cristo] [29.7, 4r]

<sup>24</sup> **io ne ho hato ordine che se pagassero** a d<sup>co</sup> Fed.co [29.7, 4v]

<sup>25</sup> io ho trovato questo , che ness.<sup>o</sup> potesse uscir' fora, cioe pernottar' fora del Terr<sup>o</sup> et credo che **questo ord<sup>e</sup> fosse messo** dalla bona m<sup>e</sup> del Car<sup>le</sup> et credo che **l'aia** [anima] fosse q.sta [29.6, 35vb]

<sup>26</sup> et perche ci e uno **ordine** f.co al tempo del Car.<sup>le</sup> che non si possano maritar senon con una certa dote [29.6, 36r]

<sup>27</sup> Et ho osservato li **ordini et usanze** che ci ho trovato [29.6, 36r];Rdit Io ho trovato **ord<sup>e</sup> et usanza** in d.<sup>ca</sup> terra chi ness<sup>o</sup> possa vender' stabile senza licenza de la corte [29.6, 36v] These are both about Rocca Sinibalda, and the usanze could easily have come down from up.

<sup>28</sup> per saper' dove andavano, et questo ord<sup>e</sup> med<sup>o</sup> ho f.co servir' al tempo mio per questa **ragion'** [29.6, 35v] This is about Rocca Sinibalda and the restrictions on movement.

and “expedites.”<sup>29</sup> These are terms of due governance, nothing tyrannical.

What of the lord’s intellectual culture? Cesarini, recent commander of papal forces and ex-governor of Fano (1551), Orvieto (1551), and Rieti (1552), had seen a fair bit of public life.<sup>30</sup> How does he depict his whatever learning, useful to matters of state? Asked of a hasty trial “was it just or unjust,” he sputters: “I am no *dottore*! I have no idea. I just refer you [*me remetto*] to what the laws say.”<sup>31</sup> Ignorance? Hardly. Rather, scrupulous caution, as, elsewhere in the trial, to avoid talk’s traps, he cautiously refers the court to things already in the transcript. Certainly, Cesarini had comfortable Latin. He drops a Latin tag from Luke: *Nemo propheta*: No man is a prophet in his own land.<sup>32</sup> He reads trials sent him from his fiefs; to follow them is easier with Latin for the questions. On the other hand, his Latin might have had its limits. In Civitanova, without his orders, so he says, a painter effaced an image of the papal arms and a madonna, putting in their stead a witty epigram about offering sacrifices to God and Cesarini. The epigram is hard to parse and Cesarini, perhaps prudently, perhaps honestly, claims not only not to know of it but not to understand it.<sup>33</sup>

This matter of high learning raises a larger question: what were the contours of the intellectual universe that gave shape and substance to Cesarini’s political language. In it, with our papers, crude telescopes, can we detect faint nebulae of feudal doctrine, dim galaxies of Aristotelian politics, gaseous clouds of humanist pieties, twinkling Christian stars, or belts, asteroid rubble, of tumbling, semi-random nostrums from Italian law? The metaphor strains. What of the man himself? How to approach him?

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<sup>29</sup> [29.7, 32v] con li priori de le cose di la coi.ta gli le ditto che facessero provisione che fussero **dispensate** bene altramente io ci pigliaria **provisione**,

<sup>30</sup> Christoph Weber, *Legati e governatori dello stato pontificio(1550-1809)*, Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e ambientali, 1994, p. 573

<sup>31</sup> Rdit **io non so dottore non me ne intendo me remetto alle leggi** [29.7, 24v]

<sup>32</sup> Rdit de questo a me non me e stato f.co querela alc<sup>a</sup> ancor che habbi voluto sapere perche c.a cera q.sta sua Malevolenza, et con verita non ho travato cosa ness<sup>a</sup> senon che dicevano **nemo propheta acceptus in p<sup>ria</sup>** [29.7, 8r]

<sup>33</sup> in ibi picta arma sua cum his versibus Primitias cives huc Xp.o redde primum Juliano altari victima deinde cadat [29.7, 10r]

One good way in is to listen to him as he talks of his subordinates -- his towns and townsmen, villages and villagers. Cesarini distinguished sharply between his towns, which he saw as communes, with their rights and rituals, and his villages. Even though the men were vassals, Civitanova and Montecosaro were ‘communities’: their affairs he called *le cose della comunità*.<sup>34</sup> And it was as communities that they expressed their wishes: “The communities did not tell me that they wanted to change cancellors.”<sup>35</sup> Communities could write him.<sup>36</sup> They could beseech [*pregare*].<sup>37</sup> Again, and again, in Cesarini’s words, the *comunità* had a will that did not bind him firmly, but that claimed his respectful attention. And, properly, its representatives to him should express it *liberamente*.<sup>38</sup> The bearer of collective *volontà*, to Cesarini, was, if not the community, the *popolo*.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, collective will required the will of each:

These letters had not been written with the knowledge or the will of the *popoli*, so I wrote my ministers telling them to inform the council, and the whole *popolo* that these letters [critical of Cesarini] had been written, and that every man should express *liberamente il suo volere*.<sup>40</sup>

I was led to understand that the community wanted to paint my coat of arms above the *terra* gate.<sup>41</sup>

Community, so understood, was not the whole assemblage of souls resident. Nor was it

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<sup>34</sup> ragionando alcuna volta [29.7, 32v] con li **priori** de le **cose di la coi.ta**; for the oath of vassalage, 29.7, 12r

<sup>35</sup> [29.7, 16v] Le **communita** non me hanno mai f.co intendere che volessero mutar' d.ci Cancellieri

<sup>36</sup> Rdit la **comunita scriveva** che haveva dato il sigillo a detti oratori [d.ci o.ri] [27.9, 14v]

<sup>37</sup> ce lo mesi ancora **pregato instantissimamente** dalla **Coit.a** de d.ca terra dandoli la meta delli frutti del benefo ... [29.6, 39r]

<sup>38</sup> Rdit In non lo ho instrutta ne con instruire senon dettoli che **dicano liberamente la volonta** della Coi.ta loro sopra di che se erano stati mandati [29.7, 13v]

<sup>39</sup> con verita fusse referta la **volunta** del **pub<sup>co</sup>** a li superiori e non con fraude venendosi persone pocho amorevoli, [re ambasciatori of CN: 29.7, 31r];

<sup>40</sup> Io resposi che **farcì foccar'** con mano a S. S. ill<sup>ma</sup> che queste l.re non erano con saputa ne la **volunta de i popoli**, et così scrissi alli miei ministri [29.7, 13r] che facessero saper' al **consiglio**, et a tutto il popolo d.ce l.re che erano state scritte et che **liberamente ogni homo dicesse il suo volere** [out of which came that oath of CN] [29.7, 12v-13r]

<sup>41</sup> me fo fatto intender' che la **comunita voleva** far' depinger' l'arme mia sopra la porta della terra. [29.7, 10r]

the collectivity of male heads of household. Rather, the community, for Cesarini, was the polity. It was what he most often called the local commune. Accordingly, Rocca Sinibalda, which barely had a village regime, was no *comunità*; it was just a *terra*, a village. This term was loose enough that it could refer as well to towns.<sup>42</sup> Or it was just a *luogo*, one among his many, indeed, a *luogo suspetto*, not to be trusted.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, a little place of small account, Cesarini could shrug it off as one of his *castellucci*.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, while the communities had their legitimate communal will, their *volere*, Rocca Sinibalda had no such thing; it was a place of desires, of impulses, but of no will.

Although the community was a collective, it had its parts. Cesarini, again and again, distinguishes the *particolari*, with their *interessi particolari*, often, in his eyes, at odds with the common good. Unseemly handling!<sup>45</sup> “I would not want the *publico* eaten by *particolari*.”<sup>46</sup> *Maneggio*, he called it.<sup>47</sup> And he is very aware of parties, of his supporters and his ill-wishers, his *amorevoli* and *malevoli*.<sup>48</sup> And he is quick to distinguish the better sort -- *i più*, from all the rest of the *publico*.<sup>49</sup> Collectively, when he scorns them, the townsmen are *il vulgo*: “I intended to change my *depositario*, as he

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<sup>42</sup> For Civitanova: 29.7, 15r ; for Montecosaro: 29.6, 35v; 29.7, 35; for Rocca Sinibalda: [29,6, 36r; 29.6, 39r;

<sup>43</sup> per esser' **il luogo suspetto**, [Re Rocca Sinibalda, 29.6, 35v]

<sup>44</sup> li dava la faculta che si li suole dar' ordinariamente alli officiali di questi **castellucci**. [29.6, 34v]

<sup>45</sup> Rdit Le **communita** non me hanno mai f.co intendere che volessero mutar' d.ci Cancellieri, da **particolari** potria esser' che me fosse stato d.co che ce avesse voluto metter' **qualche uno per interesse suo** [29.7, 16v]

<sup>46</sup> non volevo chel **pub<sup>co</sup>** fusse magnato, da **particolari** [re intrate of CN: 29.7, 32v] JC says he said this to the priori

<sup>47</sup> **Sf/C 1138, doc 17, letter 1, 1v**: Et penso dispiacesse a detti insanguinati et seditiosi et tal volta ad alcuni ch'eran soliti a **maneggiare** l'entrate del publi.co parendo loro che dal governo d'un particolare dell'uccidere et del **maneggiare**, et del tenere oppresso hor uno hor un' altro

<sup>48</sup> et perche d.ci Commissi vi comparsero con alci **malevoli miei** di dette Terre **dubitando che non reuscisse qualche romore** Mandai d.co Malatesta che avesse ad assister' insieme con li miei Ministri [29.7, 6v]; Io non me ricordo haver' ordinato particular' niuno sopra di cio, anzi ve dico una cosa fra li amb.ri che vennero ce ne erano de quelli che erano miei **malevoli** [29.7, 13r]; mostrava **essermi poco amorevole** et ve n'era unaltro chiamato Bartozzo Ugolato parimen' poco amorevole a me [29.7, 13r]; me fu domandato se havevo scritto che venessero ambasciatori **amorevoli** da Civita nova et da Monte Cosero [29.7, 31r]

<sup>49</sup> io gli rispose che intendese bene la **vounta del pub<sup>co</sup>** e di li **piu** e cosi detti ordine medes<sup>te</sup> a mr malatesta che ne parlasse con alchuni per intender bene la **volunta** loro [29.7, 30v]



and many from Civitanova know, not for his flaws but to satisfy the *vulgo*.”<sup>50</sup>

Cesarini, in court, felt pressure to justify his regime as law-abiding. Accordingly, he was quick to refer to his “usual and accustomed jurisdictions, and to the papal *bandi*”<sup>51</sup>, to his *ius patronale*, as in other places round about that have lay lords as patrons.<sup>52</sup>

And what were the goals of governance. High on the list came *quieta* and with quiet came advantage: *utile*: the terms make a handy dyad: “*l’utile, et la quieta che ne conseguivano*.”<sup>53</sup> “I told them all that they should attend to quiet living.”<sup>54</sup> The alternative, the opposite of quiet was not noise, but *scandalo*.<sup>55</sup>

In court, Cesarini had to defend against Rocca Sinibalda’s complaints to defend his family’s very feudal rule and rules, the restrictions on economic and political activity, the bans on free marriage and inheritance. Why such tight rules? Security!

As for going out without a permit, I found this *ordine*, that nobody could go out, that is spend the night outside the village, and I believe that this *ordine* was put in place by the late cardinal, and I believe that is intent [*anima*] was that this was a suspect place, and there were *malevoli* exiles, all of whom had lines of kinship and friendship [*buoni*] inside the village, so, to know where they were going, and I kept this same *ordine* in my time, for this reason.<sup>56</sup>

As for the marriage restrictions, the cardinal and his nephew seem to have aimed at social engineering, with hopes of populating their fief.

<sup>50</sup> Ancora che il dep<sup>o</sup> Fed<sup>co</sup> io volevo mutarlo, come lui sa, et **molti de Civita nova** non per suoi demeriti ma per **sodisfare il vulgo**. [29.7, 7v]

<sup>51</sup> Rdit Io me remetto alli mie **jurisdictioni solite, et consuet.**, da quelle bande [29.6, 39v] This is re RS and appointing to benefices.

<sup>52</sup> Rdit Io dico che io ho f.co come ho f.co **il mio Car<sup>le</sup>** et come hanno f.co i miei antecessori circa il dar' de benef<sup>i</sup> per esser layco et si tiene che siano **ius patronali** come in quelli **altri luoghi circumvicini li altri Sig<sup>ri</sup> layci** li danno **come p.rone**

<sup>53</sup> Tengo sia stato l'utile, et la quiete che ne conseguivano [giving over the revenues in CN] [29.7, 5v]

<sup>54</sup> Does Cesarini know Fabio Tofino? Rdit: Lui retorno da Napoli alli mesi passati et disse mi voler tornare a casa sua. Io li dissi che dicesse a tutti che attendessero a **quieto vivere** [do not make trouble] [29.7, 18r]. See also 29.7, 15r; 29.7, 33r

<sup>55</sup> accio **non ne venisse scandolo** nissuno io faceva tener quella porta guardia [29.7, 35v]: (re MC)

<sup>56</sup> circa l'uscir fora senza licenza io ho trovato questo ord<sup>e</sup>, che ness.<sup>o</sup> potesse uscir' fora, cioe **pernottar'** fora del Terr<sup>o</sup> et credo che questo ord<sup>e</sup> fosse messo dalla bona m<sup>e</sup> del Car<sup>le</sup> et credo che l'aia [*anima*] fosse q.sta per esser' **il luogo suspecto**, et haver delli **malevoli forosciti** quali tutti havevano i **parentadi** et **buoni** dentro della terra et per **saper' dove** andavano, et questo ord<sup>e</sup> med<sup>o</sup> ho f.co servir' al tempo mio per questa ragion' [39.6, 35v]

As for marrying women without a permit, I have had this same thing observed in all my *luoghi*, ...and I found that this *ordine* had been made in the Cardinal's time, because they all wanted to take outsider wives [*forestiere*], and the village girls were left without husbands, nor could the women marry outside the *distretto* without a permit, but I gave them permission more freely and more often. And this is the rule I kept [*ho osservato*], and I have refused the greater part of the men who asked my permission to marry outside the *distretto* for that reason. *And he added*: and because there is an *ordine* made in the Cardinal's time that one cannot marry with more than a certain dowry, so much the more did they seek wives outside the *distretto* to have more dowry.<sup>57</sup>

And then there was the restriction on free sale of lands, whereby the castle could bid on any sales. The peasants complained that the court officials set the prices low and then amassed terrain.

I have found the *ordine* and *usanza* of the said village, that nobody could sell stable goods without the permission of the court, and when they asked my permission, either the court gave it or paid what the appraisal had said.

He was asked if he knows if anyone from the said *castello* sold anyone of the *castello* of property without having received a permit and, because he lacked a permit, the said property was seized by his ministers and put to his own use?

He answered: I don't remember and do not believe it to be true, and I know that it is not on my orders, and if my ministers have done so, they will have to give account for it.<sup>58</sup>

A denial. Honest? Hard to say. Perhaps. Certainly, Cesarini seems not to have watched

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<sup>57</sup> ca il maritar' delle donne senza licenza io osservo et fo osservar' questo med<sup>o</sup> in tutti li miei luoghi cioe che non si possano maritar' fora del destretto senza licenza et questo ord<sup>e</sup> trovai esser' f.co al tempo del Car<sup>le</sup> perche **tutti volevano pigliar' le moglie forostier, et q.lle della Terra stavano senza marito** et mancho le donne se potevano maritar' [29,6, 36r] fora del **distretto** senza licenza ma a loro davo licenza piu volentier et piu spesso et cosi ho osservato et ho recusato alla maggior' parte delli h.oi. che me hanno dimandato licenza de maritarsi fora del distretto per la ca. sudett. subjunxit q. et perche ci e uno ordine f.co al tempo del Car.<sup>le</sup> che non si possano maritar' senon con una certa **dote** li suoi tanto piu volentier cercavano maritarsi fori del distretto **per haver piu dote** [29.6, 35v-36r]

<sup>58</sup> Rdit Io ho trovato ord<sup>e</sup> et usanza in d.<sup>ca</sup> terra chi ness<sup>o</sup> possa vender' stabile senza **licenza** de la corte et ogni [29,6, 37r] che a me hanno dimandato licenza overo li e stata **data**, o **comperat** per la corte quel tanto che e stato **estimato**

Ints an sciat aliquem in d.co C[ast]<sup>ro</sup> vendisse alicui d. d.co C<sup>ro</sup> aliquam possess.<sup>nem</sup> non obten. licentie et propter quam non obtentione licentie dca possessio per suos ministros fuerit **ablata**, et in eiusdem d Cons.<sup>t</sup> utilitatem conversa

Rdit Io non me ne recordo et non credo che sia vero, et so che **de comm<sup>e</sup> mia** non e, se l'hanno f.co i ministri miei ne renderanno conto. [29.6, 36v-37r]

the workings of his places with much care. For him, presumably, they fed his treasury and his prestige. Unlike his predecessors, and, I think, unlike some of the Orsini still around, he did not look to his peasant *vassalli* for support in raids and killings. The old age of inter-baron warfare was slowly fading, and Cesarini's career, despite Lazio's last castle, his own, looked to the city and the state.

One last matter: Cesarini was invited to remember the history of his three restive fiefs. His answer is interesting for what it says about a noble's familial memory. It has a certain charm, as, I am sure, he hoped it would.

I am not sure how to give you a good account of how Rocca Sinibalda came to belong to Our House, for it is old affair [*e cosa vecchia*], and it was in the time of my late cardinal, and I was a lad in that time, [born in 1514, he would have been twelve in 1526] but I will tell you succinctly what I know of it. I think that it was in the year of the Sack or a little earlier, if I am right, before the year of the Sack, the late cardinal bought the half of Rocca Sinibalda from a woman whose name I do not remember, but I think she was of the house of the Mareri, but I refer you to the instrument of purchase, and the other half Pope Clement took from Signor Giovanni Mutio Mareri for some crimes [*escessi*] he had committed and gave it to my late cardinal, but I do not remember in what way, and with what legal title. Then these Signori Savelli took up a controversy with my late Cardinal, and against Our House, and after some months Pope Clement arranged a peace about every difference between us, and 6000 scudi were paid out, if I am right, to His Holiness, who, if I remember well, took them for Giovanni Mutio's son, or his heirs. And between us there came about [*erano nate*] deaths of men, as I heard later, for I was a lad. And between us was made peace under penalty [*penata*], and there was made a general absolution between us, and so long as the cardinal lived I never had the running [*la cura*] of that *castello*, and after his death I left the running [*la cura*] to the man who first governed it, that is, to Messer Jacomo Muti, and when I was here [in Rome], Messer Jacomo came to me and I deputed the officials as seemed best to me, though I deputed few, for few were changed, but the greater part of said officials were deputed by me; as for the others, I do not remember by whom they were deputed, and we gave them the powers [*la faculta*] that one ordinarily gives officials of these *castelucci*.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Io no ve sapro se bene render' conto in che modo Rocca Sinibalda sia de Casa N<sup>ra</sup> perche e cosa vecchia, et che fu f.co al tempo della bo. memoria del mio Car.<sup>le</sup> et io ero putto in quello tempo pur' io ve diro cosi succintamen' q.llo che io ne so, credo che lanno del sacco o poco prima salvo il vero p<sup>a</sup> del anno del sacco il Car.<sup>le</sup> bo. me. compero la meta de d.ca Rocca da una donna della q<sup>ale</sup> non me ricordo il nome ma credo che [29,6, 34r] fosse de casa de Maredi, remettendome pero allo instr<sup>o</sup> della compera et l'altra meta papa Clemente tolse al S<sup>r</sup> Gio. Mutio de Maredi per alc<sup>i</sup> eccessi che haveva f.co, et la diede al Car.<sup>le</sup> de bon me. mio, ma non me ricordo in che modo, et con che titolo se lhavesse, Poi questi SS<sup>ri</sup> Savelli mossero controversia col Car.<sup>le</sup> mio bona me et contra Casa nra, et dopoi alc<sup>i</sup> mesi Papa Clemente concordò ogni nra

This passage lets us listen in a bit to Cesarini talking. A baronial voice moving among subjects barons cared about: noble houses, officials put in place, wars, settlements, legal conditions binding them, the interventions of the pope as lord and prince and head of state. For the villages, this history was a tremendous story, epic, and tragic, and pathetic. For Cesarini, all that faded; the village, one among so many, was a distant background, rather like a rustic tapestry, backdrop for moments of greater import.

Four decades later, the Flemish painter, Paul Bril, went out to paint Rocca Sinibalda for new owners, the Mattei. He did so twice, though the second painting, like the first now at Palazzo Barberini, carries a false label, “Belmonte.” They are splendid canvasses, tall and wide, panoramas laying out in profile the things that mattered to the owner: the vast castle looming over the houses at its skirts. In one, a solitary cannon fires a billowing salute from Peruzzi’s single, dirt-filled rampart (today invaded by thick bamboo). On the ridge line, receiving the proud salute, one sees the ornate carriage of a guest or owner. Meanwhile, all around, charming, picturesque, are the inhabitants, at their works and days, fishing and laundering in the river, plowing, herding scattered goats, lively but dwarfed by the *signorile* mass towering above the houses at its skirts. Cesarini did not commission this image, but, had the Flemish painters already come, with their landscape habits, he easily could have.

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diferenza et furono pagati sei milia scudi, salvo il vero a d.ca S S<sup>ta</sup> q<sup>li</sup> se bene me ricordo li pigliorno per i figliolo de Gio. Mutio o sui heredi, et fra noi ci erano nate morte d. hoi [homini] come ho inteso dopoi perche all hora io ero putto forono f.ce fra nio la pace penata, et ce fo f.co una assoluzione g.nale occorsa fra noi, et finche si visse il Car<sup>l</sup> mio io non hebbi mai cura di d.co castello [29,6, 34v] et dopoi la morte sua io ne ho lassato la cura a chi governa p<sup>a</sup> cioe a Mr Jac<sup>o</sup> Muti et qn. io ero qua mr Jac<sup>o</sup> veneva da me et io deputavo li off<sup>li</sup> secondo che pareva a me benche io ne habbi deputati poche perche pochi ne sono stati mutati ma al maggior parte de d.ci uff<sup>li</sup> sono stati deputati da me, gl'altri io non me ricordo da chi sono stati deputati, et se li dava la faculta che si li suole dar' ordinariamente alli ufficiali di questi **castellucci**. [29.6, 34v]. For Cesarini's age, Ceccarelli, 58r